

**GRAVE RITES AND GRAVE RIGHTS: ANTHROPOLOGICAL STUDY OF THE
REMOVAL OF FARM GRAVES IN NORTHERN PERI-URBAN JOHANNESBURG**

by

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DEDICATION

*In memory
Of
My parents Ivor and Betty Hill*



*My research assistant Lucas Mohale
And
Former Zevenfontein farm workers and dwellers who also joined
the ancestors before the dissertation was completed*

*A person does not belong to a place until there is someone dead under the ground
Gabriel Garcia Marquez, One hundred years of solitude (1967: 13)*

DECLARATION

I declare that: *Grave rites and grave rights: anthropological study of the removal of farm graves in northern peri-urban Johannesburg* 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.

CA Hill

February 2016

ABSTRACT

In a diachronic and multi-sited study that extended from 2004 through 2012/2013 I deconstructed the sociocultural dynamics of relocating farm graves from the farm Zevenfontein in northern peri-urban Johannesburg. The graves at the focus of the study were some seventy-six graves removed from a northern portion of the farm in 2004 for a huge development project that commenced construction in 2010, and other graves removed in the 1980s from portions of the farm developed for residential estates in the 1990s.

The study explored the people who dwelt on the farm and created the graveyards, the religious processes entailed in relocating the mortal remains of ancestors, the mortuary processes of exhuming and reburial of ancestors, the disputations between and negotiating processes of landowners and grave owners, and the demands and demonstrations by farm workers and dwellers seeking redress for past human and cultural rights infringements.

Although the topic of farm graves is well-referenced in land claims and sense of place discourses and is not in itself a new topic, this study provides original and in-depth information and insight on the broader picture of ancestral graves and their relocation, including the structuring of a community and its leaders and followers, it suggests answers to the question as to whether ancestral graves/graveyards can successfully and functionally be relocated. Not only are religious aspects examined in the study, but also the sociopolitical and economic dimensions of relocating graves are fully scrutinised in the context of farm workers and dwellers' political awareness of and astuteness to the social and economic potential of farm graves and their relocation.

Key words: Ancestors, anthropology, burial, cultural, Dainfern, demonstration, disjunction, dispute, economic, exhumation, farm dwellers, farm workers, followers, graves, Johannesburg, leaders, mass graves, peri-urban, political, power relations, reburial, ritual, social, *toyi-toyi*, Zandspruit, Zevenfontein

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GLOSSARY

AmaNdebele	Generally, the Ndebele speaking people, but used by the former farm workers/dwellers to refer to a group of Ndebele farm workers/dwellers living on Hans
Dainfern	Collective term used in the dissertation for Dainfern Estate and Dainfern Valley residential developments of farm Zevenfontein from where graves were relocated in the 1980s
<i>Isibongo</i>	Clan or lineage surname — children of married women (traditional or civil) take father's <i>isibongo</i> , children of unmarried women take mother's <i>isibongo</i>
isiNdebele	Nguni language, dialect of the Ndebele
<i>Isangoma (izangoma pl)</i>	Traditional healer and/or prophet skilled in communicating with ancestral spirits
isiXhosa	Nguni language, dialect of the Xhosa
isiZulu	Nguni language, dialect of the Zulu
<i>Malume</i>	Uncle, namely, mother's or father's brother, an important elder in the family
<i>Mphephu</i>	Incense made from indigenous herbs found in the veld
Portion 246	Northern portion of farm Zevenfontein, site of River Glen graveyard, removed in 2004
Sesotho	Sotho language, dialect of the Sotho
Setswana	Sotho language, dialect of the Tswana
Snuff	Commercial powdered tobacco used as an inhalant and as a ritual offering
Sorghum beer	Traditional beer made from fermented sorghum
Sotho-Tswana	Non-differential term for Sotho and Tswana speakers
<i>Toyitoyi</i>	Characteristic form of public protest entailing foot-stomping and singing protest/struggle songs
<i>Umhlaba</i>	Natural and cultural conception of land

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SEMI-STRUCTURED QUESTIONS

Code No.....

Personal details

1. Name: Tel.
2. Age:
3. Home language:
4. Where you were born?
5. Where did you live as a child?
6. Was this place land registered to a white person? No Yes
7. If yes, what was the name of the white person?

8. Do you still live there? No Yes
9. If yes, how is it that you still live there?

10. If no, when did your leave? 1950s, 1960s, 1970s, 1980s, 1990s
11. Why did you leave and where did you go?

12. When and why did you leave this place and where did you go?

13. Where do you live now?

14. What type of work did/do you do?

15. Where did/do you work?

Family details

1. Name of mother:
2. Place of birth:
3. Where did she live?
4. Where did she work?

5. Death: Age	Date:	Place of burial:
6. Names of mother's mother and mother's father:		
7. Place of birth:		
8. Where did they live?		
9. Where did they work?		
10. Death: Age:	Date:	Place of burial:
11. Name of father:		
12. Place of birth:		
13. Where did he live?		
14. Where did he work?		
15. Death: Age:	Date:	Place of burial:
16. Names of father's mother and father's father:		
17. Place of birth:		
18. Where did they live?		
19. Where did they work?		
20. Death: Age:	Date:	Place of burial:
21. Names of great grandparents:		
22. Place of birth:		
23. Death: Age:	Date:	Place of burial:
24. Number and names of brothers:		
25. Death: Age:	Date:	Place of burial:
26. Number and names of sisters:		
27. Death: Age:	Date:	Place of burial:
28. Number and names of children:		
29. Death: Age:	Date:	Place of burial:

Your family tree**Your details**

Name	
Home language	
Address	
Contact number	

Your mother, her brothers and sisters

1 st born	2 nd born	3 rd born	4 th born
5 th born	6 th born	7 th born	8 th born

Your father, his brothers and sisters

1 st born	2 nd born	3 rd born	4 th born
5 th born	6 th born	7 th born	8 th born

You and your brothers and sisters

1 st born	2 nd born	3 rd born	4 th born
5 th born	6 th born	7 th born	8 th born

Your children

1 st born	2 nd born	3 rd born	4 th born
5 th born	6 th born	7 th born	8 th born

Your spouse	
--------------------	--

Your life on the farms

Place and date of birth

	Place	Date
Mother		
Father		
You		

Where you and your family lived

Your mother	
Your father	
You as a child	
When you were grown	
Where do you live now?	

Family deaths and burials

	Date	Place
Your mother		
Your father		
Your brother/s		
Your sister/s		
Your child		

The dwelling place

Your home

What can you tell me about the place where you lived?

Where was your house?

Can you describe your house to me?

Can you describe the rooms?

Did you grow vegetables?

Did you have animals?

Who lived with you in the house?

Are you still living in the same place?

Is this your home?

Who is still living in your home?

Your church

Was there a church near where you lived?

What can you tell me about the church?

Who was the minister?

Where did the minister live?

Is the church still there?

Where is the church now?

Was the Jukskei River important to your church?

Your school

Was there a school near where you lived?

Where was your school?

What can you tell me about the school?

Is your church still there?

Do you still see people from your school?

Your workplace

Did you work in the same place where you lived?

Where did you work?

Did you move from one place to another because of work?

Relocation

Can you tell me about leaving your home?

Do you know who owns the land now?

Do you know who owned the land when you first lived here?

Did you come to this place because you or someone in your family was working for the owner?

How long were you or your family working for the owner?

Did the owner sell the property?

Did he die?

Were you able to stay even though the land had been sold?

Why were you able to stay?

Why did you not stay?

Were you given a reason why you could not stay?

Was it your choice to leave?

Why did you choose to leave?

Where did you go?

When did you leave?

Can you describe to me how you moved?

Did someone force you to move?

Who were these people?

How did they force you?

Did GG trucks move you?

How did they move you?

Did government give you money so you could pay for the relocation?

Did government offer to move your graves to your new place?

Your graves

Graveyards

Can you tell me about the graveyards?

Did only people who worked for the landowner bury in these graveyards?

Did people come from other places to bury here?

Have all the graves been moved?

Do you know where there are other graves?

Do you know who owns them?

Ancestors

Can you tell me why the grave is so important?

Umhlaba

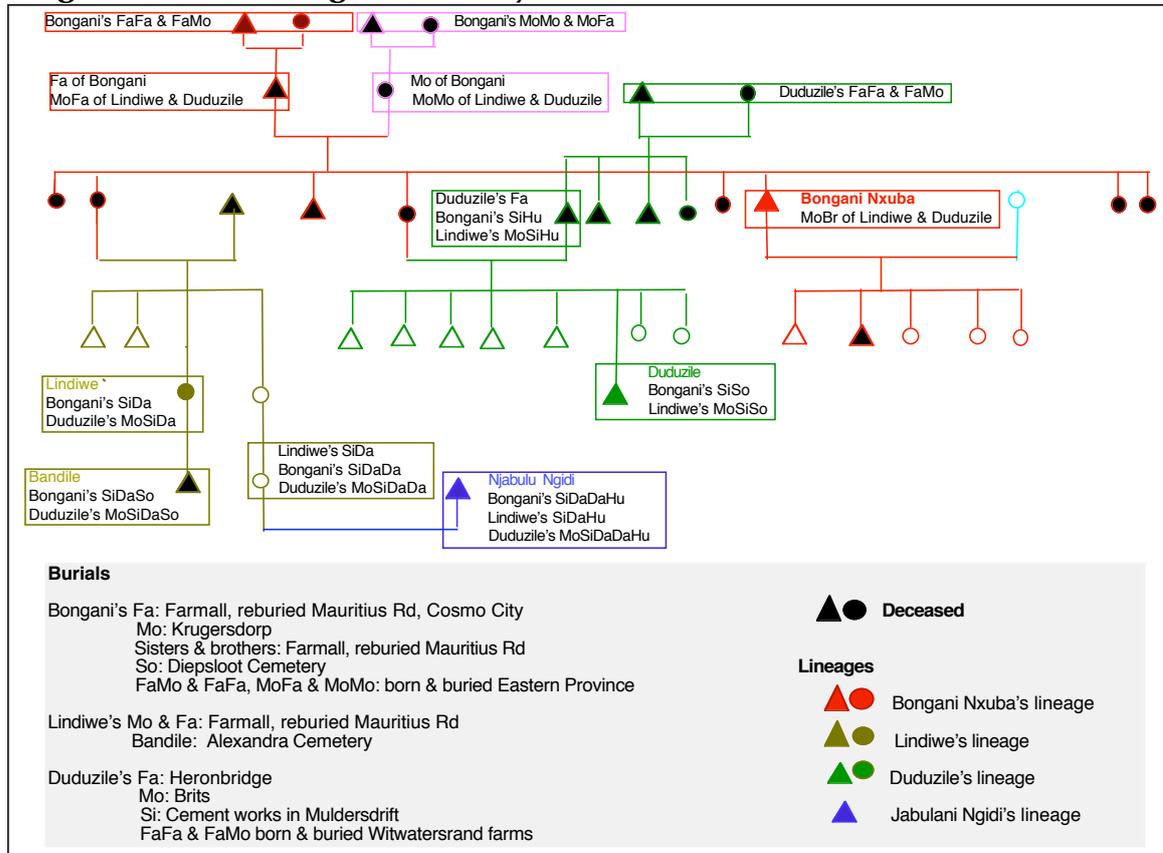
Does the word *umhlaba* mean anything to you?

What does it mean?

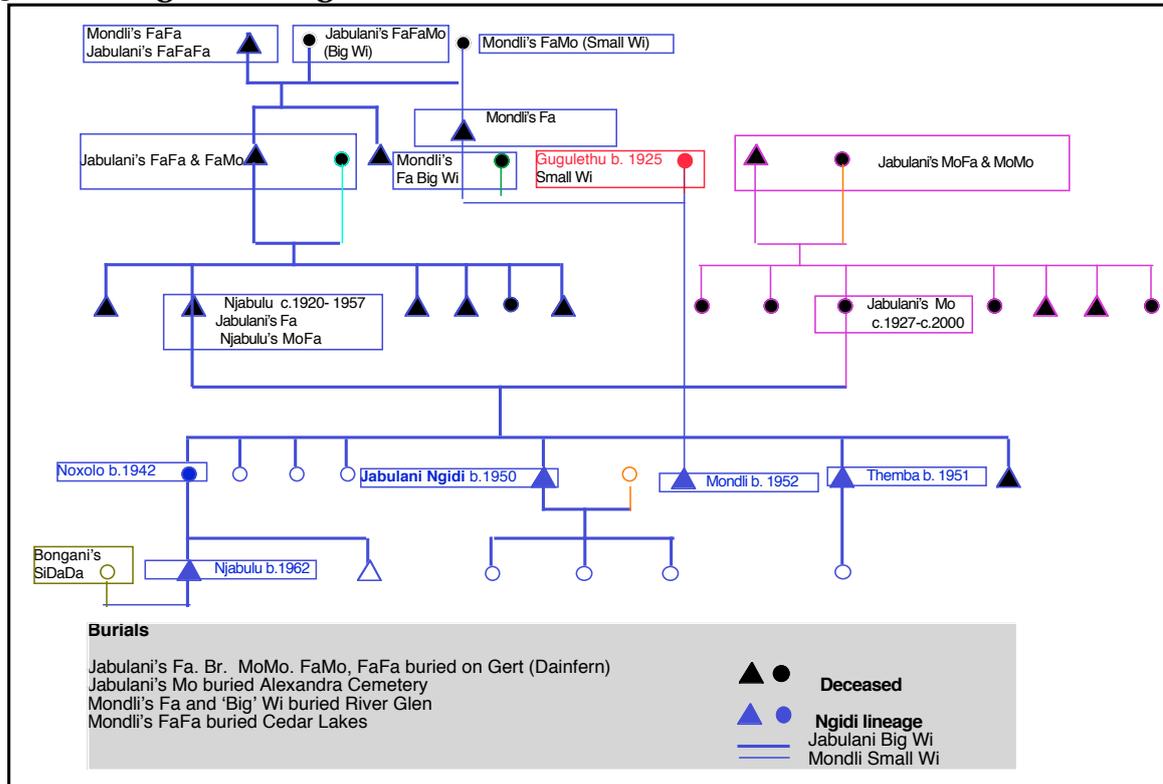
Do you use it in connection to the place we are talking about?

APPENDIX B: GENEALOGIES

Bongani Nxuba's lineage and family



Jabulani Ngidi's lineage



CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

South Africa has a history of farm burials of both black farm workers and white landowners. In the contemporary urbanising of the peri-urban environment of Fourways, northern Johannesburg, relocating farm graves has become commonplace. This anthropological study looks into the dynamics of relocating graves of black farm workers and dwellers.

Legislation such as the *Ordinance on Excavations (Ordinance no. 12 of 1980)* and the *National Heritage Resources Act (NHRA 1999) (Act 25 of 1999, Section 3, subsection 3)*, not only provide for rights to bury on farms and to visit graves, but also the terms and conditions of removing farm graves. Landowners and developers, who want to relocate farm graves that have no value in terms of national heritage, need to seek permission from the family of the buried person to do so.

However, the relocation of black farm workers and dwellers' graves is not, necessarily, as straightforward as may be supposed. For one reason, from the perspective of black farm workers/dwellers, who hold belief in the ancestors, relocation of a relative's grave should be conducted with certain propriety. For another reason there is invariably an imbalance of power between those whose graves are to be relocated and those who own the land and require the relocation. In the case of the relocation of graves from the farm Zevenfontein 407 JR (Zevenfontein) there were a number of issues that led to disputes. The farm workers and dwellers themselves brought these disputes to the attention

of local, national and international media. The publicising of the issues and disputes predated by some months the start of my research.

Media publications drew attention to the unequal power relations between the black farm workers and the white landowners of the various portions of the farm¹ where the graves were situated and the concomitant issues subsuming established ancestral graveyards and the domicile and eviction of the farm workers. For example, one of the earliest references to the former Zevenfontein farm workers was when some of them were living in Zevenfontein informal settlement. Finance week (1992: 6) refers to a 'formal agreement' between 'the Zevenfontein landowner "housing" the squatters' and Company A² and local residents. The article goes on to say: 'Ironically, the squatters used to live on part of the land now comprising [Company A's] Dainfern [E]state...'

In 2003 Christoforou and Grobler of *The Citizen* (2003: 16) reported in the first sentence of an article titled *Anguish as Dainfern graves 'disappear'*: 'Nearly 600 graves, once situated in Dainfern Valley, are gone without a trace.' A few months later in January 2004 the same two reporters began another article: 'Home owners in the elite Dainfern Valley have refused permission for a traditional ceremony to be performed on an area originally the site of 590 graves' (2004: 6). A few days later Mahlangu in a *City Press* (2004a: 6) article titled *Dainfern homes may sit on top of 'lost' graves* began with: 'Hundreds of graves belonging to black families may be lying under the plush houses of the multimillion rand Dainfern Estate in Sandton.'

¹ In most instances press reports refer to the farm in its entirety, however, the farm was already subdivided and there was not one single owner of the farm, but many landowners of portions and smallholdings.

² All the names of persons and companies mentioned in the study are fictitious. Places, housing estates, suburbs and farm names are authentic.

In his comprehensive article Mahlangu (2004a: 6) described how the black families searched without success for their graves. He quotes a Dainfern spokesman as saying that 'Dainfern has no records of the graves or of any exhumations occurring around the area'. Yet in an earlier paragraph Mahlangu states that *City Press* possessed records 'dating back to 1987' that show 'an area near the Jukskei River in Dainfern is marked as a cemetery.' According to Mahlangu (2004a: 6), the documents in the possession of *City Press* list Company A as the landowner, state that 'preparations were made to remove the graves in Dainfern', and that Funerals Limited was 'contracted to remove the graves and was paid R80 for each grave'. Mahlangu in his penultimate paragraph states:

As the war of words rages between the black families and Dainfern [E]state's management, [M] said that if the missing graves are covered by new houses, the families ought to be allowed to conduct a traditional ritual to free the spirits of their loved ones (Mahlangu 2004a: 6).'

I first learned about problems with graves on the Dainfern portions of the farm Zevenfontein during previous research in Zevenfontein informal settlement (Hill 2001). In that study a research participant stated that the grave of one of his lineage ancestors had been removed from 'Dainfern' without his knowledge or permission along with other farm workers' graves. His 'grandfather's bones', he said, had been 'thrown', together with other human remains, in 'a hole in Pretoria' (Hill 2001: 77). Another former Zevenfontein farm worker³, at the time when he was employed by my parents who lived on an agricultural smallholding of Zevenfontein farm to the west of the Jukskei River and overlooking Dainfern, used to say he had to 'dig a hole [grave] on the golf course'. When the golf

³ AB worked for Hans on Portion 246 from 1949 to 1971, and for my parents in Broadacres Agricultural Holdings of farm Zevenfontein from 1972 until his death in 1999.

course, where the graves were once situated, was sold, it eventually formed part of Dainfern.

1.2 GENERAL THEME AND INTENTION

This study, the milieu of which is an urbanising environment and peri-urban context of farmland undergoing township development, deals with relocating farm graves. The topic of farm graves is not new. They are often referred to in anthropological literature pertaining to land claims. Such land claims are generally situated in remote rural areas where there are possibilities of restitution of the land to the original occupants. And, these land claims may or may not involve the relocation of graveyards. As the original data presented in the study reveal, the peri-urban circumstances are quite different from the remote rural areas, and the intentions of farm workers and dwellers in the study were not in principle aimed at land restitution.

The focus of the study is directed toward the issues and disputation associated with problems caused by the relocation of the graves, as suggested by my Zevenfontein informal settlement research participant (Hill 2001) and the various media reports already mentioned. In essence the study explores the negotiating and pragmatics of removing graves, as well as the sociocultural impact on the farm workers and dwellers whose family members lie buried in the graves on land destined for township development.

The Dainfern dispute was caused by the relocation of graves from the farm in the 1980s, and at the time when it was being publicised (2003/2004) another graveyard on Zevenfontein was due for relocation. In this study I intend as the

general theme to explore the relocation of the two Zevenfontein graveyards in the context of the peri-urban interface, and the sociocultural dynamics that resulted from the loss of and/or disturbance to the original burial sites. I critically examine the religious, political and economic facets of relocating the graves and the concomitant disputes, and propose that the relocation of 'ancestral' graveyards can be socioculturally disjunctive for farm workers and dwellers.

1.3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1.3.1 Custom and tradition

The media reports had alluded to a history of people dwelling and burying on the farm Zevenfontein, as well as to a dispute with landowners over the removal or loss of certain graves. Thus, the first objective of the study was to ascertain the farm workers and dwellers' emic perspective on their history of dwelling, burying and their creation of the farm's graveyards. Since argumentation between disputants inheres emotionalism, subjectivity and reactivity, an understanding of how the farm workers and dwellers perceived the situation was vital to my deconstructing the arguments and issues caused by the graves that had already been removed and the graves that were to be removed. The intention was to collect a body of oral histories from the Zevenfontein farm workers and dwellers as the foundation of the study, and from former workers/dwellers of the farm Zandspruit 191 IQ (Zandspruit) for comparative purposes.

1.3.2 Place attachment

The next objective was to deconstruct the farm workers and dwellers' testimonies within current discourses, because farm graves already have their significance in respect of land claims. The Zevenfontein graveyards needed to be contextualised not only within the anthropological theories of sense of place and attachment to place and land claims, but also interpreted so as to compare the peri-urban circumstances with the more rural areas. And, specifically for the purpose of this study it was necessary to understand the sociocultural significance of the Zevenfontein ancestral graveyards while and after the farm workers lived and worked on the farm in respect of the subsequent disputes and issues. In essence, the aim was to ascertain how pertinent sense of place discourse and the referential of dwelling place and burial place, as made by land claimant labour tenants, were to the problems associated with the relocation or removal of graves from Zevenfontein.

1.3.3 Removal of graves, attitudes and decision making

The third objective of the study was an exploration of the fundamental issues the farm workers and dwellers identified with one developer's intention to remove an existing graveyard in 2004, as well as the issues described in the media about graves that were removed in the 1980s. The objective entailed in-depth research into how and why the farm workers/dwellers formed an action group, the structuring of the group as a community, as well as the decision-making processes. The media reports had drawn attention to power relations between former farm workers/dwellers and landowners/developers, therefore it

was imperative to contextualise argumentation, aims and actions from their perspective in view of the scenario of unequal power relations.

1.3.4 Pragmatics of negotiation and decision making

Based on the farm workers and dwellers decisions, my next objective was to ethnographically explore the pragmatics of those decisions, which presented themselves as three related but quite distinct sociocultural fields.

1.3.4.1 Upping the profile of the dispute

The grave owners' lack of success in negotiating demands, regarding the loss of graves on Dainfern in the 1980s, led to their holding a public demonstration. My objective in respect of that social field was to explore, within the frame of performance theory, the nature and effectiveness of the public demonstration that the former farm workers/dwellers used to bring Dainfern to the negotiating table.

1.3.4.2 Ancestral mortal remains and the living

Once negotiations had finally been concluded, the observance of the religious aspects of disturbing the mortal remains of ancestors was the farm workers and dwellers' next activity. Since most of them held belief in the continuation of life after death in the realm of the ancestor spirits, my next objective was to understand how the disturbance to the mortal remains would be resolved so as to maintain or restore the proper relationship between descendants and

ancestors. This required research into the religious aspects of graves in the form of their relevant rituals and ceremonies.

1.3.4.3 Observations on exhumation and reburial

The third of the trio of sociocultural fields was the processes involved in exhuming and reburying ancestral mortal remains. My aim in researching this aspect of grave relocations was to understand one of the arguments being made by the black farm workers/dwellers that their graves should be relocated according to cultural requirements. That objective entailed an archaeological view of the process of exhumation, and an ethnographic perspective on the reactions of family members to disinterment, in order to discern the parameters of cultural propriety in exhumation and reburial.

1.3.5 **Assessing the success of graves relocation**

My final objective was to assess whether or not grave relocation can be successfully achieved. Since the relocation of graves appeared to cause so much dispute and emotion the questions to be answered were whether relocation can be done to the satisfaction of all parties involved or do problems remain, or, in fact, are new problems created. This objective again required not only in-depth study of decision making, but also the farm workers' own assessment of the relocation projects, namely, the graveyard relocated in 2004 and the re-exhumation and re-reburial of ancestral mortal remains from Dainfern, which had been reinterred after removal from Dainfern in mass graves, during the 1980s.

1.4 ORGANISATION OF THE DISSERTATION

Chapter 1, *Introduction*, has introduced the study, outlined its general theme and intention and stated its aims and objectives.

Chapter 2, *Contextualised methodology*, orientates the reader on the scope and contextual relevance of literature research and the fieldwork strategy and techniques in data collection. It also discusses in context reflexivity in my data collecting experience, as well as clarifying the ethical considerations of undertaking this sort of research.

Chapter 3, *Geographical context and oral histories*, firstly orientates the reader on the geographical and historical context of the research area and the occupation of the farms Zevenfontein and Zandspruit. Thereafter, it presents the emotivity and subjectivity of oral testimony in thirteen personal histories and experiences of farm dwelling, burials and eviction. Since the study deals with disputation, the relevance of this chapter is to provide the emic perspective that informed the farm workers and dwellers' argumentation and conceptualisation of ancestral graveyards by indicating the customs and traditions pertinent to graves. In essence the chapter identifies within the collective of all the oral histories the various points and aspects of the relocation of graves from peri-urban farmland undergoing development that are discussed in the dissertation.

Chapter 4, *Grave constructs of place attachment*, anthropologically contextualises the content of the oral histories by firstly deconstructing them with respect to South African legislation that impacted on dwelling and working on and eventual eviction from farms. It then unpacks the farm

workers/dwellers' social construction of sense of dwelling and burial place, before interpreting those facets of lived experience and the leaving behind of material, and the bearing in mind of the immaterial, cultural components in the context of place attachment. The specific contents of the chapter are a discussion of landownership and occupation in respect of the holding of title deeds, the status of the former farm workers/dwellers according to legislation, as well as the impact of eviction and forced removal that led to a developers' trope of 'abandoned graves'. The relocation of the Zevenfontein graves is contextualised within current anthropological discourse on farm graves, and the customs and traditions pertaining to ancestral practices and beliefs are dealt with in detail so as to background the implications of relocating graves. The final section of the chapter considers implied and evident sociocultural realities in the daily experience of former farm workers and dwellers. It indicates the particular iconographic context of perceptions of a socioculturally changed landscape in an exploration of the tangible and intangibles of place attachment. In essence this chapter foregrounds the perceptions of reality that impacted on the identifying of issues and the making of decisions.

Chapter 5, *Issues and decisions of grave concern*, discusses the farm workers/dwellers attitudes and decision-making processes. It firstly outlines the general circumstances of graves and graveyards in the wider research area as a result of land-use change, indicating the sort of problems faced by farm workers. The chapter then deals with collective decision making and the structuring of the group into leaders and followers by applying theoretical discourses on the meaning and purpose of community structures and its leadership, before unpacking the specific issues regarding the two graveyards at the focus of the study. The in-depth examination of the issue of the Dainfern

graves scrutinises and draws attention to the elements of disputation between landowners and farm workers. The chapter finally deals with such aspects of land claims that may impact on perceptions about the occupation of the farms and established graveyards by introducing the particular circumstances of peri-urban graves and land references into the current discourse.

Chapter 6, *Grave performance, actions and events*, provides ethnographic studies of the pragmatics of negotiation and decision making by exploring three sociocultural fields that were intrinsic to how the farm graves were relocated. In Section 6.2, *Performance for the dead*, I unpack how the profile of the issues was raised by a public demonstration that the farm workers and dwellers held in an effort to bring the landowners to the negotiation table. The demonstration is explored within the frame of performance theory and deals with the roles of the various actors, the orchestration of the demonstration, its subtext of *toyi-toyi*, as well as the reaction by the Dainfern audience and the effectiveness of the demonstration. The significance of the section is that it concretises the sentiments expressed in oral histories and farm workers/dwellers' attitudes to their graves. Section 6.3, *Actions for the ancestors*, explores the relation between ancestral mortal remains and living descendants by examining in ethnographic detail the rituals and ceremonies that ethnic groups and individuals deemed as essential in order to relocate graves and ancestral graveyards. The section deals with the various elements of ritual and ceremony in general, before describing, in the context of ethnographic literature on ancestor beliefs and practices, private family homestead rituals and public rituals held just prior to and after graves are opened and human contents removed. Section 6.4, *Exhumation and reburial events*, explores the processes involved in exhuming graves and reburying human remains according to the argument that the process has to be

carried out in a culturally appropriate manner. The discussion includes reference to current legislation and the archaeological perspective. In discussing the actual processes involved in exhuming and reburial I make comparisons between the processes used by forensic archaeologists and that of an undertaker professing knowledge of the particular processes and beliefs that should be observed. The section discusses the specific cultural values for ordinary relocation, and how those cultural values are applied to the exhumation of mass graves, before discussing the cultural requirements observed in the reburial process.

Chapter 7, *Grave causes of disjunction*, assesses the success of the relocation of the Zevenfontein graves in three contexts. Section 7.2, unpacks the dynamics of disputation and negotiation between landowners and grave and homestead owners as extrapolative and significant factors, and the fundamental sociopolitical and economic problematics of grave relocation. My discussion considers the implications of the concept of grave ownership and dispute settlement. I look at how the farm workers and dwellers evaluate the land they once occupied and their notion that grave relocation should include financial compensation. I also introduce the peri-urban realities of demographics, housing and the acquisition of title deed into the land claim discourse. Section 7.3 assesses the relations between ancestors and descendants as a consequence of relocating ancestral graves. The discussion reviews the religious aspects of relocating graveyards and considers whether an ancestral graveyard can be successfully relocated. It also considers how possible disharmony in communication between descendants and ancestor spirits entail sociocultural change and adaptation in order to maintain the Supernatural order. Section 7.4 discusses individual and communal perspectives of the collective in respect of

social relations in the structuring of the collective. The section assesses the sociopolitical and economic function of leadership, and explores the economic opportunities open to people who have graves on farms that have to be removed. It also exposes the potential for manipulation of farm workers and dwellers and/or people with graves by those holding authoritative power.

Chapter 8, *Conclusion*, provides a brief summary of the fulfilment of the aims and objectives of the study, and concludes on the sociocultural disjunctions that the relocation of graves caused to everyday experiences of people to whom graves have tangible and intangible significance.

CHAPTER 2: CONTEXTUALISED METHODOLOGY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on the pragmatics and theoretical context of the research undertaken for the study. Section 2.2 outlines the parameters and relevance of my literature research; Section 2.3 discusses the fieldwork strategy and techniques; Section 2.4 reflects on reflexivity in my experience of data collection; and Section 2.5 deals with ethical considerations.

2.2 LITERATURE RESEARCH: EXTENT AND CONTEXT

I began my literature research by reading the initial newspaper reports on the disputation over Zevenfontein farm graves and following the story in later media publications. The content of the reports suggested topics for an extensive literature research on farm dwelling, burial and eviction, the significance of graveyards, ethnic religious beliefs and practices, processes involved in relocating graveyards, as well as the reading of various theoretical discourses from sense of place to dispute. In this section I briefly explain the scope and relevance of the readings. More detailed references and contextualised use of the literature is provided in the appropriate chapters.

Literature on the religious aspects of burial and graves were found in numerous South African ethnographies categorising religious practices and beliefs according to ethnicity, such as Schapera's (1976, (1953)) study of the Tswana, and Krige and Krige (1954) on the Lovedu and Northern Sotho. The farm workers and dwellers were of various ethnic groups, although predominantly

Ndebele and Tswana, hence, a broad and comparative understanding was relevant, particularly as marriages took place among the farm workers and dwellers across ethnic groups. Furthermore, as rituals and ceremonies formed such an important part of relocating farm graves, a comprehensive understanding of burial and graveside ancestral practices was crucial.

Ngubane (1977) provided insightful analysis and interpretation of Zulu ancestor beliefs and practices and the profundity of the relationship between ancestors and descendants. Mönning's (1967) study of the Pedi and Setiloane (1976) on the Sotho-Tswana were useful for comparative analysis of burial practices among rural groups. Hammond-Tooke's authority on the worldview of South African ethnic societies (1974, 1975, 1993, 1994) provided explanation for many of the rituals I observed. In essence, these studies pertained to the twentieth century and elucidated on burials and ancestor beliefs and practices comparable to the religious expressions of the Zevenfontein farm workers and dwellers.

There were even earlier authors associated with the Christian missions, such as Addison (1924) and Willoughby (1928), who gave insights on ethnic religion in the late nineteenth century. Although very dated they provided evidence on the continuity of certain ancestor beliefs among younger generations. There were also studies, such as Kuckertz (1981), that focus on ancestor religion and the spread of Christianity among ethnic groups. Pauw (1974a) and (1974b) throws light on the syncretism of African and Christian religions among urbanised and semi-urbanised groups. And, although Pauw's studies dealt with the Xhosa, it, again, held comparative relevance for the study, because most of the farm workers practiced a form of syncretised religion.

Specific ethnographic studies on the religious practices pertaining to the removal or loss of graveyards were scant, although undeniably it is referred to in sources on land claims. However, such literature does not extend to the sociocultural or religious impact when ancestral graves are permanently lost. Colson (1971) indicates the problems caused to religious practice as a result of relocation of people from the vicinity of their burial sites and the subsequent loss of graveyard due to inundation. She mentions sociocultural changes and adaptation that were made as the people adjusted to the loss. However, the circumstances encountered by the Gwembe Tonga were not the same as that of the Zevenfontein farm workers. Nevertheless, Colson's observations were useful for interpreting possible sociocultural adaptation and innovation among the Zevenfontein farm workers and dwellers.

There is a body of literature on labour tenancy and eviction from farms, including legislation and archival literature that gives some insight into the circumstances encountered by the Zevenfontein farm workers/dwellers. There are good sources on the labour tenant farm evictions during the apartheid era, such as Harley and Fotheringham (1999) and Surplus Peoples Project (1983) among others that discussed the process of eviction and experience of labour tenants. These sources validated what the Zevenfontein farm workers and dwellers described as their own experiences.

There are enlightening studies, generally post 1994, on South African land claims. For instance, Claassens (1989), Cousins (2000), Claassens & Cousins (2008), Walker, Bohlin & Kepe (2010) and James (2000, 2007, 2009), who has published extensively on the contemporary relevance of graveyards to daily life. However, much of it pertains to existing graves or graveyards as evidence of

claimants' legal argument to restitution of land. Within this category of literature there are also journal articles published on legal cases dealing with the rights of labour tenants to bury on farms and have access to the graves, archival documentation on the holding of title deeds to land, and of course current legislation.

Spiegel (2004), De Jongh (2006, 2007, 2008) and Van Vuuren (2010) bring their own perspectives on issues pertaining to the significance of claimants' sense of place and memory of place and space in South African land claims. Van Vuuren (2010: 9) indicates that 'the discourse on memory and its manifestations in phenomena of land, place and object ...' has considerable contemporary scholarship and mentions such authors as Connerton 1989, Schama 1996, Casey 2000, Wertsch 2002, Jaminez 2003, Ermacher 2004 and Cubitt 2007. Tilley (1999 & 2006) throws light on the relevance of the material artefacts in the landscape and their significance as immaterial symbols of culture in perceptions of sense of place among individuals and collectives.

My turning to the South African land claim sources, such as Spiegel, De Jongh and Van Vuuren, was because the issues the Zevenfontein farm workers and dwellers had with graves and graveyards had the specific South African inferences of land claim. Additionally, the farm workers' oral histories of dwelling, working, marriage, customs and traditions associated with the farm indicated space and place bases to disputation and resultant disjuncture caused by the relocation of their graves. I drew, from readings of Spiegel, De Jongh and Van Vuuren, the essence of argumentation in terms of sense of place and place attachment, and I pursued general studies on sense of place theory in sources such as Rodman (2003) and Low and Zúñiga (2003).

Legislation and documentation pertaining to relocating or removal of graves were of particular relevance to the study. What I sought was relevant legislation and descriptions of conducting exhumations and burial. Heilen (ed.) (2012b), which deals with relocating historical cemeteries in America, was worthwhile as an archaeological textbook for aspects of the River Glen graveyard relocated in 2004. The archaeological report on the heritage assessment of River Glen itself (Coetzee 2004 and Loots 2012) were specifically informative sources, and other heritage reports on the relocation of other graves, such as Van Vollenhoven (2013), were useful for comparison with River Glen as well as a general understanding of farm graves. Saccaggi's (2012) dissertation on legal aspects of relocating graves and his argument that only forensic archaeologists should relocate graves provided valuable comparison for the removal of graves by an undertaker as in this study. Particularly informative was Nienaber & Steyn's (2002) archaeological report on the relocation of some graves from Zevenfontein that were situated within Dainfern Estate, not only for comparative purposes, but also as a means of inferring how Dainfern had dealt with other graves more or less within the research period.

Although I found legislation on removing or relocating graves during the 1980s under the National Party government, I found virtually no other sources throwing light on any farm graveyards that were relocated during that period. Graves of white people were also relocated during that era where land was destined for urban development. But an Internet search for the archaeological reports on any of the graves removed from Zevenfontein prior to 1994 was fruitless. Unless one knew the names of the archaeologists, of which I found no information, carrying out the surveys and making a personal request, such documents could not be found. They may very well have existed, but the South

African Heritage Resources Agency's (SAHRA) electronic database did not extend back earlier than 1994. And, in response to an e-mail enquiry SAHRA could not advise me on any research strategy, because, I was told, it was before their time.

Further theoretical reading focused on dispute, performance and the collectivity. Bailey (1988) was particularly enlightening on the structuring of decision-making groups and the influence of leaders on followers. Amit and Rapport (2002) provided food for thought on the construct of community and the meaning for those who perceive themselves as a community. My reading on performance theory, such as Turner (1987), was insightful on how to interpret the function and effectiveness of the public demonstration, as well as the parameters of public rituals observed at the exhumation of the mass graves.

2.3 FIELDWORK STRATEGY AND TECHNIQUES

2.3.1 Multi-sited and diachronic research

The nature of the study was multi-sited. The principal research sites within the Fourways urban node included River Glen graveyard situated on Portion 246 of Zevenfontein, where I went on daily excursions over limited periods of time to observe exhumations, and Fourways Memorial Park where I observed the reburial of mortal remains. Witkoppen School was a regular research site of the farm workers and dwellers' monthly community meetings. In 2004 the public thoroughfares outside Dainfern became a research site when the farm workers and dwellers held a public demonstration there. In 2006 I observed the exhumation of mass graves in Mamelodi Cemetery, Pretoria, as daily excursions over a short period. A private dwelling in Klipgat, situated in the former

'homeland' of Bophuthatswana, northwest of Pretoria, was the site of a ritual slaughter. I also made excursions from 2007 to 2009 to various graveyards situated on other farms in the broader research area to observe the conditions of graveyards and their juxtaposition to dwelling places. Other sites included the private dwellings of research participants where I conducted interviews. These temporary and dispersed research locations of data collection were, what Hannerz calls, 'short-lived phenomena' (2007: 364-366).

There were two periods of research. The first phase, which ended in December 2006, entailed collecting data on community meetings and various events and activities that occurred between 2004 and 2006. The first phase culminated in the relocation of mass graves from Mamelodi Cemetery, and at the end of that year I registered for the MA degree⁴ intending to focus on ethnography of the pragmatics of relocating graves. However, after a year's hiatus in community meetings, and a single meeting at the end of 2007, the meetings resumed in January 2008 and continued until the end of 2012, beginning of 2013, because the farm workers were dissatisfied with the relocation of the mass graves.

The farm workers/dwellers' objections to the relocation of their graves and the slow progress in negotiating with landowners/developers led to years of disputation. Rather than only the pragmatics of relocating graves, the entire process of disputing became equally, if not more, worthy of investigation. As a

⁴ After registering at the end of 2006 by which time the exhumations were finished, I worked fulltime on writing up the dissertation until the end of 2007. Then, with the commencement of the second research period in 2008, which continued until 2012/13, I could work only part-time on the research and dissertation as I was by then also working part-time as an external lecturer for the Department of Anthropology and Archaeology at the University of South Africa, which I did until end of 2014. Pressure of work caused me to request a two-year break in registration, although, of course, research at meetings continued. I was able to give my time fully again to the dissertation in 2015.

result, my research had to resume and continue until the disputes, having run their course, in some way or other were either resolved or brought to a halt. The back and forth of disputing took many years, since progress could only be made in monthly instalments, that is, as and when the community gathered to discuss what had transpired and to decide on a way forward. In the end because matters appeared to reach an impasse, I concluded my research after the meeting held in January 2013.

Collecting data on the disputes and the negotiations from 2004 to 2006 and again in the second phase from 2008 necessitated my accepting the realities of a diachronic research strategy. Data collecting opportunities depended entirely on the tempo and duration of negotiating processes, as well as the length of time the farm workers were prepared to dispute among themselves and landowners over the relocations. As it is, the meetings continued, but the purpose changed from the relocated graves to the farm workers' intention to apply for a land claim to the farm Zevenfontein. Although I did attend practically all the meetings, and continued at the time of writing to do so when they were held, in case there is any progress in the disputing over to the relocation of the Zevenfontein graves, the application for the land claim does not *per se* form part of the study.

Apart for short daily periods at exhumation sites, data collection was conducted regularly once a month at community meetings and a further two or three days a month when I was conducting interviews. For both the farm-worker research participants and myself, grave relocation and talks about relocating graves were adjuncts to daily life (Hannerz 2007:366). Graves and disputes over graves brought us together with greetings and renewals of acquaintance, polite

exchanges of inquiry and then focus on the issue, followed by temporary partings until the next time. In a sense we did it ‘now and then, fitting it into our lives when we [had] a chance,’ or ‘rushing off to do it as the next instalment of the narrative [was] played out’ (Hannerz 2007:366).

Multi-sited research implied linking and juxtaposing locations in logical association that would define the study’s argument (Robben 2007: 331). That entailed the collecting of oral histories/testimonies, obtaining data from farm workers and dwellers on the dispute with landowners and developers that escalated in a public demonstration, observing the religious rituals and ceremonies needed to restore relationships with ancestor spirits, and the actual processes involved in exhuming graves. It was important, too, to determine the power relations between landowners and farm workers, between township developers and grave owners, as well as distinguishing followers from leaders within the collective.

It is relevant to point out that the study’s research field was not an anthropological construct. The research required following over a number of years a group of grave owners, who had various issues over and disputes with landowners and developers on the removal of the graves of their family members. I was intensively involved with and accepted among the grave owners — former farm workers and dwellers — and allowed to observe their activities and to hear their perspective and sometimes, biased opinions, expressed at meetings. Much of the research data on the disputations were sensitive, and I was not only at pains to protect research participants, but also to avoid interfering with their negotiations in which the farm workers and dwellers held

the less-powerful position. These factors had to be borne in mind throughout the data collecting process.

I made intensive observations of the landowners and developers when they met with the farm workers/dwellers and I spoke with those who were agreeable to being interviewed in situations where I could be observed by the farm workers/dwellers. However, I avoided not only asking them any direct questions on the negotiations, but also interviewing them privately and without the knowledge of the farm workers and dwellers. This stance may have effected limitations to the scope of data collected on the various disputants' perspectives. Nevertheless, I believe it has not compromised the validity or reliability of the study. There was in my view a danger of inadvertently becoming a go-between, which position would have impacted adversely on the scientific objectivity of my findings. As it was, as a result of the continual publicising of the issues and disputes, I was able to garner the developers' perspective from media reports, which I discuss in its relevant chapter. The ethical implication of my research decision not to interact with landowners and developers or individuals with whom the farm workers/dwellers were in dispute is fully discussed in the Section 2.5.2 *Partisan anthropology* of this chapter.

The subject of the study was highly emotive and subjective. Informants' explanations in their oral histories were individualistic, based on their own family or personal experiences. The sociopolitical history of farm dwelling and evictions was recreated from their memories and their perceptions. Although they were subjective, these perceptions were important and valid because they went toward explaining how the families as a group and as individuals dealt with the problems around their graves and the actions they took.

2.3.2 Specific research strategies

I took a holistic approach to data collection using research techniques that varied according to the particular place, time, and circumstances of research. These entailed participant observation, semi-structured interviewing, collecting genealogies and walking the landscape. I wrote notes during meetings. I made written notes and voice recordings during interviews. To collect data on exhumations and reburials and the public demonstration I wrote notes and used a camera, while only the camera was used at the ritual slaughter.

2.3.2.1 Participant observation

There is always a danger during participant observation of ‘observer effect’ (De Jongh 1990: 58), if what constitutes a good anthropological researcher implies a sort of hovering unseen all-seeing recorder. My participant observation of meetings caused some significant observer effect upon the undertaker hired to relocate the graves. For instance, at meetings he usually either summarised in English what the farm workers were discussing or asked me whether I understood what was said. If I said ‘no’ he would explain. Some years later one research participant pointed out, backed-up by others, that some things were said in English specifically so I should understand, at other times the translations, they indicated, were not precise interpretations of what had been said. I was not oblivious to the fact that I was not being told everything that was said, because dissenting farm workers compensated, with due observer effect, for any misinformation by their speaking English. I took this to be ensuring that I was not misled as to what they were saying. In essence the effect of there being

an observer was the extent to which English was spoken by high profile individuals.

It is pertinent to indicate here that the undertaker involved in the relocation of the graves acted as gatekeeper to the community. A study of community meetings, access to a community and its activities generally implies the presence of a gatekeeper, particularly among vulnerable groups and where data is sensitive. In this study, however, the undertaker not only acted as the gatekeeper but in himself also contributed anthropological data. He was a former Zevenfontein farm dweller and an authoritative and influential leader of the group. In this chapter when discussing my interactions with him in respect of conducting fieldwork, I refer to him as 'the undertaker' or 'the undertaker/gatekeeper' implying his role and methodological significance in terms of my research strategy and access to data. In subsequent chapters when he contributes to the dissertation as data in his role as a dominant and significant leader of the farm workers, and his role and actions are discussed anthropologically, he is referred to as 'Undertaker'.

At the first few meetings my role of anthropologist/historian and observer rendered me a certain status with a place being made available for me at the end of the committee's table. I was very conspicuous, and the farm workers and dwellers occasionally asked me to comment on the progress I was making in my research. In fact, although I was eventually able to avoid the committee's table, over the years, at most meetings I was often asked if I had anything to say and whether I was *au fait* with all that had been said. Interestingly, it implied that I was expected to be a sort of engaged 'witness' and not just an observer.

Later, and for the rest of the 2004 to 2006 meetings, when the venue for the meetings moved from the school library to one of the classrooms, I was able to sit more appropriately as an impartial researcher to the side of the room. I positioned myself where I was visible to the committee and the farm workers, but part of neither, and I made notes openly. During the second session of meetings from 2008 to 2012 I was in a way more acceptable as a participant and I sat among the people, but still visible because we all sat around the room, rather than in rows. At these meetings it was openly articulated that they saw my role to be a witness to everything said and done.

Nevertheless, during the early meetings, the significance of my sitting with the committee was equivocal. I was not sure whether it fulfilled a requirement that I should be visible, or made me available as an (authoritative?) anthropologist when landowners and developers were attending, or it was to emphasise my whiteness.

I did not find having to be conspicuous or having to speak at meetings disturbing because while I was researching in Zevenfontein informal settlement (Hill 2001) I was advised that I should attend the Service Providers' meetings. I was told that as a researcher I was in a sense providing a service. Like all the service providers working in the settlement — various welfare organisations and community forums — my report on what I was doing was a regular item on the agenda, and I had to give 'Feedback by the anthropologist'. I would then mention what I had been doing that month in the settlement.

As a researcher I was free to go anywhere in the settlement, speak to whom I liked and take photographs, with or without my research assistant, who was a

resident of the settlement (Hill 2001). But, the security guards at the entrance to the settlement and the Community Development Forum always wanted to know that I was there. I reported to Security when I arrived and when I left. For that reason I did not find the same requirement at the farm workers' meetings a problematic condition of doing research. It was in a sense *quid pro quo*.

My research assistant in Zevenfontein informal settlement was Lucas Mohale, who died in 2014. Lucas was multi-linguistic and fluent in isiNdebele and Setswana. He was well known and respected in the settlement, having contributed to the negotiations between the settlement and Dainfern in 1995. Those negotiations resulted in the settlement remaining until the settlers could be relocated to Cosmo City some ten or so years later. When the community meetings resumed in 2008, I asked Lucas to assist me again. The reason being Zevenfontein and Zandspruit farm workers, particularly those who had lived in Zevenfontein informal settlement, knew him and his mother, and they trusted him. He had also attended the local Riversands School and was known to some of the younger members of farm worker families. I think that I was more readily accepted and trusted after 2008 having him as my research assistant.

During meetings I made notes on what was being said and how people reacted, but not of a meeting in its entirety. I was told that I would be given copies of the minutes of the meetings, but in the end I saw none of them. Since I could understand a little isiZulu and was given a copy of the agenda, which was written in English, it was possible for me to follow the general direction of the discussion, but not precisely what each speaker said. I grasped the main points of the discussion but I did not understand everything that was said. Sometimes reports-back were given in English, such as after the committee had spoken with

landowners and developers, or to lawyers or to the police or when there was a written agreement that was read out to the farm workers.

To compensate for not understanding fully what was said I paid careful attention to meta-language, from which I surmised, there was much argumentation on how the community should proceed, and there were individuals who regularly questioned the course of action. By asking questions after meetings I obtained clarity on what had been said at a meeting and its possible implications. The regular monthly community meetings and individual interviews meant that new data regularly updated the progress of the farm workers' issues. By comparing the 2004-2006 and 2008-2012 meetings I was able to detect the changes in the dynamics of the dispute with landowners and developers and the community and the relationship between leaders and followers (see Van Velsen 2012: 142 on observing changes by comparing different periods of research).

During participant observation of rituals at River Glen I was able to ask the spiritual leader performing the rituals what they signified. But, of the rituals being performed by the elders at Mamelodi I only asked a few questions. I interviewed the chief *isangoma* who led the group of *izangoma* about her role at the exhumations, and the rituals and the objects she used. She had been hired to perform these rituals and therefore had no personal involvement in the mass graves. I also interviewed one of the other *izangoma*, who happened to be a former Zevenfontein farm dweller, about the chief *isangoma's* trance and communication with ancestral spirits. Of the ritual slaughter I only took photographs and returned on another occasion to ask the research participants about what I had captured in the photographs.

During participant observation at exhumations at River Glen, because only two or three family representatives observed the project, I managed to ask direct questions on what was happening, and what they thought was going on. At the exhumations of the Mamelodi mass grave where there could have been about one hundred people watching, because of the sensitivity and emotiveness of the subject, I kept to informal conversation. Although I did interview cemetery officials and discussed the genuineness of the graves with any of the farm workers who themselves broached the subject.

I followed the demonstrators at the public demonstration and my main data collection strategy was observation, making notes and photo documenting what was going on. I had brief and very informal interviews with demonstrators, Dainfern residents and drivers caught up in the marching to Dainfern, the police and security men.

2.3.2.2 Interviews and genealogies

Sadly, some of the elderly former farm workers died before I had the opportunity to interview them and collect their oral histories and genealogies. Interviews were conducted in English, and, from 2008, Lucas, my research assistant translated what I said for participants less fluent in English.

The oral history and genealogy collections were prearranged visits to research participants' homes in Diepsloot, Cosmo City and Klipgat. On one occasion in 2004 my interview with a research participant was held, after a morning of observing the exhumation of graves, over lunch at a local Wimpy in Fourways. In 2006 another research participant and I met to talk at a Fourways coffee shop.

The venues where I conducted interviews with research participants reflected the sociocultural changes that occurred in South Africa post-1994. When De Jongh (1989: 49) was doing research in the 1980s he sometimes found that 'it was not ... considered desirable' to conduct interviews in respondents' homes and neighbourhoods '... because of 'suspicion' and 'fear of intimidation'.

Some research participants invited me inside their homes, while others preferred that we sat outside in the sunshine or shade of a tree. The reason for the latter was because I was a stranger and therefore not taken into the privacy of the house (Hill 2001: 28). A group interview with former Zandspruit farm dwellers held in 2007 in Cosmo City took place outside the main research participant's small state-constructed house. Not only was I a stranger, but also the house was too small to hold such a large group of people. Subsequent interviews and visits with that research participant were usually held outside, but sometimes we sat indoors. The interviews lasted about two hours, and where possible were held with the family elder, sometimes with the entire family, otherwise with younger individuals.

The interviews were semi-structured but open-ended. Prepared semi-structured listed questions were a reliable method of collecting data that were relevant to my study, and also useful to research participants for their own purposes of a land claim. A simplified form of the questions I used for interviews was given to research participants at one of the meetings, so they could write their own personal responses. The depth of information collected was comprehensive, namely, all known familial connections, as well as personal details, date of birth, marriage, death, residence and changes in residence, schooling and occupation (Barnes 2012 (1967): 105; Barrett 1996).

The data I collected were used in writing their oral histories of visits to the graveyards until they were refused access to graves by township developer or landowner. These data subsumed the farm workers' sense of place, giving substance to their argument that eviction and the removal of graveyards caused disruption to dwelling place of the living and resting place of ancestors. The contribution to the study was an emic perspective on individual relationships between farm workers and the farm and on their personal issues with the removal of the graves from Zevenfontein.

Quantitative research techniques were not used, as it was possible to make what statistical summations were necessary from the data collected from the questions. Crosschecking oral historical information was problematic in so far that much information depended on participants' memory. During group interviews, participants discussed facts among themselves before they offered one answer by consensus. The spectrum of the study depended upon how the farm workers generated data and how the data informed an academic discourse.

A 'questionnaire' was formulated specifically for compiling genealogies during interviews, and to give to the farm workers so they could construct their own family trees. The first row in a grid of spaces was for ego's grandparents, a second row of spaces for ego's mother and her siblings and ego's father and his siblings in their respective order of birth, next row of spaces was for ego and his or her siblings in the order of their births, below that a row for ego's children and below that for ego's grandchildren. Research participants were asked for names, dates and places of birth, death and burial, as well as marriages. When I received the genealogy grids from the research participants, I enquired whether there were any earlier ancestors they could name.

I explained the concept of ego to each research participant, who was going to draw his or her relationship to other family members. Although some farm workers tried to complete a genealogy on their own, they found the tiers of spaces extending from ego, where they were to insert a name, confusing. Their vertical memory extended for the most part only to a depth of two generations, and memory of the names of grandchildren was poor. For some research participants completing a genealogy required consultation with other family members.

Barnes (2012 (1967): 112) argues that because some informants might be reticent in naming their own relatives, the research participant should not be ego. I, however, needed to establish ego's relationship to deceased family members and ancestors, and living people to specific farms and graves. I also wanted to see whether there were any marriages between persons living on one farm and persons living on different farms. As it was, the research participants had no problem with naming their relatives because they understood the relevance of personal relatedness to graves and the land in the construction of their heritage.

Irrespective of age, most participants could name their grandparents but were unsure of earlier ancestors. They were more knowledgeable about descendants as far as their grandchildren. They appeared better informed also on their mother's lineage than their father's, and, in some instances, although people acknowledged the affinal and lateral kinship of the extended family, they could not readily recall a common ancestor.

Although there were no major disagreements, surnames needed clarification as female research participants often gave their and their mother's married names, but differentiated children taking their own name from those taking the father's name. Nevertheless, most research participants clearly grasped the concept of a family tree and identified all members of the family by the correct *isibongo* (isiZulu) or *ifani* (isiXhosa) or *sefane* (Setswana) (family or surname).

The expectation of the genealogical data was that it would differentiate deceased vertical and lateral family members revealing the common lineal ancestors. And, thereby, it would demonstrate how two or more individuals could claim the same grave. For instance, a widow could claim a husband's grave, which was also claimed by the husband's brother and his son, which was significant as to who was to receive funds for ceremonies. The genealogical data also gave insight into the demographics of the farm workers as a 'community' dispersed across a farm, and highlighted the principal families with long association with the area (see Kottak 1994: 25).

2.3.2.3 Walking the landscape

On a few occasions interviews were conducted as research participants traced the history of the farms and burial sites through memories recalled by 'walking the landscape'. Excursions were made to the farms and to graveyards as part of the data gathering on the historical background to the farm workers' life on the farms. Participating elders could remember the geography of the research area and related historical anecdotes although the original landscape had changed. The remains of dwelling and burial places provided not only historical reorientation but also memory testing.

Spiegel (2004) and Van Vuuren (2010) draw attention to the value of walking the landscape of the former home of evicted people when exploring oral histories. Spiegel (2004: 3) suggests that memory can 'be constituted through the process of traversing landscape - as if memory is inscribed in and through peoples' feet'. He makes the point that 'differences in the present-day terrain significantly affected the ways in which ex-residents' memories of settlement in the area were constituted during the verification exercise' (ibid).

Walking the landscape was not aimed at verification of a land claim so much as orientation of where dwellings were situated in relation to the graveyards, as well as to personalise the landscape of the farm Zevenfontein according to the memory of participants. It was a useful research strategy to walk or drive with former residents of the farm along tracks and service roads on the farms and ask them to point out places as they were in the past as far as they could recall. The contribution walking the landscape brought to the study was visual stimulation to recalling the geography of the farms and anecdotes of farm life on Zevenfontein and on Zandspruit.

2.3.2.4 Research tools

A cassette audio-recorder was used until 2007 and a MP3 recorder in 2008/9. Copies of cassette recordings were provided as requested, but owing to copyright restrictions on MP3 recording only printed transcriptions were made. A set of printed photographs on the ritual slaughter was given to the research participants, a set of photographs on the River Glen relocation was given to the undertaker, and a set of photographs on the Mamelodi exhumations was given to the committee.

I used a digital camera for the ritual slaughter and the Mamelodi exhumations, which had the advantage of my being able to enlarge images for scrutinising details, and recorded time on the images could be used to calculate how long an event lasted. I was able to capture the temporal and spatial orders of the unfolding sociocultural processes, providing comprehensive insights into what occurred (Collier & Collier 1986: 176-179). The photographs were especially useful for the ritual slaughter because at a subsequent interview I could present the photographs to the research participant and ask for explanations on the significance or meaning of elements in the image. It also allowed the research participant to expand on the relationship between family, descendants and the ancestors with additional information not apparent in the photographs (ibid).

Photographic 'microanalysis' contributed to defining qualitative evidence and refined insights on human behaviour and material culture. Scrutiny of documented exhumations, public demonstration and ritual processes and actors' interactions, postures and facial expressions, ritual objects and clothing, conditions and contents of graves allowed me to assess cultural authenticity and validity, the micro-detail in the broader social field. The images also captured reactivity of people attending events and acting-up for the camera. On presenting images to research participants I could also observe their emotional responses to viewing sensitive images of exhumed human remains. I could compare these responses with those during the actual lived event (see Collier & Collier 1986: 176, 180, 184).

The reliability and validity of cultural and technological data, such as inventories of ritual objects, exhumation tools and forensic record of the exhumed remains, and the historical record of significant events, such as the

exhumation of the Mamelodi mass graves and the public demonstration, depended on my camera's 'fact presenting value' (Collier & Collier 1986: 8). Nevertheless, my photographic data were inevitably selective and subjective, not only in my 'presentation and consumption of anthropological knowledge' but also in my 'production of that knowledge', and the way I 'capture[d] the actuality of the event and establishe[d] the presence of the anthropologist' (Morphy & Banks (1997: 1-2, 10).

2.4 REFLECTING ON REFLEXIVITY

2.4.1 **Alterity and a white-faced researcher**

Reflexivity played no small part in data collection, and it seems appropriate to reflect on my being white and my research participants black. Sluka and Robben (2007: 2) suggest that an anthropologist's reflection on the fieldwork experience allows readers within the discipline to: ...'better understand and evaluate an ethnographic text if we know something about the writer, the experiences upon which the text is based, and the circumstances of its production.'

I was, as Gupta and Ferguson (1997: 35 citing D'Amico-Samuels 1991: 61) say: 'The white-faced ethnographer in a sea of black or brown faces.' However, it was neither a matter of the former farm workers being some 'Other' waiting to be 'observed and written about' (Gupta and Ferguson 1997: 2) nor of my adhering to alterity or a 'traditional' ethnographic study. The issues discussed in the study concerned disparities between white, rich and powerful landowners and development companies and black, poor and disempowered farm workers. Both the farm workers and I lived on sub-divisions of the farm Zevenfontein and the

social field was my own locale, so I, in a sense unintentionally reflected a white voice of the economic elite and powerful side researching the less powerful side.

The construct of exclusion-inclusion subsumed both anthropological observation of the farm workers' activities and participation along their journey of events. It was clear that on the whole the farm workers appreciated my interest in their problem, not just as a researcher, but also as a white researcher. By virtue of my colour, participants associated me with their inter-societal disputants. Yet, their critical generalisations of local white residents and developers excluded me. On the one or two occasions that someone at a meeting made a racist generalisation, the speaker added the proviso of not referring to me. Generally, when the situation arose for such an observation, for instance, as happened at the public demonstration, I was told: 'You are with us.' Thus, as an anthropologist, I not only witnessed the farm workers' problems, but also my regular attendance at meetings and events demonstrated solidarity with their cause.

Nevertheless, in doing research such as this, there were situations in which I found myself alone and culturally far from home. The black-white conflict and the injustices of the past that still visited upon the present lives of the former farm workers provided constant undertones to the study — undertones that were at times disconcerting. For instance, during the 2004 graveyard relocation, I wondered about my being a lone white woman among fifteen black men wielding picks and shovels. Perhaps, I fantasised, in resentment to the destruction of an ancestral graveyard, they might smack me on the head with a spade and summarily conceal my lifeless body in one of the conveniently gaping graves.

Although researching conflict situations can bring the element of danger to an anthropologist (Sluka 2007a), my research situation was not dangerous and at no time did I actually ever feel the least bit nervous or threatened. Yet, a year or so later, at the exhumation of the Mamelodi mass graves (2006), after the gravediggers failed to find any remains in the first two mass graves, the undertaker laughed: 'If nothing is found in this one, we will bury Cherre and go home.' Despite the jest an undertone of many a true word hung in the air as the sounds of picks rang with the former farm workers' anger at the disrespect shown to their ancestors' bones by whites.

Ritual slaughter provided an element of culture shock. Although a meat eater I was, nevertheless, apprehensive about viewing the actual slaughter of an animal. To get myself through the ordeal, I adopted a conservative scientific distancing and avoided looking the animal in the eye. I was struck by the care not to distress the animal, and how quietly, humanely and quickly as possible the deed was done. As Holbraad (2009: 91) argues: 'Anthropology is not about "how we think they think". It is about how we could learn to think, given what they say and do.' In retrospect, it was probably easier to witness that particular ritual slaughter, than to see the same animal dealt with among others at an abattoir, where there may not be comparable humaneness.

The destructive behaviour and vandalism of property at the public demonstration was another instance of culture shock. The deliberate trampling on the plants in the herbaceous borders lining the streets at Dainfern by the younger demonstrators shocked and appalled me. I expressed my disapproval to an ANC representative I knew from the Zevenfontein informal settlement, and

asked him to call upon the youths to stop. Perhaps, I took my inclusion with the group as the right to act as Mrs Grundy⁵.

2.4.2 Reactivity and manipulation

The avoidance, or at least tempering of reactivity among research participants so as not to compromise the validity and reliability of data is always an aim of a good ethnographer. I tried to anticipate and generally encountered little of it other than trivial acting up for the camera by the gravediggers during the relocation in 2004 and young women at the public demonstration. There was, however, a very different sort of reactivity after one of the meetings, while I was arranging to attend the ritual slaughter at a research participant's homestead. The committee secretary demanded to know what we were talking about, to which the research participant sharply retorted that it was not her concern.

At the penultimate meeting held two weeks before the exhumation of the mass graves the undertaker asked me about notes I was making. Since it seemed to be a problem I stopped. He also told the other farm workers that they were 'not to talk' to outsiders and the news media. It seemed strange because there was a cameraman hired to film the meeting. It was a brief meeting the purpose of which was the disbursement of cheques to finance pre-exhumation ceremonies. The camera was there to record recipients signing for cheques, but I was shouldered out of seeing exactly who were getting cheques and any questions I asked were ignored.

⁵ A character of conventional propriety in the comedy by Thomas Morton (1807) *Speed the Plough*.

I wondered if permission for the continuation of my research was about to be withdrawn. On the whole, though, I surmised it reflected the sensitivity of the subject that I was researching. For instance, one research participant said she could not agree to my attending her family rituals as she was not an elder and the rituals would be held at the homestead of the senior members of the family. She would ask whether I could attend and would let me know if it was possible, but that she really did not have any say in the matter.

At the meeting held the day before the start of the exhumations I asked the committee if I could attend the mass graves exhumations and I was told there would be no problem. Although I was willing and expected to transport some of the farm workers in the procession to the cemetery, a woman, whom I did not know, got into my car uninvited and called two other people to get in as well. She did not say anything to me, and my feeling was that I was being watched. The watcher was being watched. To the best of my knowledge I had not done anything to cause offense, and my wariness was sharpened to the possibility that some people might be worried about what I was observing.

I surmised that my observation, particularly of exhumations and reburials, was both, functional if I could be manipulated, but tiresome if I could not. For instance, I was asked to submit a report on the exhumation of River Glen graveyard in 2004. I had made notes on the rituals I had observed, on diggings and finds in the graves, as well as coffins and reburials, and willingly complied. I perceived a need to be gracious, because of the emotive and sensitive nature of what I was studying. At the following meeting I and the farm workers and dwellers were informed that my 'anthropological report' on the rituals that were performed before opening each grave had been given to the

developers/landowners. My inference was that the 'report' provided a sort of validation that the grave relocation had been done according to what the undertaker referred to as cultural requirement.

The reactivity I encountered came from the undertaker, the committee secretary, and some of the younger members of former farm worker families. They were not rude or unpleasant, just evasively questioning of what I was doing, but I was never actually asked to stop my research. For instance, when I asked, even the undertaker said I could still attend the exhumations of the mass graves.

Nevertheless, reactivity to my observations was quite apparent. On the third day of exhumations the secretary asked me to hand over my camera's flash card and compact discs of all photographs taken the previous days. I explained that I could not do that but I would provide printed photographs at the next meeting. I was absent for the next two days, and returned after the weekend. On the second day after the weekend the undertaker said I was to stop photographing exhumed bones because it distressed the elders. It was, he said, culturally offensive. I put away the camera and just made notes on the contents of the graves. But that was objected to as well.

In photographing ancestors' graves and bones, I had taken especial care to not offend or discomfort the elders, regularly checking with different individuals and asking whether they had any problem with what I was doing. I thought it odd to object to my photography because there was a television camera and a photographer, hired by the undertaker, recording the entire project, although I did observe the cameraman was spoken to. When I asked the professional photographer about his photographs, he said, he had also been asked to

handover his flash card and refused. He said he had told the undertaker he would provide edited photographs after the conclusion of the project.

When the undertaker informed me that my photography upset the elders I was concerned and enquired from different spectators, the older women and especially the religious leader whether I had offended them, not only to apologise, but also to understand the emotional responses to the exhumation of their family member's remains. I asked if it was wrong of me to photograph the bones. They all said no, and said that they did not know which elder had demanded I should stop taking photographs. Despite their assurances, I decided to discontinue my research and go home. As I was leaving, a woman told me they had no objection at all to what I was doing and that it was not true that the elders had asked me to stop documenting the event.

In addition to the demands regarding photography the undertaker told me to make a full report of the event and hand it over to the committee⁶. After that, he had no further communication with me, refusing to explain the cultural offence of photographing exhumed bones. Younger family members associated with the undertaker also said that information on the graves removed from Zevenfontein in the 1980s was their intellectual property. I explained I already knew about the graves (Hill 2001) and that they could read about it in a copy of my study that I had given to the Community Development Forum (CDF) of Zevenfontein informal settlement⁷. Whether they checked or not, I do not know.

⁶ I supplied this report in the form of a letter apologising for any offence I might have caused by my documenting the exhumation of the mass graves.

⁷ The CDF secretary told me in 2009 that the report (Hill 2001) is kept in a school library at Cosmo City as an historical document of the life at Zevenfontein informal settlement, and read annually.

I compiled images of Mamelodi exhumations in two large albums for the families and the elders and at the next meeting gave them to one of the committee members. The undertaker was not at the meeting and some of the farm workers looked through the albums. The irony of the objections was that in 2011 I was shown the undertaker's report on the exhumations of the mass graves of which four-fifths of the photographs were copies of mine.

My experience of doing anthropology entailed both my being included as a participant of the group, and being held exclusive as the objective observer of and later witness to the group. The inclusion-exclusion dichotomy reflected professional anthropological distancing on one hand and subjective concern on the other. Amit (2000: 3) notes this ambivalence, saying: 'The tension between the personal and the professional aspects of fieldwork has, however, extended both ways, equally raising concern about integrity of anthropologists' claims of professionalism.'

2.5 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

2.5.1 **General conduct**

At the first community meeting I attended in April 2004 I introduced myself and explained what I wanted to do. I spoke in English, and the groups' leader, the undertaker, who acted as gatekeeper, translated. He told the farm workers that he did not see any problems with my doing the research, so long as I gave an undertaking not to publish or publicise information on graves and the families without first checking with him and the families' lawyers. He also asked that I

provide a letter of accreditation from the Department of Anthropology and Archaeology, University of South Africa.

The former farm workers and dwellers wanted to know how they would benefit from my research. I presented myself as 'anthropologist', but explained my activities as creating a historical record of the removal of the graves. Subsequent reading of Rapport (2010: 85-86) I learned that when he conducted research among rural dwellers and workers, he 'dispensed with the self-description of an anthropologist for something more akin to the local language and local social history'. The farm workers agreed to my attending their meetings⁸ and observing and documenting the relocation of the River Glen graveyard.

I explained anonymity and have used pseudonyms (Anthropology Southern Africa 2005: 142) for research participants and companies as well as names mentioned in media reports. However farms, graveyards and cemeteries and residential estates are identified by their actual names, because these are already in the public domain. I explained and asked permission to use recording devices for audio-recording interviews and photo-documenting rituals, exhumations and reburials and demonstrations. I made a particular point of asking for permission to photograph sensitive situations such as rituals and exhumations, and also asked if I could include photographs in the dissertation.

Informed consent (Anthropology Southern Africa 2005: 142) was sought from individual research participants as well as the collective of farm workers and

⁸ Once I was involved in doing research, I was expected to attend meetings in order to account to the families/farm workers on what I was doing. Similarly in Zevenfontein informal settlement, once I was engaged in research there I was expected to attend the Service Providers monthly meetings (Hill 2001).

dwellers. Everyone was advised that at any time they could ask me to cease my observations and research. They were also informed that they could decline participation, as happened with the person who said she did not think it was possible for me to attend her extended family's ritual slaughter.

In considering my responsibility to research participants (Anthropology Southern Africa 2005: 142) I had to make sure I considered the wellbeing of all the farm workers, dwellers and grave owners and not just the individuals whom I interviewed. The nature of the study entailed a long period of association with research participants and I established a good relationship and deep involvement with individuals and families. Occasionally I donated small amounts of money to help with legal expenses. I engaged with the participants and their issues as empathetically as possible.

Research depended upon participants' goodwill at meetings and events. For that reason I attempted throughout the study not to reduce the importance of the farm workers as people experiencing real life problems to merely participants or subjects of academic enquiry. I believe at the outset and throughout the many years of my research *all* the former farm workers acknowledged my sincerity and regarded my enquiry into the issues around their graves as that of an objective and sympathetic witness. If they had any reservations about me, it occurred at the beginning when I first met people and I was an unknown quantity.

2.5.2 Partisan anthropology

The Anthropology Southern Africa code of ethics (2005: 142) states in protecting research participants, the anthropologist should *anticipate* (my emphasis) harm. It is pertinent, therefore, to explain my decision to take a partisan approach to first-hand data collection on a topic of conflict and dispute between the former farm workers/dwellers and the landowners/developers. Strategically, I opted to pursue a partisan anthropological stance by obtaining first-hand data on the perspective of the farm workers/dwellers. I avoided collecting data directly from developers and landowners on their perspective of the dispute, because I anticipated the possibility of my ending up as a go-between, which could impact on my objectivity and possibly cause harm.

In effect, I refrained from interviewing the landowners and developers, with whom the committee were negotiating. I could have asked for permission from the farm workers and dwellers, but if granted there was a chance my interviewing might compromise the negotiations. Anthropologists have a responsibility to speak out publicly rather than communicate secretly to some but not to others (Berreman 2007: 309). However, without permission from the farm workers and dwellers I could not extend my research field beyond what they could see me doing, because it would have been a form of clandestine research (Anthropology Southern Africa 2005: 143).

Sluka (2007b) makes some pertinent observations on conducting 'partisan anthropology' in conflict zones. He himself conducted research in the violent and dangerous scenario of Belfast obtaining data from one group of the warring factions. He observes (2007b: 290) that the Association of Social

Anthropologists, in such respect, was less concerned by the dangers to which anthropologists exposed themselves than their scientific objectivity. It is Sluka's (2007b) observation on objectivity, which has pertinence to my own situation.

Sluka suggests that 'neutrality' is not always the best stance (2007b: 290). That is, the anthropologist acting as an external spectator/observer of all sides of the conflict, because 'neutrality' can be misinterpreted (2007b: 290). As it was, the topic of study made it impossible to remain 'entirely neutral' as a data collecting 'device' (Collins and Gallinat 2010: 3). Rather, research was 'transitional' (Holbraad 2009: 91), and necessitated my demonstrating solidarity with the entire farm-worker community's cause. For that reason, I considered it strategic to always remain within the sights of the principal research participants, namely the farm workers. I avoided placing myself in a situation where I would have to explain what I had seen or heard from developers or landowners. My reasoning being that a spy is a spy whichever side one operates from, even in the name of ethnographic objectivity, and it was not my role as an anthropologist. I had explained to the farm workers I was there to hear their story, not to assess the rights and wrongs of their perceptions and arguments. And, from the start of my research they conceived my role and interest in their problems as one of concern for their interests. As Sluka suggests, being scrupulously honest with research participants was essential.

Sluka (2007b: 288) argues that the 'people among whom anthropologists do their research have usually never had an anthropologist working in their midst,' and he continues, 'it should be kept in mind that they are naturally going to try to figure out what you are doing there.' Sluka notes that research participants regard the observing anthropologist 'with reference to pre-existing categories',

mentioning among other 'spies' and 'journalists'. As the study demonstrates the farm workers were wary of spies, and, ironically, as the Dainfern security and management when observing my presence at the public demonstration outside the gates to Dainfern Estate indicated, they were wary of journalists.

Sluka (2007b: 290) advises researchers in the field to 'make a substantial effort to counter these public definitions...' by 'a process entailing a conscious effort at impression management'. He emphasises 'avoiding acting in ways that might reinforce these suspicions.' Since the developers and landowners were white, from the farm workers perspective, my being white could have been the sort of thing to which Sluka refers. By interviewing the economically more powerful white landowners and developers in the absence of the less economically and politically powerful, in the context of the study, black farm workers could have been an act that would have raised the suspicion of my being a 'spy'.

Interestingly, James (2007: 84) experienced the same sort of concern from her research participants at community meetings she attended on graves, where there was another group also interested in the same graves.

Although Sluka notes researching in conflict situations does not necessarily entail being partisan and that sympathising with the cause suffices (2007b: 291), he argues that the ethical implications are dependent upon the anthropologist's appraisal of the situation. He emphasises the value of identifying with the principal research participants 'interests', and 'understanding and sympathising with their problems and grievance, and showing them that you are willing to act accordingly' (2007b: 291).

Furthermore, Sluka (2007b: 289) also mentions that anthropologists need to be adaptable to situations. In my own research scenario what had originally appeared quite straightforward ethnographic data collection, took a turn when grievances included the projects, and research participants openly stated their suspicions that there was of a spy sitting amongst them at the meetings. And, having made that observation, I was immediately questioned on what I knew of landowners/developers actions. Fortunately, I had already, as Sluka (2007b: 289) advises, revised my strategy according to the particular situation and had not held any interviews with Dainfern landowners/developers.

As Berreman suggests (2007: 307) my ethical response depended on making moral choices during the research process, putting the interests of those being studied first where I perceived there may be a conflict of interest (Berreman 2007: 310). Furthermore, I was researching a topic where there were unequal power relations. I took note of my own moral acts where there was risk to the research participants and the former farm workers as a group (2007: 311). I had also to be constantly alert not to be placed in an advocacy role in a situation— negotiations — of which I had no experience or skill. The committee had in any case made it clear when representatives of the landowner and developer, who attended the community meetings, that I was an observer, an anthropologist conducting research.

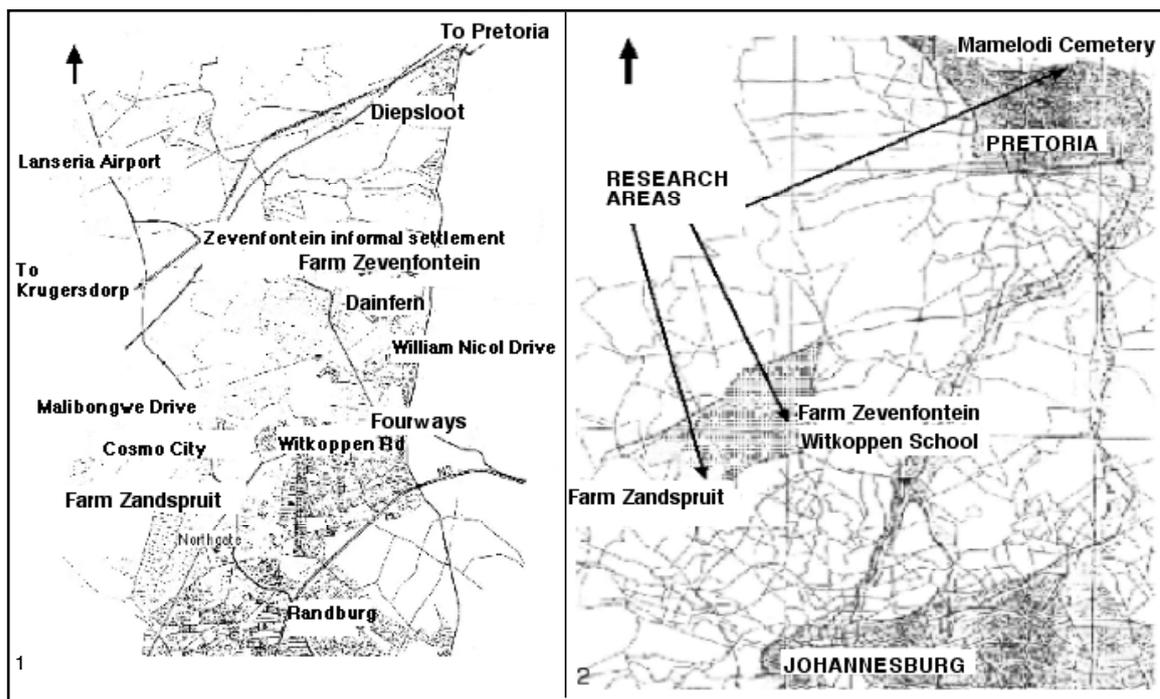
In writing the dissertation I have attempted to consider the reflexive impact on the data collection and analysis process, foregrounding the experience of the former farm-worker research participants and at the same time making myself as data collector explicitly clear and present (Collins & Gallinat 2010: 4).

CHAPTER 3: GEOGRAPHICAL CONTEXT AND ORAL HISTORIES

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The intention in Chapter 3 is to locate in Section 3.2 the geographical orientation of the research area and contextualise the farms where the former farm workers and dwellers lived. Section 3.3 gives voice to the former Zevenfontein and Zandspruit farm workers/dwellers' subjective perspectives of lived experiences through which they inscribed the farms with unique meaning.

3.2 GEOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL ORIENTATIONS



Map 3.1 Farms Zevenfontein and Zandspruit indicating relationship between rural areas and urban nodes of Fourways and Randburg (modified map of Gauteng, Government Printer 2006)

Map 3.2 Northern Gauteng showing Mamelodi Cemetery in northeast Pretoria in relation to farms Zevenfontein and Zandspruit (modified map of Gauteng, Government Printer 2006)⁹

⁹ The above sketch maps serve to orient the reader as to the general area of research and the location of the farms Zevenfontein and Zandspruit, as well as the distance between Mamelodi Cemetery and the farms

The farms Zevenfontein and Zandspruit are situated in northern Johannesburg, almost in the centre of Gauteng. The N14 to the north, William Nicol Drive to the east, Witkoppen Road to the south and Beyers Naude Drive to the west bound the Johannesburg research area in its broadest parameter.

The full extent of Zevenfontein 407 JR extends across both sides of William Nicol Drive. The western half which pertains to this study lies on both sides of the meandering Jukskei River and mainly to the west of William Nicol Drive, bounded by Cedar Road to the west, Witkoppen Road to the south and the farms Rietvallei 538 JQ (Rietvallei) and Diepsloot 388 JR (Diepsloot) to the north. The farm Zandspruit lies to the west of Zevenfontein on both sides of Malibongwe Drive and west of Beyers Naude Drive with Witkoppen Road as its southern border. The Sand River, a tributary of the Klein Jukskei River, itself a tributary of the Jukskei River, divides the farm into northern and southern portions.

A government survey in 1957 noted that as there was no policy to control the size of farms, landowners were free to subdivide their farms into smaller portions and holdings (Republic of South Africa 1957: 16: 119). The subdivision of the southern Transvaal farms (Gauteng) into smallholdings began after World War One and peaked in 1922 and again in 1926 (Republic of South Africa 1957: 7: 41(i)).

Roads in the farmland areas of Johannesburg were characterised as 'reasonable to bad' (Republic of South Africa 1957: 9: 62). In 1972 William Nicol Drive running north south and Witkoppen Road running east west, whose intersection was the toponymous Fourways, were gravel roads in the process of being tarred. Traffic was minimal comprising mainly commuters from the smallholdings and

farms. There was no public transport, and a motorcar, which most white residents owned, was essential. Farm workers, living and working on the smallholdings and farms, journeyed by foot along gravel roads leading to smallholdings or along footpaths they had trampled into the veld.

Zevenfontein already comprised large and small agricultural holdings at the time when my parents bought one of the Broadacres agricultural smallholdings of Zevenfontein in 1972. At that time Zevenfontein lay outside the Johannesburg municipal boundary but within the magisterial district of Randburg. The northwestern Johannesburg smallholdings were so-called 'gentlemen's estates'. Many had 'beautiful residences' and grounds where landowners kept horses among other animals (Republic of South Africa 1957: 8: 47). Some landowners, such as my father, worked in town and lived in the country (Republic of South Africa 1957: 8: 51).

The arability of much Johannesburg farmland, such as Zevenfontein, was considered poor, a 'large and virtually useless area of veld grazing' suitable for 'trek oxen, donkeys, sheep and goats', (Republic of South Africa 1957: 27: 259). If I looked toward the eastern portions of Zevenfontein from where I lived I could see livestock on the Jukskei River's western valley slope. According to a research participant living in Zevenfontein informal settlement and whose cattle and goats roamed Zevenfontein, there was good all year 'soft' grazing on the farm and green forage along the banks of the river during winter (Hill 2001: 33).

At the Fourways intersection there was a service garage, pharmacy, hardware store and newsagent-café¹⁰, and across William Nicol Drive there was a greengrocer. The newsagent-café sold everyday necessities, such as, newspapers, cigarettes, snuff and tobacco, daily fresh bread and milk, frozen, dry and tinned foodstuffs, nonalcoholic beverages, barbecue wood and charcoal and simple takeaway meals, such as sandwiches and pies. White customers entered the shop. The black customers were served from a window. The hardware store catered for local *maplotters* (smallholders), subsistence farmers and stable owners.

A kilometre or so north of Fourways on William Nicol Drive there was a farm school, known as Witkoppen School. About three kilometres north of the school, close to the Jukskei River, in an area now covered by Dainfern, there was a popular *spaza* (a small tuck shop) that sold similar provisions to the newsagent-café, usually packaged in small quantities, to the local farm workers and their families. It was the closest shop for many farm workers living on local farms.

3.3 ORAL HISTORIES OF THE FARM DWELLERS

3.3.1 Case study 1 Gosego Buthatele

Tswana-speaking Gosego Buthatele was born in 1924 on the farm Witkoppen 194 IQ (Witkoppen), which is located between the farms Zevenfontein and Zandspruit. He identified his birthplace and where he grew up on one of the

¹⁰ Café in South Africa refers to a small or corner grocery shop.

Craigavon agricultural holdings of Witkoppen by its eponym of Campbell¹¹, and that of his wife, Rethabile, of Nel. After he and Rethabile married in the 1950s they moved to the farm Zevenfontein, to Hans (Portion 246). They lived on Hans until they were forcibly removed in the 1980s to Klipgat in the so-called Bophuthatswana homeland, northwest of Pretoria, nowadays part of North Western Province. They continue to live there with one of their daughters and their son and grandchildren. The Buthateles have six living children all of whom were born on Zevenfontein. Two sons died after the forced removal and were buried in Klipgat. One daughter Lesebe is married to Tabo and they live in Cosmo City, a low income-housing suburb constructed on the farm Zandspruit.

Gosego's mother was born circa 1906 on Douglas, situated south of Witkoppen Road and also part of farm Witkoppen, where her parents lived. They died in the 1930s and were buried on Campbell, and since Gosego's mother worked for Nel, she was buried in 1976 on Nel. Gosego's father was born northeast of Fourways on the farm Randjiesfontein 405 JR (Randjiesfontein). He worked as a cleaner for a school in Linden (a suburb south of the research area) and when he died in 1976 he was buried in Dobsonville cemetery, Soweto. Gosego's father's parents, who also died in the 1930s, were also buried on Campbell, and one of his mother's mother's sisters, who died as a child, was buried on Douglas.

Gosego worked as a builder and driver for Hans. He first lived at Losmacherrie, a group of dwellings provided by Hans for his farm workers, which developed into an informal settlement during the late 1980s. In the 1960s Gosego moved from Losmacherrie closer to the Jukskei River where he built a brick house. He had a

¹¹ Farm workers and dwellers either referred to farm names or identified the eponymous landowner.

well nearby where he drew water and an area of land set-aside for him to keep fowls and goats and grow vegetables. According to Gosego the workers were allowed to construct brick houses on the farm and raise families.

Because the family lived on Hans, Gosego was allowed to bury two of his wife's sisters' children in River Glen graveyard. His own brothers were buried in the 1970s on the golf course (Dainfern). According to what Gosego heard at the community meetings when he first attended in 2003, the human remains from the golf course were interred in a mass grave in Mamelodi Cemetery.

According to Gosego, prior to his death 'Hans wrote a letter', which was delivered to the Alexandra Department of Home Affairs giving Gosego permission to live in his house until his own death. Nothing is known of what happened to this letter after Hans died in the 1980s. Gosego believes that Hans 'gave' him the land, referring to his small piece, as his own home and that 'he told them at the pass office' that the land was 'registered' to him. Despite the letter Gosego and his family were forcibly removed from the farm Zevenfontein by the 'GG-men' in the 1980s. 'GG-men' was the name used by farm dwellers and workers who were forcibly removed during the apartheid era. It referred to the Government Garage vehicle registrations of local and national governmental authorities enforcing eviction notices by conducting forced removals.

Gosego attended the burials of his mother and brothers in the 1970s. The family and the people living around attended the burials. The men dug the 'hole' for the corpse; a cow was killed for the deceased and eaten by the people attending the funeral. There was also beer, cakes and non-alcoholic drinks. Gosego and his family are members of the Zionist Christian Church (ZCC church) and in keeping

with their beliefs the ancestors were very much part of their everyday life. After the burials Gosego communicated with his deceased relations, asking them to go from the graves to the homestead on Hans. After he and his family were forcibly removed Gosego visited the graves and invited his ancestor spirits to accompany him and his family to the new dwelling place in Klipgat.

As a result of the township development of the Douglas and Campbell properties the graves were removed, but exactly when and to where Gosego did not know. His mother's grave and that of her brother were also 'missing' from Nel. Gosego was not informed before the construction of the cluster houses on the Nel and Campbell smallholdings and no one could explain what happened to the graves. Gosego last visited his graves in the 1980s. When he tried again after his relocation in 1994 all the graves were gone. He was told the graves of the white Nel family were relocated to Fourways Memorial Park, but no one could tell him what happened to his family graves. Campbell's property was undergoing development and when Gosego spoke to the construction workers, they said the owner/developer was not there. He was told he was 'making trouble', so he went home, he said.

The graves Gosego had knowledge of being removed were his mother's sister's children and one of his brother's from Hans whose mortal remains were reburied in Fourways Memorial Park in 2004. When Gosego first discovered that his Dainfern graves were missing, he 'heard' they had been taken to Krugersdorp. He went to Krugersdorp, but could not find them. Gosego did not know what he should do when he could not visit his graves. He was confused, sad, and upset. 'It is very bad for the children,' he said. 'There is nowhere to report. It's the law to go to the grave.' By 'the law' Gosego meant the obligation

to inform ancestors at their gravesite on such occasions as births, marriages and deaths in the family in accordance with his religious beliefs in the ZCC church.

Gosego continued to visit and can still visit his father's grave in Dobsonville, as usual, after moving to Klipgat, but none of the others after 1994. Although ancestors are omnipresent and Gosego can speak to his father's spirit at both the graveside and at his homestead, he used to visit the grave because on certain occasions he needed to go where the bones rested. He could not do this for his mother because her grave was missing. However, he can communicate with her spirit at his homestead because of the ritual that guided her spirit to Klipgat.

3.3.2 Case study 2 Mmusi Dladla

Mmusi, who also spoke Setswana, was born on a North Riding agricultural smallholding of the farm Witkoppen in 1944 where his mother was a domestic worker. He did not know the name of the white owner. His father, who referred to the place as '*My grond*' ('My land' in Afrikaans), was born on the farm Rietfontein (these days the suburbs of Rivonia and Bryanston). In the 1950s Mmusi, his father and his father's father, who was from Matudi in Botswana, lived on Columbus, one of the Chartwell agricultural holdings (Houtkoppen 193 IQ (Houtkoppen)) west of Zevenfontein and Rietvallei, where they raised a herd of cattle. According to Mmusi, blacks working or living on farms in those days were sometimes allowed to keep cattle and some farm workers acquired substantial herds.

Mmusi's mother and his father's father died in 1962. In 1967 when his father was 'chased away' by the landowner the remaining family moved to

Zevenfontein on the western side of the Jukskei River where they erected shacks and kept goats. In the late 1980s other people evicted from farms joined them and shacks mushroomed to become the Zevenfontein informal settlement (see Hill 2001). In 2005 Mmusi moved to Cosmo City where he holds title deeds to a Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) house.

Mmusi's father's father was the first person in the family buried 'on the golf course'. The actual site of the grave, according to Mmusi, was where the Dainfern crèche was later constructed. Mmusi's father 'gave thirty-three rand' for the grave plot. Mmusi also bought the grave plot for his father when he was buried in 1983. His mother was buried on the farm Nietgedacht 535 JQ (Nietgedacht), which is situated to the northwest of the research area. Mmusi does not know what happened to any of these graves.

Mmusi explained that he used to visit his mother's grave on Nietgedacht and his father's and his father's father's graves on Zevenfontein to communicate with his ancestor spirits. He used to go occasionally, once a month or 'when things were going wrong, to ask "why?"' The grave was, he said, the only place where he could communicate with the dead because the graves were where the dead were 'lying in their beds'. He used to visit the graves 'early in the morning'.

Although an ancestor spirit may not be concerned about where its bones are resting, Mmusi said, it is angered when its descendant does not attend to the place where they lie. The burden of attending graves, to give thanks, offer prayers, water and snuff weighs solely on the descendant, and only he or she can be punished for the neglect, he said. According to Mmusi paying respect to

his ancestors was important because they gave him his 'life' and they were the line through which he claimed his 'identity'.

He last saw his father's father's grave in the 1970s and last visited his father's grave in 1992. The latter grave was the only one remaining after others around it were removed by 'earth moving machinery' according to a 'witness', Mmusi said. Mmusi thinks his father's grave was not relocated among the others because it was surrounded by bricks and covered with concrete chips and resembled the grave of a white person rather than the characteristic farm grave that is surrounded by stones. There was no inscription on a headstone because Mmusi could not afford one.

The missing graves Mmusi was concerned about were those of his mother, his father and his father's father. In the late 1970s with the disappearance of father's father's grave neither father nor Mmusi took any action. They did not know where to seek help. Because both his father's and his father's father's graves were 'missing', Mmusi said, he was 'in the danger zone'. By danger zone Mmusi meant that his neglect of his lineage graves exposed him to misfortune from his disgruntled ancestors.

In 1992 Mmusi spoke to locals about his graves but at the time of research these people had either moved away or were dead. Like Gosego he did nothing about the missing graves. He did not attend any of the community meetings. He thought that the 'Government' should 'pay', and he wanted 'one hundred thousand rand' for each missing grave because 'they made me suffer'. The mixing of the bones of his father's father and possibly his father's with other

people's bones in a mass grave denied him not only his 'identity' but also his right to speak with his ancestors.

3.3.3 Case study 3 Bheka Mfene

Bheka spoke both Setswana and isiZulu and had been living in Cosmo City since 2005/2006. He was not sure which year he relocated from Zevenfontein informal settlement. He said he had trouble recounting his story, because he had not had much schooling. What he could remember was that his mother came from 'Bechuanaland' (Botswana). He did not know where his father was born, but Bheka was born, and at one time lived, with his father on 'Witkoppen Mr Short'.

Bheka did not know his age unless someone looked at his identity document and told him, because he cannot read. His South African identity document was issued in 1994, and it meant he could vote in the first democratic elections. It gave his birth year as 1949, although Bheka looked older. He said he queried the date at Krugersdorp Home Affairs who said it was the date in his *dompas*, an identity document that all black South Africans carried during the apartheid regime from the age of sixteen years. According to Mpho Msuthu (Case study 8) a person could apply for a *dompas* at any age after they had turned sixteen. When a *dompas* was issued, however, the age stated in the document 'was always "sixteen years",' she said, despite the real age of the applicant. 'Krugersdorp said I must live like that' and that 'there's no mistake', said Bheka. Even his sister was given the same birth date, although they are not the same age. He did not know why they said what they did.

As a child, Bheka lived on Short, where there were cattle. Sometime in the 1960s, he 'ran off to Brits' because his father was 'a rough man and he hit and he smacked me on the head'. This happened 'a long time ago, before Short died'. After his father died in 1970 and Bheka was a young man but still unmarried, he returned to the area, and lived and worked as a garden labourer in Chartwell¹².

Bheka's father, while he was still living on Short, had started working at 'Gary Player', the golf course situated on Zevenfontein. After the golf course was sold to Dainfern, his father worked at 'Rooivaal' (Blair Athol, which used also to belong to Gary Player), situated northwest of the research area. When Bheka's father died in the 1970s he was buried on 'Gary Player', referring to the Zevenfontein golf course. Bheka did not attend the burial. He last saw his father's grave in the 1990s. He did not see or know anything about the grave being removed. The first he and other people knew about it, he said, was when they saw the development being done and houses being built.

After his father death Bheka's mother, moved to Sophiatown, in central Johannesburg. When she died in 1975 Bheka buried her on 'Rooivaal' (Blair Athol) because his father used to work there. Bheka saw her remains exhumed in 2005 (when Blair Athol was sold and developed as a nature reserve housing estate), and reburied in Fourways Memorial Park. Before his mother was exhumed from Rooivaal, Bheka slaughtered a sheep at his shack in 'Sgodi Phola' (a colloquial term for Zevenfontein informal settlement, see Hill 2001).

¹² It is possible he meant Chartwell agricultural holdings, but I have heard people (other than the research participants) call Zevenfontein and various agricultural smallholdings Chartwell.

It was during the exhumation of his mother's grave that Bheka heard that meetings to discuss the removal of the Dainfern graves were being held at Witkoppes School. Bheka said he was a 'poor man' and 'suffering' because of the 'trouble' with what had happened to his father's grave. Misfortune from his ancestor spirits caused the mistake with his age as indicated in his identity document, he said. The misfortune from his ancestors due to his failure to take care of his father's grave was not receiving a state pension when he really turned sixty years of age. Because of this misfortune he still had to work because he needed money, although he was not well enough to do so.

3.3.4 Case study 4 Mandla Sokhulu

Mandla, who is Ndebele, was born in 1925 on the farm Doornrandje 386 JR (Doornrandje), northwest of Diepsloot. He lived there with his late parents. His father was buried on Doornrandje and his mother and two brothers were buried in KwaNdebele. Three of his children are buried in the township of Soshanguve. Mandla lived on the farm Zevenfontein among other Ndebele farm workers and dwellers in a row of dwellings referred to as 'the amaNdebele' by Dumisani (Case Study 13). From within his dwelling quarters Mandla, an African church leader and traditional healer, ministered to his church followers.

In his own written testimony Mandla stated:

I was born 1925/03/13 at Doornrandje. At the age of 31 years old in 1956 I moved from Doornrandje to Sewerfontein (sic) [Zevenfontein] looking for a job. I was fortunate to arrive at [Hans's] farm. And I was hired and started my first work without an ID ('dompas' (sic) at that time). A year later in 1957 [Mr Hans] applied for an ID [*dompas*] document for me.

At the age of 33 years old in 1958 I got married to my late wife [Mrs LSS]. In our marriage we were blessed with six children: 1st: 1959/05/21 [JSS], 2nd 1963/10/12 [ESS], 3rd 1966/07/06 [MPS], 4th 1970/01/21 [JS], 5th 1974 (sic) [JS] and 6th 1976/09/17 [DS]. All my children were given birth there at Sewerfontein. My boss [Mr Hans] was blessed with three kids, 1st [MS], 2nd [FS] and 3rd [SSF]. In 1981 [Mr Hans] passed away and in 1982 his wife passed away, too. We were then left under the supervision of the kids. Of which [SSF] took control of the farm. [SSF] suddenly sold the farm without informing us. Instead, she evicted us.

I asked about my services as a general labourer to be paid without any luck. She refused and told us to look for a place to stay. She'll build a house for me. Early in 1990 I moved from Sewerfontein to Soshanguve to locate my family. Where I thought she'll build as she promised (sic). A couple of years later I made my follow-ups about the promise. Instead her husband [Mr F] threatened to kill me and straight without hesitation told me 'Kaffir gaan sê Mandela. Sal vir jou 'n huis bou.' ['Go and tell Mandela. He will build a house for you.'] Until now nothing has happened.

3.3.5 Case study 5 Xolani Ndelu

Three generations of Xolani's family were born on Zevenfontein. They lived in the amaNdebele dwellings, which were situated southeast of the Hans's farmhouse. Xolani's mother's father had a cattle kraal, which was situated southeast of the amaNdebele dwellings. Xolani was born 1966, his mother was born in the 1940s, his father was born in 1934 and his mother's father was born circa 1920. Xolani's family also included his father's father, who was born in 'Hennops Doornrandje'. Xolani was not sure where his father's mother was born, but her *isibongo* (clan name, equivalent to a surname) had a long history of dwelling in the surrounds of the farm Zevenfontein. The family lived on Hans because Xolani's father, mother's father and father's father worked for Hans.

Xolani attended Riversands School. 'The school', Xolani said, 'was sponsored by W, who started the Itereleng School,' in School Road. The teachers at Riversands School were RS and his wife. Xolani attended high school in KwaNdebele.

In 1985¹³ after Hans had died, when Xolani was nineteen years old, the 'GG trucks' took the family to KwaNdebele. With little warning: 'The trucks came during the morning at the weekend.' After leaving the farm Xolani settled in the Zevenfontein informal settlement and now lives in the township of Diepsloot developed on the farm of that name¹⁴. He first worked for a butcher in Randburg and later in Roodepoort and then Kya Sand, an industrial area west of Zandspruit. Xolani's father, who died circa 2011, lived in Soshanguve.

Father's father and mother's father were buried on Gert (the golf course), which became part of Dainfern. Mother's mother was also born on Doornrandje and was buried in KwaNdebele. Xolani did not know the dates when his mother's and his father's fathers were buried on Gert, but he remembered a family burial when he was about twelve or thirteen years old, circa 1978 or 1979. Xolani thought that the remains of his parents' fathers were possibly among those exhumed from Dainfern in the 1980s and re-interred in the mass graves in Mamelodi Cemetery and among those re-exhumed and re-buried at Fourways Memorial Park in 2006. His father did not receive any money 'from the government' for the relocation to KwaNdebele or financial compensation from the family of the landowner.

¹³ Actual dates vary in the testimonies, some to the year of death and others to year of eviction/forced removal.

¹⁴ Originally, in 1994, the Zevenfontein informal settlers were to be relocated to Diepsloot, but following land invasions not everyone could relocate there. Cosmo City was established later to accommodate people from the settlement, who did not go to Diepsloot (Hill 2001).

3.3.6 Case study 6 Nonhlanhla and Thandi Mhlophe

Sisters Nonhlanhla and Thandi were born on the farm Zevenfontein, Nonhlanhla in 1940 and Thandi in 1945. Their parents were JS and ES, who Nonhlanhla said were both born on Doornrandje, but Thandi said their mother was born in the 1920s on Zevenfontein. At some time the sisters lived on Doornrandje with their father, before returning to live with their mother on Zevenfontein. Today, Thandi and her husband live in Kwaggafontein, Mpumalanga Province and Nonhlanhla lives in Doornrandje.

The sisters' mother and one of Nonhlanhla's children were buried on Zevenfontein, and their father on Doornrandje. According to Nonhlanhla, one of her brothers was buried on a farm north of the research area. Thandi was more specific saying two brothers, DS and SS, a sister, MS, and two of her children, were buried in Mpumalanga Province. Another sister, NS, was buried in Vandyksdrift, Mpumalanga Province.

The sisters' memories of dwelling on Zevenfontein also differ because they lived, they said, as married adults with their children on different portions of the farm owned by different landowners. In her account Nonhlanhla wrote: 'I was living on a farm [Zevenfontein]. We lived for years. The house was built on a farm. The owner was called Maurie. The house had three rooms. We grew vegetables and kept a dog. I lived with my husband and children. We do not live there now. There was a church near where we lived. It was good. There was a minister, Mr M. He lived in Soweto. The church is not there anymore. The church is now in Soweto.'

Nonhlanhla attended the local Witkoppen School. 'It was good. The school is still there. I still see people from the school.' Nonhlanhla was not employed on the farm and she stayed at home. After Maurie died, the farm was sold. 'When the farm was sold, I don't know who bought the land. We moved to Bossa, Winterveld' (north of Pretoria, part of the erstwhile KwaNdebele homeland). Nonhlanhla and her family were told they had to leave because the farm was sold. It was not their choice to leave and Bossa was a poverty stricken informal settlement, but an area where ex-farm workers could erect shacks. 'We hired a truck and went with it. We were not forced to move. They were nice and good they didn't force us. There were no GG trucks. It was this one move.' They did not receive any money when they moved, nor was any offer made to remove the graves to the new home.

The graves were removed later. 'They took all the graves they didn't notify us.' Like many others, Nonhlanhla's graves were important to her. 'They are so important. We do what we call *ukuphala*, talking to the ancestors, when we had problems.' The land, *umhlaba*, was also important: 'Because we live and do everything we want [there].' In contrast to Nonhlanhla, when Thandi was asked what *umhlaba* signified, she attached no significance to the term and translated it as a 'piece of land'.

Thandi said she lived on Zevenfontein farm with her mother as a child. When she was grown up she lived in Mabopane, near Pretoria, before moving to Kwaggafontein, Mpumalanga. When the family lived on Hans, her family had a mud-brick house, with small rooms. They grew vegetables and kept animals. The family of eight persons lived in the house. The place was their home. Like her

sister, Thandi attended Witkoppen School, but unlike Nonhlanhla, she did not maintain contact with former school friends after she moved.

Thandi did not work on the farm, someone in the family worked for Hans. She worked in Bryanston (south of the research area). After Hans died, the farm was sold. When the farm was sold the family had to move. No reason was given why they could not stay. The GG trucks moved them. It was not their choice to go. They went to Pretoria. Thandi could not remember the date of the forced removal, when they were transported away on trucks. They received no financial compensation. 'There were no graveyards on the portion of land where I lived. My mother's grave was removed from where it had been on the farm Zevenfontein. The graves are important because they are our ancestors'.

3.3.7 Case study 7 Busisiwe Mthiya

Busisiwe Mthiya, who died in 2012, spoke isiZulu. She was born in 1971 on Hans where she lived as a child and as an adult, and where her father worked.

Busisiwe's mother was born in 1935 in Lesotho, and her father was born the same year, in Kingsmead, KwaZulu-Natal, (at that time Zululand). Busisiwe's father left his birthplace 'in 1947 when he was 12 years old because of the fighting in Durban'¹⁵ and accompanied his older brother first to Nigel, south east of Johannesburg, because they knew people there. 'When grown, [father] came this side' to the northwest of Johannesburg.

¹⁵ Although there was Indian defiance in 1947, violent racial conflict occurred in Durban in 1949 (South African history online, 2015).

Their house on Zevenfontein was made of cement bricks. It had six rooms, including bedrooms and a sitting room. They had dogs, cats and fowls. Busisiwe attended Witkoppen School and the family's church was by the river under the trees. It was an apostolic faith church. Later her mother left that church and joined the Roman Catholic Church in Sloane Square in Fourways. Other people Busisiwe remembered living on Hans were Gugulethu Ngidi's family (Case study 10), Dumisani Mnguni (Case study 13) and family and Mandla Sokhulu and his family (Case study 4).

Busisiwe's family was evicted from Hans in 1978. The GG trucks people knocked down their house, she said. The family eventually went to Zevenfontein informal settlement, where at the time of her testimony (2008) she lived and was awaiting an RDP house in Cosmo City. Both her mother and father were buried in Tembisa. Her brother and sister, who died in 1977, and her mother's brother, who also worked for Hans, were buried in River Glen graveyard. Their remains were exhumed in 2004 and reburied at Fourways Memorial Park. She used most of the money she received for rituals to erect tombstones for her parents' graves.

3.3.8 Case study 8 Mpho Msuthu

Mpho Msuthu, who speaks South-Sotho and was born in Ferndale (a suburb of Randburg), was named after her mother who died when she was born. Her father was born in Chartwell and died in 1988. He was buried in Alexandra (a black township southeast of the research area). Mpho did not know when or where her mother was born but she was buried in Mnandi agricultural holdings (Knoppjeslaagte 385 JR), northeast of Zevenfontein.

Mpho lived in Randburg with her mother's mother. After her grandmother's death in 1965 Mpho aged nine years went to live on Koot (also referred to as 'Gert', Zevenfontein) with her mother's brother and his wife, who worked for Koot. Early in the 1970s Koot sold his Zevenfontein property and moved with his son, Gert Jr, to Witkoppen, to a portion of the farm later to become Fourways Memorial Park. Mpho's family and Jabulani Ngidi's family (Case study 10), moved to the farm Witkoppen.

When the Witkoppen property was sold Mpho, her uncle and her aunt voluntarily moved to Mabopane, near Pretoria on the border of North West and Gauteng provinces (formerly part of the apartheid homeland of Bophuthatswana) where Mpho's uncle and aunt bought property. Mpho married and she and her husband live in Diepsloot with their three children.

Mpho, like Bheka (Case study 3) and some other farm workers/dwellers who were not sure of their correct age, disputed her age. 'So, many people have an identity document in which their age is given one or more years younger than they really are.' There was nothing that could be done about it, because many affected persons do not have birth certificates, she said. Mpho believed she was born on 1 December 1956, and yet her identity document stated her date of birth as 8 October 1958. The latter date was transferred from her old apartheid passbook (*dompas*), which was issued at age 'sixteen' (see Case study 3). Like all farm workers/dwellers/labour tenants she carried her *dompas* at all times. It permitted her to live and/or work on a white farm.

Mpho started attending the community meetings for the graves in 2004 to show support for Jabulani Ngidi and his family to whom she was related. She did not

go to all the meetings because she was working. It was only recently that people who knew her aunt's husband, FP, told her that he had been buried in 1966 on Koot's and that his remains would be among those re-interred in the Mamelodi mass graves. FP was from Malawi and worked as cook for Maurie, whose property lay adjacent to Koot/Gert, the boundary being the Jukskei River. People working for both Koot and Maurie were buried on Koot. Mpho attended meetings to show solidarity with those people, who had problems with graves, rather than as a claimant herself.

3.3.9 Case study 9 Tshepo Guma

Tshepo was born in 1932 on Mason, near Witkoppes School, where his mother, who was born on Waterval 5-IR, east of Alexandra, to the southeast of Zevenfontein, had a house. The house was across a stream of the Jukskei River where many other people had houses and were living, he said. Tshepo's father was from Botswana and he raised livestock on Zevenfontein, which Tshepo as a small boy herded. His father died in 1947 and was buried in Johannesburg. Tshepo, then aged fifteen years old, left school and moved to Rivonia to start earning a living as a builder's assistant. The livestock were sold between 1947 and 1950. The 'Boers' told them, Tshepo said, that they had to 'sell all the cows except for two for milk'.

The school Tshepo attended was a small farm school called St Justin's School. The school was situated close to a dam (nowadays, a feature of the Fourways Mall shopping centre). In the 1970s the school moved to its present location further north of the original site and became Witkoppes School. There were suggestions that the school and its adjacent clinic were to close. Like many ex-

pupils Tshepo said he wanted the school to remain in its present location because it was 'close to transport for people living in the area'. And, like many other schools it is 'used by the community' for extracurricular activities such as meetings outside of school hours.

Tshepo is not related to any of the other Zevenfontein families. One of Tshepo's daughters from his first wife, two of his father's brothers and his mother's sister's daughter were buried in the Zevenfontein Cemetery (Dainfern). The grave of a daughter, he thought, was among those relocated to Mamelodi Cemetery. Tshepo signed an affidavit identifying the location of his daughter's grave and received money to perform the necessary ritual before the exhumation. He said that if he needed to talk with his daughter's spirit, he would go to Fourways Memorial Park to talk to her.

Although he used to know the location of the grave of his cousin (mother's sister's daughter), he could not recognise the actual site following the construction of houses in Dainfern. The son of Tshepo's mother's sister was looking for his sister's grave and sometimes attended the meetings, but he lived in Tembisa and was sick. One of Tshepo's mother's brothers was buried on the western side of the Jukskei River on the farm Rietvallei, north of Zevenfontein informal settlement and on the crest of the valley slope. These graves were situated not far from the cemetery of the white owners of the farm Zevenfontein. Another brother was buried on the opposite side of the river near Losmacherrie. Unlike many other farm workers Tshepo had some of his family members' birth and death certificates. He did not know if there was a death certificate for his father, because his mother's house burned down sometime in

the 1980s. She was old and was burned to death in the fire and buried in Alexandra cemetery.

Tshepo used to have a house near Gugulethu Ngidi (Case study 10). It was one of three homesteads remaining on Portion 246. According to Tshepo, Undertaker, who was involved in the relocation of the graves, had a list of the people living in the homesteads. Although an eviction notice was issued, Tshepo said, the courts in 1995 told him he should continue to live in this house and one of his sons was living there in 2004. In 2009 the house burned down. Tshepo did not know how, because he was in living in Alexandra at the time where he had lived for many years.

3.3.10 Case Study 10 Ngidi family

The Ngidi family speaks isiNdebele. Jabulani's mother, Buhle Gumbi was born circa 1927 on Zandspruit. She died circa 2000 and was buried in Alexandra. His father, Njabulu, was also born in the 1920s on Farmall, Zandspruit. Njabulu and Buhle settled on Gert after the birth in 1942 of Jabulani's older sister Noxolo. Both Jabulani in 1950 and brother Themba in 1952 were born on Gert. Jabulani's cousin Mondli, the eldest son of Gugulethu Gumbi Ngidi, they said, was born in 1952 on Maurie, where his father Lunga was also born. Lunga's father worked for Hans.

Mondli's father and his father's father's 'big wife' were buried in River Glen. Mondli's father's father and his father's father's 'little wife' were buried in the 'Cedar graveyard' (either adjacent to Cedar Road or Cedar Lakes estate). A number of Jabulani's family were buried on Gert, including his father in 1957,

his youngest brother in 1958 who was about four years old, his father's mother and his father's father, his mother's mother, among other relatives, whose names and relationship to him he could not remember. The Gert graves on the eastern side of the Jukskei River and more graves on the western Frans side constituted what was known as the golf course burial site.

After Njabulu died in 1957 the family remained on Gert, and in 1966 when Jabulani was sixteen years old he began working for Gert's son Koot, who inherited the land and sold it in 1971. Both Gert and Frans were sold at the same time for the construction of the golf course. When Gert was sold everyone, including Koot, his son Gert Jr and the entire Ngidi family, moved to Witkoppen.

In 1995 Gert Jr decided to develop the Fourways Memorial Park on the property and the Ngidi family was given one year's notice to leave. Unable to find anywhere else, Jabulani and the family relocated to Zevenfontein informal settlement for a few months before erecting shacks in Diepsloot in 1996.

Jabulani's brother Themba first went to Alexandra and then to Zevenfontein informal settlement before relocating with the rest of the family to Diepsloot.

Jabulani did not receive any compensation for the loss of his place of residence on either Zevenfontein or Witkoppen, but Gert Jr financed his relocation, the construction of a shack in Zevenfontein informal settlement and then a shack in Diepsloot. The rest of Jabulani's extended family living on Witkoppen had to finance his or her own relocation and shack. The relocation was voluntary and Jabulani continued to work for the Gert Jr until 2000. The shack in Diepsloot eventually was incorporated into the Reconstruction and Development

Programme (RDP) and Jabulani obtained title deeds and implemented improvements to his house.

According to Jabulani and Themba when Maurie sold his property to the Dainfern developers, Mondli and his mother and the rest of their family moved to one of the homesteads on Portion 246 because one of Mondli's father's brothers was working for Hans. Gugulethu told a different story. She said she had lived in her homestead on Portion 246 from the time she was married to Mondli's father and Mondli was born there. Mondli would not speak about what the developers were doing for the homestead dwellers and he had not told his cousins Jabulani, Themba and Mpho.

There were a number of graves on the 'golf course' and not all the people buried there worked for Gert or Frans. Anyone, they said, could pay between ten to fifteen rand to either Gert or Frans to do so. Similarly, anyone could bury on Hans, whether or not they worked or lived there. The people making the burials were mainly people working on agricultural holdings in the area, because there was nowhere else for the burials of black people. However, Mpho also said that although she was born in the suburbs of Randburg, since there was no graveyard for blacks in Randburg, suburban dwellers went 'outside' of the urban area to find burial places.

Jabulani and his brother and sister, with the help of Mpho, could recall their lineage ancestors to a depth of their grandfathers and grandmothers. They were unsure of the relatedness between themselves and Mondli. Mpho suggested it was due to the custom in the family of marrying two wives. They thought perhaps Mondli was related through marriage of a little wife to Jabulani's

father's father's father, who was Mondli's father's father, and again another marriage between Mondli's father and a little wife, Gugulethu.

Mpho also explained that if a woman had a legal marriage or her husband had paid *lobola*, she identified herself by her husband's surname and her children of such a marriage took their father's surname. If there had been no *lobola* or legal marriage, a woman identified herself by her own surname and her children took her *isibongo*. Furthermore, although some farm workers and dwellers bore the same *isibongo*, they were not necessarily related, Mpho said. The inability to identify all one's relatives was affected by which *isibongo* was used for offspring and to the custom of multiple wives, such that sometimes even if people were related, members of the extended family might not be able to identify the common ancestor.

Mondli's mother Gugulethu and Jabulani's mother, Buhle, had the same surname of Gumbi, however they were not related. The reason, Mpho suggested, was again due to the custom of an ancestor having two wives, and the descendant having two wives and so on, in that way surnames of both marriage partners spread extensively and subsequent bearers no longer conceived or acknowledged others as family. The common ancestor may be many generations deep but the farm workers did not know the connection, because their depth of lineage knowledge extended only to grandparents. Conversely, because of the marriages to more than one wife people with different surnames and equally unidentifiable connection, were recognised as family. People knew who was kin but could not demonstrate how, she said.

3.3.11 Case study 11 Neo Mohome

Neo, who was born circa 1970, said his mother's family, which is Tswana, had been in the 'area around Lonehill, eastern Zevenfontein 407 JR, a suburb of Fourways, for years', that is for generations. He was born on Slack (Zevenfontein) where his mother's mother's mother worked. He grew up with his grandmother and his mother in a female-headed household. Their homestead was situated in a valley of the Jukskei River. The family, Neo said, was forcibly removed from Zevenfontein 'in the seventies' by the 'Red Ants' and the family's 'belongings were thrown into the scoop of a bulldozer and taken off to Hammanskraal'. His memory of the incident that occurred when he was a young boy is somewhat distorted, and his statement that the Red Ants relocated them is anachronistic¹⁶.

Neo's grandmother purchased a plot in Hammanskraal for four hundred rand, although the family did not go there to live, he said. Instead the family erected shacks in Zevenfontein informal settlement. Neo claimed that he was one of the first shack dwellers when the settlement was at that time known as the 'sand diggings'. He recalled the landowner was very good to his own employees but would take 'pot-shots at the squatters'. He also remembered the AWB (Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging, Afrikaner Resistance Movement) activities in the 1990s and the African National Congress (ANC) and Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) clashes in 1993/4 (see Durand 1994, Hill 2001). He left Zevenfontein informal settlement in 1995 and was, he said, one of the first people to live in Diepsloot

¹⁶ (The Red Ants refers to Red Ants Security and Eviction Services who have been in the business of enforcing evictions after 1994.)

where he constructed a shack, later built a house and became a successful businessman and entrepreneur.

Neo in recalling his life on the farm mentioned memories of ‘using one of the Zevenfontein farm gravesites’ situated at the foot of the southernmost sewer duct on Dainfern as a trysting place. Based on his age he must have been referring to when he was a teenager and living in Zevenfontein informal settlement. ‘The original name for the farm Zevenfontein was Ipype’ (The Pipes) and ‘families living in the area,’ he said, called the farm Ipype. The name is somewhat anachronistic as it derives from the three sewer ducts (*ipype*) that were constructed across the Jukskei valleys in the 1970/80s. Neo’s memories were sometimes distorted because he also claimed ‘Queen Elizabeth II visited his school (Witkoppes School)¹⁷ and he ‘remembered as a schoolboy holding a plant as part of a guard of honour for the Queen’. ‘A classroom was named after her,’ he said.

Neo’s family had a history of ANC activism, and his great-grandmother ‘started the original school’ that was later to become Witkoppes School. Local government of the time said a farm school could be started if his great-grandmother, who was illiterate, obtained the names of one hundred children. Neo’s great-grandmother visited local farms and collected the required number of names. With the list of names she approached the local authority and the school was opened¹⁸. The land where the school was situated, Neo said, was

¹⁷ Queen Elizabeth II visited South Africa on three occasions, 1947 as a princess, 1995 and 1999 (Wikipedia 2015a).

¹⁸ Witkoppes School began on Mason as St Bartholomew’s and in 1943 was dedicated to and known as St Justin’s and run as a mission school. It was known as Witkoppes School from 1957. It is still a farm school although it has a subsidy from the Gauteng Department of Education. The Anglican Board of Trustees holds the land in trust for the

given to his great-grandmother and her descendants¹⁹. But, because she was illiterate, the land was put into 'a trust held by the Lutheran or Anglican Church'. The school's sports field was situated on Blakeway, and the landowner donated the land to the school and sponsored the library where the community meetings were held in 2004.

While living in Diepsloot Neo became a successful businessman, and one of his enterprises was to provide funeral services to Zevenfontein informal settlement dwellers and township dwellers. He became sufficiently prosperous to leave the township and live in the suburbs.

3.3.12 Case study 12 Bongani Nxuba

Bongani Nxuba speaks isiXhosa and was born in Mafikeng²⁰, North West Province, in 1925. According to his memories and the calculations of his children, nieces and nephews, he arrived in the Transvaal (Gauteng Province) with his parents, older brother and one of his sisters circa 1935, when he was about ten years old. His mother and father were born in the Eastern Cape. After their marriage Bongani's parents moved, circa the early 1920s, to Mafikeng, and from there to Zandspruit where his father worked for the manager of 'Plot 91 Zandspruit', which was a 'big farm', according to Bongani. Bongani's father was buried in the Farmall graveyard from where his and other graves were relocated to Mauritius Road graveyard in Cosmo City in 2005. Bongani's mother worked and was buried in Krugersdorp.

school and the clinic (Sandton property 2015). All Saints and St Justin's churches used to hold meetings at the school (Allsaints.co.za 2015).

¹⁹ Two acres of Mason's was given to the school and clinic and held in trust (Sandton property 2015).

²⁰ At one time Mafeking, changed to Mafikeng and recently to Mayikeng.

Bongani is the family elder, and the only surviving member of his generation. He is *malume* (uncle) to an extended family, all of whom at one time had homesteads on Zandspruit. At first Bongani's reserve allowed the younger generation to dominate and collaborate on their history, and they had varying memories of the names of landowners, of the place itself and of life on Zandspruit. On a later occasion, Bongani's own recollections refuted some details and added others to the oral history.

According to the younger family members the name Zandspruit derived from the River Sand (Zand in Dutch) that runs through the area, but, they said, the 'place had no name, it was open land'. When people lived in Zandspruit, they said, people gave their own names to their locations, for instance 'amaXhosa' as a name for the section where Xhosa-speaking people lived and 'amaNdebele' for the area where Ndebele people lived. Another way of identifying a specific place, they said, was by using *izibongo*, clan and surnames. 'People knew the different parts of Zandspruit in that way', and they built homesteads and raised cattle and goats and grew vegetables.

When he was a man, Bongani said, he worked for LR for one month before being given two month's notice to leave the property. All the families were moved off the land by the local authorities. Some of the younger family members said they were forcefully removed from the land by GG-men in the 1970s when the area was rezoned for 'white peri-urban' dwelling, and they had to sell their cattle.

The Ndebele families were sent to Hammanskraal in KwaNdebele and the Xhosas, such as Bongani's family, were supposed to go to the apartheid homeland of Transkei, Eastern Cape Province, they said. Bongani's niece Lindiwe

said some of her family conceded to the eviction notice and because the Eastern Cape Province was so distant people made their own arrangements. She, for instance, first went to Brits, North West Province, and later to Alexandra. Other people, according to some of the younger family members, 'changed' their 'tribal' affiliation, for instance they said they were Ndebele rather than Xhosa, and moved to various 'homelands' that were not so distant and where it was easier to find accommodation.

Bongani and his wife went to Muldersdrift (northwest of Zandspruit) and then moved around as whites forced them to leave their properties until eventually in the late 1980s they settled in Zevenfontein informal settlement. They registered for an RDP house in Cosmo City and when they received it they eventually returned to Zandspruit.

Bongani's parents, his older brothers and sisters, one of whom was Lindiwe's mother, who died in 1975, his siblings' spouses and children, as well as his own children who died during the time the family lived on Zandspruit, were buried in the Farmall graveyard. The graves were relocated to Mauritius Road graveyard in Cosmo City. Bongani was content that he still lived near his ancestral graves, but he and his niece Lindiwe were disappointed that no further burials would be permitted in the Mauritius Road graveyard. Old people such as Bongani, Lindiwe said, liked to be buried among their ancestors. Bongani and Lindiwe were worried by the memory of having disturbed the resting place of the spirits of the dead, and were thinking about performing post-reburial rituals. Lindiwe erected tombstones and held an unveiling (a ceremony held one year after the erection of tombstones) for her parents' graves.

3.3.13 Case study 13 Mnguni family

The extensive Mnguni family has some fifty-three identifiable consanguineous and as many affinal members. Dumisani and Musa are first cousins. Their grandfather, whose birthplace Dumisani did not know, had five sons and one daughter, all were born in Chartwell (Houtkoppes). From Chartwell the entire family moved to Zandspruit where Dumisani and Musa and their respective siblings and cousins were born.

Dumisani and Musa described Zandspruit as 'open land', across which homesteads and households were dispersed. Dumisani recalled a white landowner whose surname he did not know, but the people living on Zandspruit called him Little Back, a reference to a spinal hump. Dumisani said if the Nxuba family arrived in the 1930s, he thought it might be earlier than his family. He did not know the date of his family's settlement. There were many people of Xhosa, Sotho and mainly Ndebele origins living on the farm. Musa knew and had a record of the names of everyone from Zandspruit, because they were involved in a land claim.

Dumisani father's house was situated on the corner of Addis Abba and Tunis Streets in Cosmo City. The family homestead, he said, which had been constructed from some sort of brick, was still visible as a ruin when the site was cleared for the construction of RDP housing in Cosmo City. His father's household included himself, his wife and children, cattle, dogs, pigs and chickens.

When Dumisani was still a young child his 'big brother' and his 'little father' (father's younger brother) were working for Hans on Zevenfontein, and when the black farm dwellers were told to leave Zandspruit, Hans relocated Dumisani's father's household to Zevenfontein. Musa's family remained on Zandspruit but relocated across the Sand River where they remained from 1960 to the 1970s. As a child Musa planted two eucalyptus saplings next to his mother's house, his father having died circa 1960. The house remained intact for a number of years but was derelict by 2008. Other people went to KwaNdebele. When Hans died Dumisani's family also went to KwaNdebele where his biological father died and was buried.

Various members of the Mnguni family died and were buried during the sojourn on Zandspruit. Musa's father was buried in Mauritius Road graveyard. Other family were buried in Farmall and in 2005 these graves were relocated to Mauritius Road. Dumisani observed the exhumations of the Farmall graves by Archaeological Graves Relocations and the reburials in Mauritius Road by Funeral Services. One of the graves contained bones and a skull, he said. The body in the other was entirely decomposed, and there was only soil for reburial. It was important, he said, that soil was taken for reburial, because it contained the remains of the corpse.

The Cosmo City Nature Park contained a number of Musa's family graves. One of the cousins' grandmothers and a brother's wife were buried on Dainfern.

Although the Mnguni family no longer lived on Zandspruit, certain family members were employed on the farm, and they continued to bury family members in the nature park. The family had access to the nature park in Cosmo City and could still attend to the graves and make offerings. People liked to bury

all their family members close together in one place, Musa said. 'In the old days people could do that, now if you want to have a family burial place you have to pay a lot of money for Fourways Memorial Park.' Although Musa could identify all his family members, he kept no record of their burial places.

In the 1970s when Musa was still a young man and unmarried his family was chased away from Zandspruit. They relocated to the east of Lanseria airport where his mother and one of his brother's daughters died. The family then moved westward again, where they remained for about one year. Evicted again, Musa and his younger sister and brother relocated to Hammanskraal in KwaNdebele where an older married sister was living. While living in Hammanskraal Musa worked in the Fourways area, returning to Hammanskraal at weekends. He relocated back to the Fourways area in 1988.

Musa did not go to school because he had to look after the family cattle as a boy, and as a man worked as a farm labourer for more than forty years. He is autodidactic and in 2007 he owned an auto spares shop in Diepsloot and was an established businessman. In 1997 he bought a smallholding in Chartwell.

Musa heard there was to be a meeting at Witkoppes School to discuss the relocation of the Farmall graves when he went to visit a family member. The family member was not at home because he had 'gone to the meeting to discuss the Farmall and Cosmo city graves'. Since it was too late for Musa to attend that meeting, he decided to go to the following one, he said, because he had already spoken to the construction company about the relocation of the Zandspruit graves. A meeting had already been arranged in Cosmo City, between people with graves and the developers, construction contractors and the archaeological

company hired to conduct the relocation. The purpose Musa said was so 'everyone could understand each other and agree to do one thing'.

Bothered by hearing that another meeting had been organised, Musa said he wanted to find out what was going on. He learned that there was a proposal to relocate all the Zandspruit graves to Fourways Memorial Park. This was contrary to what he knew as already agreed to, namely that the graves in the nature park were to remain undisturbed and the Farmall graves were to be relocated to Mauritius Road where there was sufficient space for reburials. Musa did not want any of his family members' graves removed from Cosmo City, and he was happy that in the end his family nature park graves remained where they were, and his Farmall family graves joined other family graves in the Mauritius Road graveyard.

The extensive younger generation of the Mnguni family had been born and lived on Zandspruit. In view of their history Musa wanted to know how it was possible that 'you are born on a place, grown up in the place, and then get thrown out. Even now,' he said, 'I am crying for that place.' He was, he said in 2007, 'fighting for his family' living on Zevenfontein (Portion 246) to get houses in Cosmo City. At one time, Musa said, the developers said they would let the Mnguni family have a piece of land but later changed their minds. He accepted the situation, he said, because he thought it had something to do with local government, who owned the land. They, he said, do not provide explanations, and in any case much of the development was completed. Dumisani also described some of the confusion over the fate of the homesteads on Portion 246. The households of two of his brothers and one of his sisters had lived in the homestead closest to River Glen graveyard. His brothers were dead, but the children still lived there.

In 2008 the homestead dwellers were told they would go to Cosmo City. Later they were told Cosmo City was full, and nobody knew where they were going to be relocated.

3.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter has in some ways been a preamble in providing geographical and historical orientations and the documenting of testimonies by a few of the farm workers and dwellers on various aspects of graves and grave relocation. The testimonies reflected the emotiveness and subjectivity of their authors regarding their dwelling and burials on, and evictions and forced removals from, the farms Zevenfontein and Zandspruit and the Fourways urban area.

Collectively the testimonies indicated or alluded to all the aspects, points, issues and perceptions that are dealt with in the following chapters of the dissertation.

The ages of the authors of the testimonies ranged from thirties to early eighties, and their testimonies indicated that more males were employed on the holdings than females. They also suggested that a good number of family members resided with the few individuals who were employed by the landowner. In essence the oral histories indicated the tangible evidence of 'abandoned' homesteads, kraals and graves, the markers the farm workers/dwellers left upon the land as indicators of their former presence. The intangibles of an inscribed landscape were also mentioned in the form of marriages, the raising of families, keeping of livestock, burying of family members, visits to graves, all of which were sociocultural components and intrinsic of a rural way of life and worldview that was held for at least two or three generations.

In listening to and afterwards, proper reading of the research participants' testimonies suggested similarities and differences, well-remembered incidents and distortions in memory. It is within the narrative of oral histories, their truths, exaggerations and errors, that elements and anecdotes framed the issues and decision-making of relocating graves (discussed in Chapter 5). In order to anthropologically contextualise those issues and decisions the oral histories/testimonies are fully explored in Chapter 4 in the context of the legislation of the time, cultural practices and the theoretical frames of sense of place and place attachment.

CHAPTER 4: GRAVE CONSTRUCTS OF PLACE ATTACHMENT

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In their oral histories the farm workers and dwellers of Zevenfontein and Zandspruit conceptualised the natural and cultural landscape of the farms. They inscribed meaning in the landscape through their individualism, subjectivity and emotionalism. Since I argue that the farm workers and dwellers' subjective perspective informed the issues they had with the relocation or loss of graves, I explore in this chapter the sociocultural dimensions of the farm from three conceptual frames of reference: subjectivity in historical perspectives, sociocultural orientations of place and sentimental attachment to place.

Section 4.2 unpacks the dwellers' micro history of land occupation within the macro historical and sociopolitical context of landownership. 4.2.1 considers title deed to land, 4.2.2 distinguishes between labour tenant, farm worker and farm dweller, and 4.2.3 reflects on legislation opposing farmland occupation by and consequential eviction of black farm dwellers.

Section 4.3 explores the sociocultural beliefs and practices in the construction of place. 4.3.1 discusses how the experiences of life and death on the farms constructed the sense of dwelling and burial place. 4.3.2 ethnographically explores the processes and significance of burying deceased relatives in the cultural construction of sacred burial place, and 4.3.3 discusses the ongoing relationship between the living and the dead by unpacking ancestor beliefs and practices pertaining to graves.

Section 4.4 explores the sentimental dimensions of place attachment. 4.4.1 reflects on the tangibles and intangibles of a landscape revisited, and explores the concretising of memory in dwellings and graveyards. 4.4.2 discusses inscribed landscape and contested place as background to the former farm workers and dwellers' attitude to the relocation of their graves.

4.2 HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES: LAND OWNERSHIP AND OCCUPATION

4.2.1 Title deed to land

In categorising the physical and conceptual dimensions of the Zevenfontein landscape, one finds it was, as are other landscapes, an artefact of nature and culture that was politicised by a heritage based on subjective notions of history (Tilley 2006: 19, 7). The history described by the farm workers and dwellers reflected one that recognised the South African Republic coming into being in 1853 at a time when the Transvaal already had a widespread black population (Sahistory.org.za 2015: 3)²¹. That is, many black people were living in Gauteng (formerly the Witwatersrand of southern Transvaal) before the dominating white social stratum claimed the land as farms.

As a result of the redefining of the landscape in the history of the white population the resident black people remained where they lived and worked for the farmer (Sahistory.org.za 2004: no page number shown on website). From the 1880s land claimed as farms by whites was registered in the South African cadastral system under the name of the white owner. The *Deeds Registration Act*

²¹ In-text references to website sources provide site name, date and page number. Full web addresses and date accessed are listed in the Literature Cited according to the in-text website and date

of 1937 (Act 47/1937) (*DRA 1937*)²² did not include any black people already occupying the area (Fourie 2003: 1-6). Such legislation resulted in a white dominant social stratum defining and controlling the domicile of black settlers on agricultural land such as Zevenfontein and Zandspruit. The farm Zevenfontein, which was first registered in 1896, was subdivided as early as the 1940s. Zandspruit according to a landowner was subdivided by 1905, and his family had owned and lived there since that time. Section 102 of the *DRA 1937* defines the owner of land as the person holding registered right in or over the land, and in whose name a farm is registered (Southwood 2000: 321, 355).

Research into the name of the farm or the greater landscape revealed that the names Sewefontein (the correct Afrikaans spelling), Sevenfontein (English) and Zevenfontein (early Dutch name) date from the nineteenth century and they signified the entire extent of the farm. Mandla (Case study 4) called the farm Sewerfontein (sic), reflecting the Afrikaner occupation of the farm when he started living there. Generally, Zevenfontein was the more common name used by the farm workers and dwellers. Neo's (Case study 11) toponymic 'Ipypi', derived from *ipyipi* (the pipes), was of later origin, reflecting sociocultural change to the farm in the 1970s. It invoked his own experience of life on Zevenfontein as a teenager and young man when he lived in the Zevenfontein informal settlement and used the 'pipes' as a trysting place. Other informants said the sewer ducts (aqueducts on maps) provided shortcut thoroughfares across the valleys. Many of the older farm workers, such as Gosego (Case study 1), neither knew nor used the name in any context. Neo's subjective history reflected his sense of self-identity in terms of the landscape by giving the farm a social

²² The content of laws and statutes in the dissertation are sourced from secondary sources and not the primary legislative source.

identity that linked the present situation of a culturally changing environment to an idealised past (Tilley 2006: 17). However, as Van Vuuren (2010: 12) on place names points out, although existing place names reflect the dominant stratum of society, it does not mean that earlier indigenous names do not exist.

More localised place names were eponymous of the landowner of portions of Zevenfontein. These included Hans, which comprised the northern portion of the farm and was situated to the east of the Jukskei River, Frans which lay south of Hans and north of the Jukskei River, Maurie which lay east of Frans, Gert/Koot was a holding situated across the river from Frans, and Slack, Blakeway and Mason were holdings situated adjacent to Gert/Koot and across the river from Maurie. The farm workers and dwellers used the names Nel, Campbell and Douglas to identify individual agricultural smallholdings of Witkoppen. The familiar use of first names in identifying subdivisions of Zevenfontein indicated the long association between landowners and farm workers/dwellers, as well as in some instances individuals in a large landowning family. Clearly these names indicated the history of a dominant sociopolitical stratum.

The names of white landowners of Zandspruit showed none of Zevenfontein's familiar association. For instance, one landowner did not even have a personal name only a physical description (Case study 13). Although surnames were mentioned by the Zandspruit dwellers, they were not used to identify specific portions of the farm, which suggested the absence of the white landowners.

Surplus People's Project (1983: 32) found that the greatest settlement by blacks was on unoccupied land bought speculatively by mining houses and 'land companies'. An alternative reading of history could suggest that mining houses

bought land already occupied by blacks, but the people in whose name the land was registered did not occupy the land.

That would suggest that mining houses bought potential agricultural land in view of the Johannesburg gold rush of the mid to late nineteenth century. In the absence of a white landowning profile, Musa indicated that the black dwellers gave their own identity to the Zandspruit landscape by dividing the area into ethnic sectors or family enclaves. For instance, the land was subdivided into the homestead locale of the Xhosa or Ndebele or Tswana, or individual homesteads identified as that of the Ngidi or the Nxuba or the Mnguni household. As with Zevenfontein no earlier indigenous name of the landscape was indicated by the farm workers/dwellers. They did suggest the Sand River was toponymous, but again that reflects a white social stratum.

Other portions of farms which participants knew, but with which they had no personal connection, were referred to by the names of agricultural smallholding areas; for instance, Chartwell, agricultural holdings of the farm Houtkoppes, and Farmall, which was a smallholding subdivision of the farm Zandspruit. In casual conversation Chartwell and Witkoppes were used interchangeably in a general sense for the western portions of the farm Zevenfontein, particularly smallholding portions although they were not the actual names. From a research perspective to understand exactly where people lived or about which they were talking, it was necessary to identify the individual white landowners of portions or holdings of Zevenfontein, or the structuring of the landscape according to individual black family sites or collective dwellers in the case of Zandspruit.

4.2.2 Farm worker, dweller or labour tenant

The Zevenfontein and Zandspruit research participants indicated in their oral histories their having been born or settled and dwelling on the farms during the 1920s to 1970s. They would have settled on and occupied the land at the time of or before promulgation of the *Native Trust and Land Act, 1936 (Chapter 4 of Act 18 of 1936) (NTLA 1936)*. They would also have been subjected to various Acts, such as *The Native Services Contract Act, 1932 (Act 24 of 1932)*, *The Natives Resettlement Act, 1954 (Act 19 of 1954)*, *The Subdivision of Agricultural Lands Act, 1970 (Act 70 of 1970)*, *The Basic Conditions of Employment Act, 1983 (Act 3 of 1983)*, which formulated the terms and conditions of their occupation of farmland (Southwood 2000: 141-143, 354-355).

The farm dwellers stated that someone in the family was working for the landowner or his land agent. Pre-1994 all white-owned farmland under the (*NTLA 1936*) categorised any black person living on a farm as a labour tenant, and by the Act regulated his or her mobility, status, etcetera (Van Vuuren 2010: 14 footnote). Most labour tenants were confined to farms by work contracts by the 1920s. The terms of the contracts were from three to nine months labour in return for, variably, cash wages, use of the land and use of the landlord's implements and animals (Surplus Peoples Project 1983: xii; Human Rights Watch 2001: 4). However, none of the oral histories indicated these terms and conditions.

Post-1994 legislation, which is current today, namely the *Land Reform (Labour Tenants) Act, 1996 (Act 3 of 1996) (LTA 1996)* defines a 'farmworker' (sic) as obligated to work himself or herself in terms of a contract, predominantly paid

in cash or other form of remuneration, without right to reside on a farm. Whereas, a labour tenant had a right to reside or was residing on a farm together with family members, with cropping or grazing rights and in return provided labour to the owner or lessor of the farm (Southwood 2000: 141-143, 354-355). This Act is anachronistic for the majority of the farm workers and dwellers because they had been evicted prior to 1994. The only people still living on Zevenfontein, to whom it was applicable, were the occupants of Portion 246 in the homesteads and Losmacherrie informal settlement. Nevertheless, the legislation is used in respect of first-person land claims, but again it is the imposition of another history upon the farm and its former workers and dwellers.

In 1895 the *Squatters' Law no. 21 of 1895* passed in the Transvaal permitted only five black families to 'squat' on any white-owned farm. Other black individuals and families had to leave and find work elsewhere (Sahistory.org.za 2004: no page number shown on Internet source). Despite legislation it was not practicable to enforce laws such as the *Native Laws Amendment Act, 1949 (Act 56 of 1949) (NLAA 1949)* aimed at controlling the occupation of land by blacks (Horn 1998: 9-22).

The oral histories of the Hans dwellers suggested there were a large number of black households situated on Hans, without him taking any action against them. It was only after his death and that of his wife that the beneficiaries of his will and inheritors of the property sought mass evictions of the dwellers and workers. Similarly, the histories of the other holdings suggested that dwellers lived in their numbers and untroubled by the landowners until the land was

sold. Judging by the number of individuals who attended meetings, there must have been at least thirty households on Zevenfontein, if not more.

The Natives (Abolition of Passes and Co-ordination of Documents) Act, 1952 (Act 67 of 1952) (Pass Laws 1952t) required all black people over the age of sixteen to carry everywhere and at all times a passbook (*dompas*). The *dompas* contained fingerprints, photograph, employment details, and determined permission to be in a particular locality. These personal documents stamped 'farm worker only' in the case of farm workers/dwellers prevented anyone from leaving white-owned farms unless terminated by the landowner or employer (Human Rights Watch 2001: 4; <http://cortland> 1915: 2). The impact of the *Pass Laws 1952* and the *NLAA 1949* on the Nxuba family's occupation of Zandspruit (Case study 12) exemplifies the definition of labour tenancy. When Bongani's father died, Bongani himself was dismissed after only one month's employment, and the entire family were evicted from Zandspruit. Similarly, Mmusi (Case study 2) and his father were evicted in 1967 from Zevenfontein after Mmusi's father's father, who worked for the owner of the holding, died.

Gosego (Case study 1) and Xolani (Case study 5) mentioned their own agricultural activities and keeping of livestock with specific reference to dwelling on Hans. But they did not, nor did other testimonies indicate that they were bound to work for only part of the year in return for the privilege of dwelling and land use. Some people, worked for wages, and were provided with accommodation as indicated by Mandla (Case study 4). If they did work for monthly wages, one could probably regard them, based on the small wages they received and the permission to dwell on the land where they did the bulk of the work, as labour tenants. However, the terminology neither accounts for the farm

dwellers and landowners' *laissez faire* relationship, nor the farm workers and dwellers' perspective of the farm as being their own dwelling place.

Employment was not strictly land related. Gosego was a builder and driver for Hans, as well as having been a builder for Nel, when he lived there. Women, such as Mpho (Case study 8), worked in the house. Research participants were very clear as to which member of the family was employed by a landowner, and which members were dwelling. Some of the female testifiers indicated that they did not work for the landowner, but were married to someone who did or they were the offspring of a worker. Generally, it was the head of the household who worked 'in return for accommodation for the rest of the family' (Crankshaw et al 1992: 140). From the tone of the oral histories and interviews it was apparent that by virtue of being a *dweller* as opposed to a *worker*, individuals believed in a closer relationship to the farm and the land (semi-structured question on *umhlaba*, see Appendix A), because as adults they raised the household crops and as boys guarded the livestock for the family.

Some of the farm workers mentioned that they shifted from farm to farm as work became available, and the trend was to stay within the broader locale of Fourways. The effect of the *Pass Laws 1952* was indicated where Mandla (Case study 4) stated that although he was not born within the research area, he found work on Zevenfontein and his employer (Hans) obtained a *dompas* for him. Similarly, following evictions from Zandspruit in the 1950s, Hans was instrumental in relocating Dumisani and his family from Zandspruit to his own property in Zevenfontein where one or more of the family was employed.

The continued use of the white dominant stratum's categorising of labour tenants post-1994 (as applied in land claims) for black people who lived on farms registered to whites is an anachronism that neither focuses on black farm workers or dwellers' subjective reading of their historical and emotional relationship to a dwelling place, nor references a relationship to graves. This is evident where someone like Bheka (Case study 3) described being a farm labourer by occupation, but he did not live on any of the farms where he worked. He was born on Short, for whom his mother worked and where he lived with his parents. His father lived on Short but worked on Gary Player (Zevenfontein), which was where Bheka buried him. Thus, Bheka was not a labour tenant in respect of Zevenfontein but he had a grave there. His exclusion from Zevenfontein labour tenancy was made clear to him when he was told at a meeting held in 2012 that none of the meetings concerned him. The meetings, they told him, were to apply for a Zevenfontein land claim and the basis for their land claim was they had been labour tenants on the farm. Bheka was not included, because he did not work or dwell on Zevenfontein.

The focus of the dissertation is graves, and a grave has personal significance for an individual. By avoiding the sweeping categorisation of research participants as 'labour tenants', the contextual relationship of Bheka or Gosego or any other farm worker, dweller, research participant, to space, place and time, experience of living, working, burying family members and creating graveyards is emphasised. Avoiding the appellation of labour tenants also levels the historical playing field so that the former land occupants, workers and dwellers define their own identity and self-history.

4.2.3 Occupation and eviction

4.2.3.1 Settlement and occupation

Studies on the settlement and occupation of Witwatersrand farms, generally, are scant. The Surplus Peoples Project (1983) study does not include the Witwatersrand, and in any case focuses on the apartheid 'homelands', nevertheless it provides general information on black land occupation, as does Human Rights Watch (2001). Crankshaw et al (1992) does deal with the Witwatersrand farms, but focuses on squatter occupation of Johannesburg's southern peri-urban farms. The study is concerned with urban-rural migration from the late 1950s, so the circumstances being discussed were not really comparable to the experience of the Zevenfontein dwellers. Interestingly, however, Crankshaw et al (1992: 137) notes that at least half of their research participants were born on Witwatersrand farms. I was unable to source any historical information pertaining to black occupation of Fourways farms in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Not only because blacks occupied farmland prior to whites proclaiming its ownership, but also because of the degree of independence with which they lived on the white-owned farms, there was a significant sense among black land occupants and labour tenants that 'the land was theirs' (Human Rights Watch 2001: 3). Fourie (2003: 1-6) makes the pertinent observation that despite their not having title deeds, the land in a sense did belong to the original occupiers, but the law precluded blacks from owning land other than in common within a tribal categorisation. Zandspruit and Zevenfontein in their peri-urban context fall outside such tribal based categorisation. And, again from the perspective of

black dwellers on white peri-urban farms, the dominating white history did not account for homesteads, the raising of families, the sites where livestock shelters had been constructed or the establishing of graveyards.

As I have already stated, history is subjective. For instance, Bandile, (Case study 12) argued that the farm Zandspruit was unoccupied by whites when the Nxuba family settled there. It was, he said, 'freehold', implying the black freehold rights of the so-called 'black spots' (Surplus Peoples Project 1983: x; Human Rights Watch 2001: 2). He called it 'free land', 'black farmland'. The whites, he argued, 'came later' and 'proclaimed the land for themselves.' It is pertinent to point out that in attempting to categorise Zandspruit in terms of white legislation, Bandile exemplified a fundamental perspective of periurban farm dwelling blacks who said they were living on land in the Fourways/Randburg area prior to white proclamation. Farms in that locale lay outside the legislative pale in their minds. In other words the black farm dwellers lived on and conceived of the farm as communal tribal land according to their subjective reading of history, but in the alternative white reading the land was not registered to them.

And, as I have already explained an alternative reading of history was that of the buying up of tracts of so-called unoccupied land by mining companies and land speculators from the late nineteenth century (Surplus Peoples Project 1983: 32). In which case it might well have led to the apparent absence of agricultural activity on the land prior to the Nxuba family's settlement. Another reading of history by Horn (1998: 9-22), suggests that during the South African War many blacks occupied the white-owned farms keeping the cattle in the belief that the war was 'to return them to their old lands and to expel the whites'. These histories of Zandspruit epitomise a historically contested landscape, and they

iterate the subjectivity of different groups. As Tilley (2006: 13) has so pertinently argued the identity and singularity of place and landscape are 're-entrenched with people wishing to find a refuge, to defend a notion of a bounded place with which they can identify'.

Tebello (no case study) and Neo (Case study 11) who are Tswana and were both born on Zevenfontein, said they had lineage ancestry dating prior to white ownership of the farm and even Ndebele occupation, although neither of them provided genealogical confirmation. Nevertheless, the possible historicity of Sotho-Tswana occupation of the farm is evident in the Iron Age Sotho-Tswana settlement at Lone Hill in the Fourways suburb of Lonehill, east of William Nicol Drive and in the eastern portion of farm Zevenfontein (Mason 1986: 5). However, many of the Tswana research participants could not claim such a deep heritage to the farm as Tebello, and many had forebears who originated from Botswana.

Tilley (2006: 12) links collective identities, as I have shown regarding Sotho-Tswana inhabitants of prehistoric Fourways, to conceptualisations of specified collective history, traditions and shared material forms. He argues: '...they are imagined in a historically and materially specific way. But that which they imagine, or present to consciousness is not always the same.' I found this argument resonant of how Undertaker conceived the tangibility of Zevenfontein's history in extensive graveyards predating the occupation of the farm by whites. In his conception such graveyards signified the occupation of the land by black settlers first. But, in viewing the same area archaeologists failed to recognise the possibility of such cultural artefacts or the same historical reality. Furthermore, the cultural artefacts of the dominant white stratum in the form of legislation, particularly the *DRA 1937* overwhelmingly

prevailed. Nevertheless, the absence of material proof of black first people occupation does not mean it was factual.

Black identification with land, thus, was based on land occupation, place and heritage, rather than on land possession (Horn 1998: 9-22). Mmusi (Case study 2) when he described Zevenfontein as his homeland (Hill 2001: 77), he conceived of his land occupation in terms of apartheid legislation that created tribal homelands and *Bantustans* (Surplus Peoples Project 1983: x; Human Rights Watch 2001: 4). As Bandile said, when he and the former dwellers of Zandspruit were evicted from Zandspruit, they were expected to relocate to their respective ethnic homeland.

By identifying Zevenfontein in the language of apartheid legislation as his 'homeland' Mmusi established the historicity of his occupation at the same time taking into his construction the alternative history of the dominant white social stratum and the macro environment. Pragmatic impossibility of his relocating to a *Bantustan* may be understood in the context of his ancestors being from Botswana rather than South Africa. Subjectively and genealogically, he knew only the place where his parents and grandparents had been born, lived and died as being the locale of Fourways and Randburg peri-urban farms. From his perspective the history of the dominant white political environment was being imposed irrationally upon him.

Although dwelling was obviously paramount in the sentiment of life on Zevenfontein and Zandspruit, it was the burials on the farms that provided the tangible evidence. A former farm dweller cited by Ndlela (2006: 3-4) captures the same sentiment as Mmusi:

No people should be evicted from their land because it is their land. They have graveyards where they have buried their forefathers and children, mothers and their family members that have passed on. When they are evicted where should they go? They were born on a farm and grew up on a farm and there is no home or another home for them except for where they are currently residing (Ndlela 2006: 3-4).

The absence of historical and emotional association between 'tribal homelands' and Zevenfontein and Zandspruit dwellers was indicated when Gosego said that even after nearly thirty years of living in Klipgat (formerly a homeland region of Bophuthatswana to which Tswana speakers were forcibly removed), he still saw himself as an outsider. This was understandable since he had no family history with the area, other than the burials of two of his sons following the forced removal. His ancestry to at least the depth of great-grandparents was associated with the Fourways farms, and other than the ZCC church in Klipgat and his own household he had no social network in Klipgat. Gosego's perspective again reflects the subjectivity of self-history, and imagined traditions and material culture to which Tilley (2006: 12) alludes by the very lack of a collective history associated with a so-called homeland.

4.2.3.2 Eviction and forced removal

Apart from the few Zevenfontein and Zandspruit farm dwellers that mentioned they relocated after eviction to Zevenfontein informal settlement, the farm workers and dwellers in this study could not be categorised as squatters. In terms of apartheid history a squatter was defined as a person living illegally on land without the permission of the landowner (Surplus Peoples Project 1983: xii). Musa, who indicated he and his family moved from one side of the Sand River to the other (Zandspruit), and Mmusi and family who moved from one side

of the Jukskei River to the other (Zevenfontein), would have been classified as squatters. This might have been especially applicable to Mmusi whose family dwellings were constructed informally from corrugated sheets of metal. Such a shack dwelling implied a temporary abode, and in Mmusi's sense of history it did not signify a place of permanence (see Hill 2001).

Eviction from the farms deprived the farm workers and dwellers of the right to occupy or use the land. The *NTLA 1936*, under which many farm workers and dwellers were born and lived on the farm Zevenfontein, states that squatters, and labour tenants and workers whose contracts had been terminated, among other reasons, could be removed from the farm because they had no legal right to be in the area (Surplus Peoples Project 1983: 105-106). The *NTLA 1936* was the major legislation that removed black farm workers and dwellers from farms. The earlier and significant piece of legislation was, of course, the *Natives Land Act, 1913 (Act 27 of 1913)* (Southwood 2000: 353-354).

The Zandspruit and Zevenfontein farm workers and dwellers were evicted for various reasons of the macro sociopolitical system and the history of the dominant social stratum. The resettlement of blacks to the closest homeland commenced from the 1950s, and Dumisani recounted that people living on Zandspruit were evicted as early as 1953. Other Zandspruit dwellers mentioned the 1960s. All of them were expected to relocate to their respective homelands. Mabin (1992: 18) notes that the 1960s was a 'decade of massive, but not necessarily state-sponsored removals of labour tenants and squatters'.

An eviction notice was in the form of a '*trekpas*'. This was a letter stating that a farm worker and his or her family, and their livestock should vacate the farm by

a certain date (Human Rights Watch 2001: 5). Sometimes a *trekpas* could be issued at the request of a labour tenant so he or she could move to another farm. However, none of the research participants mentioned the practice when they moved from farm to farm in the peri-urban research area. They referred to it only in the context of being instructed to leave a farm.

Evictions from Zevenfontein dated from the 1970s according to the testimonies. The sale of Zevenfontein portions, dating from the 1970s, to an individual purchaser, or to township developers, or because an owner died, generally meant that any farm workers/dwellers living on the various portions of the farm were vulnerable to eviction (see Crankshaw et al 1992: 140). The *NTLA 1936* (Act 18 of 1936 Section 26) set out that a farm worker, whose contract was terminated, for instance through the death of the employer, lost his/her right to his/her housing and had to leave the white-owned land.

After Hans died, Mpho (Case study 8) said, she continued to live and work for the widow and it was only when Mrs Hans died that she was evicted. The property was willed to the eldest son, who told Mpho that she had to leave Hans and relocate to his own property situated east of William Nicol Drive. Because she did not want to work for the son, when Hans was sold, she, among the other workers and dwellers, was given twenty-four hours to vacate their homesteads. Unlike the other Hans's farm workers and dwellers, such as Gosego and the amaNdebele, Mpho was not forcibly removed. Hans's daughter found Mpho a house in, and transported Mpho and her belongings to, Soshanguve, Bophuthatswana.

The callousness with which workers were treated by eviction orders is demonstrated in the treatment of Mpho. After years of service and trust, which was exemplified in her being entrusted with knowledge of the whereabouts of the will, she was summarily removed from her home. The resentment to gross violation to their humanity was expressed by Neo. In a rather distorted memory of his childhood, he described the 'Red Ants' loading the family and their possessions into the 'bucket' of a bulldozer, and being carried off to Pretoria. Although he may have seen a bulldozer destroy the homestead, his calling the people doing the forced removal 'Red Ants' was anachronistic. The red-uniformed Red Ants are more characteristic of present-day urban evictions of squatters from buildings, and they were, ironically, used for the forced removal of the homestead dwellers from Portion 246 in 2010.

Most of the Zevenfontein and Zandspruit former farm workers and dwellers were evicted prior to 1994 under the National Party legislation. The exception was the people still living on Zevenfontein farm in 2004 at Losmacherrie and River Glen, who, as of the 1980s were squatters. Since 1994, the *Land Reform (Labour Tenants) Act 3 of 1996 (LTA 1996)* and effective from 1995, and the *Extension of Security of Land Tenure Act 62 of 1997 (ESTA 1997)* included residential protection. The people living on Portion 246 were protected until 2010 by the *LTA 1997 (Act 62 of 1997)* as they had been in occupation for more than five years prior to 1996.

There were some instances where farm workers were not forcibly removed from the farms. For example, Dumisani (Case study 13) explained, following the receipt of the eviction notice, Hans, for whom he and his brother worked, were taken with their family to live on Zevenfontein. After Koot sold his property on

Zevenfontein, Jabulani and his family moved with Koot's son Gert Jr to Witkoppen farm. When Gert Jr developed the Witkoppen property as a cemetery, he had a shack constructed for Jabulani Ngidi in Zevenfontein informal settlement, and after he relocated to Diepsloot another one, by which time there was a prospect of obtaining RDP housing. Although one can read into these instances compassionate treatment by the landowner, nevertheless, it was the landowner's history that dominated the histories of the farm workers and dwellers. Their history showed cultural evidence only in the form of graveyards, whereas the dominant white stratum had the cultural evidence of legislation.

4.3 CULTURAL CONSTRUCTIONS OF PLACE: BELIEFS AND PRACTICES

The bearing that the farm dwellers and workers' cultural beliefs and practices had on sense of place — constructing homes where families were raised and establishing nearby graveyards where the dead continued their relationship with the living— are discussed. The material artefacts of homesteads and graves concretised the tangibles and physical realities of place. However, the relationships and the ideas associated with those tangible artefacts in the minds of their creators were, although intangible, no less real. The raising of families and burying family members are outlined, before various aspects of burial and ancestral beliefs that contributed to the meaning of the graveyards are ethnographically explored.

Discourses on place and space have drawn significant interest over the past few decades, not only from anthropology, but also philosophy, literature, history and sociology. As a theoretical construct sense of place has relevance to cultural geographers and urban planners worldwide. In this study sense of place

embraces a geographical orientation to how the dwellers of the Zevenfontein (and Zandspruit) locale conceived of a farm as a result of their personal attachment to and historical associations with it. In other words, it was the 'meaning' grounded in and produced by worldview (Rodman 2003: 207), that is a farm-oriented worldview, that influenced perceptions of historical reality. That reality was to have significance in defining issues and arguments over the relocation of cultural artefacts, namely, graves.

A significant aspect of the sense of place discourse is how sense of place and place attachment develop. Spiegel (2004) and Van Vuuren (2010) focus on the cultural history of places, especially registered farms where indigenous ethnic groups are making first person land claims. Since in many instances as a result of apartheid evictions of so-called 'black spots' from the apartheid landscape, the claimants were no longer occupants of the land they were claiming. Van Vuuren (2010: 9) on this point not only draws attention to an extensiveness of discourse on memory, but also to the literature's relevance in understanding the particular South African scenario where '... memory of land and its human products and produce needs to be understood in the historical context of loss of land and former territory in the colonial and apartheid periods.'

In order to understand the sense of place that the farms Zevenfontein and Zandspruit evoked in the minds of the former farm workers and dwellers it is pertinent to ethnographically unpack the cultural constructions of dwelling place and burial place and contextualise the various sociocultural dimensions within contemporary discourse on sense of place. The purpose of exploring Zevenfontein farm and its graves within the discourse of sense of place is to

understand the intangibles of relocating graves and the impact on the living people related to the buried dead.

4.3.1 Constructing dwelling place

The farm dwellers in the Fourways area were predominantly Ndebele and Tswana. Sotho, Xhosa and Zulu speakers were in a minority. Although individuals acknowledged ethnic origins, they were not used as self-identification in the collective of individuals living on Zevenfontein. Tilley (2006: 9) has pointed out that defining or attributing identity to a group or individual is problematic, because of the term's polysemic usage in a contemporary world where people 'have no stable identity' or 'identity is transient'. Identity depends on the here and now and only partially connected to where they 'might have come from'. Ethnic oriented localities with a characteristic social identity in a globally mobile and interactive reality are no longer sustainable. This has significant resonance in the peri-urban environment. Thus, despite my being able to locate only two or three generations of dwelling on the farms, the shallow depth does not necessarily indicate a lack of authenticity or invalidate sentimental attachment to the area. As Tilley (2006:11) observes an ethnically based way of life is a life-style choice.

Broadly, the testimonies indicated that at least from early in the twentieth century most of the Zevenfontein farm workers and dwellers were either born on the farm themselves, or their children were born there. Gosego (Case study 1) was the oldest living Zevenfontein research participant. He was born in 1924 on the farm Witkoppen and his mother was born on the same farm in 1906.

Indicating shallow knowledge of ancestor depth he could not say where his

mother's parents were born. However, although both maternal and paternal grandparents were buried on Witkoppen circa 1930s, that fact was not enough to conclude that they were born in the area. The homestead and interacting household generally included only parents or grandparents. Only Neo mentioned any real knowledge about his great-grandmother who had started the local farm school. Thus, within the here and now of South Africa and the peri-urban area there was no substantiation of earlier ancestors or living relatives outside of South Africa, suggesting the present situation governed the past.

Even migrants to the peri-urban farmland, such as Bongani, could not provide information on ancestors not associated with the here and now. Xhosa-speaking Bongani recalled being about ten years' old when he, together with siblings and parents, settled on Zandspruit where his older married sister was already living in circa 1935. Bongani's parents had migrated from the Eastern Cape Province to the Transvaal (North West Province and Gauteng) seeking work. Madala, who was born in 1912 in the Eastern Cape Province also, said he migrated to the Witwatersrand to work on the mines and settled in the research area in 1949 (Hill 2001: 29).

All the research participants described growing up on one or other farm. The oldest research participants, such as Bongani, Gosego and even Bheka, had little if any formal schooling. They described traditional herding of their family's cattle and goats. The younger former farm dwellers, however mentioned that they attended one of the schools situated along William Nicol Drive. The precursor to Witkoppen School was already established by the 1950s as suggested by Tshepo (Case study 9), who was in his seventies in 2004, and said he had attended it. On the whole most of the farm workers/dwellers had little

education, except perhaps the youngest generation such as Xolani and Neo who attended Riversands and Witkoppen schools, respectively, after the 1980s when improvements were made. Most of the research participants suggested leaving school after Standard Six, at about the age of twelve or thirteen. Farm workers/dwellers generally received about two years less education than an average person living in informal settlements (Crankshaw et al 1992: 140).

Various categories of social networks linked farm workers and dwellers to the peri-urban farms. They were, as Tilley (2006: 21) argues, contextual to a material locus and understandable only in relation to their temporal and spatial place. As social referents, 'they are intimately connected to history, the past, and hold out the promise of a desired future' (Tilley 2006: 21). Such socially identifiable networking included visits to family or friends across different parts of the farms. As children they attended the local schools or the clinic located on the same premises as Witkoppen School. Most farm workers attended a church: the local ZCC church, or other African churches, which were headed by an ordained preacher, or self-ordained farm worker. There were also various Christian denominations farther afield. Witkoppen School was closely associated with the history of the people. Through the school people knew each other because they had been pupils and as adults various activities and meetings were held at the school, including the meetings for the families with graves.

Oral testimonies showed that people married individuals who were born or resident on farms in the broader research area. Genealogical data indicated that certain *izibongo* (family names) dominated the farm Zevenfontein. However, the shallowness of lineal and affinal generations meant I was unable to draw marriage ties between families. People simply stated they were part of this or

that family. The only link between two distinct families was the recent marriage of Jabulani Ngidi's sister Noxolo's son, Njabulu Ngidi, to Bongani Nxuba's sister's daughter's daughter. They met for the first time at a Witkoppen School reunion. (Nxuba and Ngidi genealogies are provided in Appendix B).

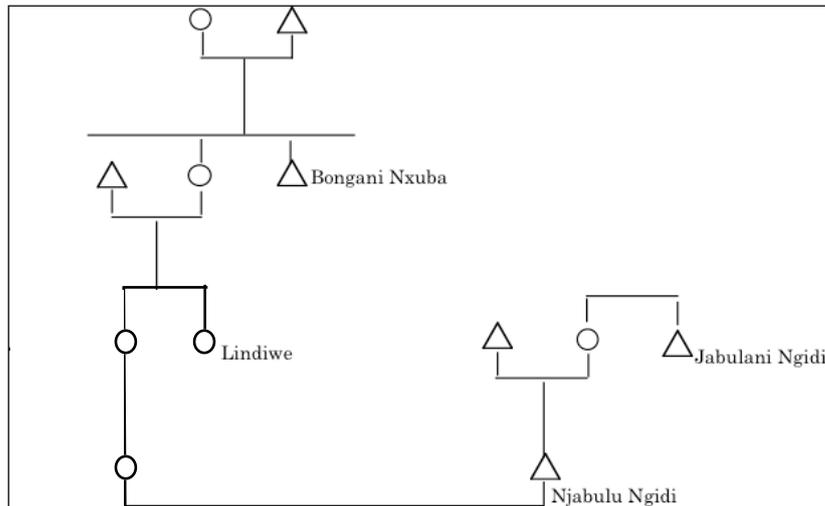


Figure 4. 1 Affinal link between Ngidi lineage, Zevenfontein, and Nxuba lineage, Zandspruit

After marriage nuptial couples indicated that they moved away from the parental homesteads and sought places to dwell and work on one of the other farms in the Fourways area. Although most of the testimonies indicated women had undergone some form of marriage (*lobola* or legal) and lived in the husband's homestead and raised a family in the name of his lineage, there was indication that some households were female-headed, with children born out of wedlock such as Neo. In some instances husband and wife lived apart on different farms, or one spouse lived in a suburban area for the sake of work opportunities. Other women living on the farms were widowed, such as the Mhlophe sisters' mother (Case study 6), however some widows left a farm for the city as Bheka's mother had done.

The essence of community was experienced through acquaintance, friendship and marriage. Other than attending burials, none of the farm workers or

dwellers described any ethnically related communal sociocultural interactions. However, there were occasions when familial female initiation ceremonies continued to be held on Zevenfontein. These social networks were another category of intangibles, which had specific characteristics of peri-urban worldview that imprinted on the former farm workers and dwellers. There was no return to the farm in a general way. Male initiation ceremonies such as those led by Mandla were held in the places to which people had relocated. But, because Gugulethu was still in occupation on Zevenfontein she held initiation ceremonies at her homestead for her daughters and granddaughters. I had the opportunity to observe one of these initiation ceremonies.

Following a meeting in December 2006, I accompanied six women to Gugulethu's homestead where her granddaughter's initiation (*iqhude* or *ukuthombisa*) was being held (Van Vuuren 1995: 237). A marquee had been erected and the uninvited, and invited female guests some of whom wore items of traditional dress, sat in a circle with Gugulethu. Gifts of personal and toiletry items for the initiate's mother and grandmother were displayed. The uninvited guests had brought a monetary gift. There was conversation and singing led by three singing and dancing *izangoma*.

Having paid their respects and staying no longer than half an hour, the uninvited guests departed. Outside they were offered tea and scones. The male members of the family were seated outside, boiling meat, notably the tripe of a slaughtered beast. Innovations and change to the traditional practice were evident. Although there was a container of traditional sorghum beer, most of the men were drinking bottled hops beer. There were a number of the Ndebele farm

dwellers present, but the majority of people were members of the extended Ngidi family (Van Vuuren 1995: 37).

People were buried on farms for various reasons. They may have worked there, or lived there, or they had paid to bury there. The evidence of graves on a farm did not necessarily signify birth on a farm, as Mpho indicated urban dwellers also buried on farms where they were allowed to do so, because there were no black cemeteries nearby. As tangible evidence of family association with a farm the former farm workers could identify only the burials they knew of, generally to ancestors as far back as great-grandfather or great-grandmother, but more often only grandfather/mother.

For instance, Mmusi, a generation younger than Gosego could also only name his grandfather, although he knew his great-grandfather was an important and well-known traditional healer in Matudi, Botswana. Since the great-grandfather and great-grandmother did not leave Matudi, it is likely that Mmusi's grandfather was also born in Matudi, and migrated to the Witwatersrand as an adult. But when asked, where and when his grandfather was born Mmusi could not tell me. He could only tell me when and where his grandfather was buried. Comparable lack of knowledge of birthplaces of more remote ancestors was characteristic of all the testimonies. It is possible that by living in a peri-urban environment, and within more nuclear households than one finds in the remote rural areas, the naming of distant ancestors had declined in importance.

4.3.2 Establishing burial place

Understanding sense of burial place is framed by traditional cultural burial practices that demonstrate how sanctity of a grave is constructed. Although farm burials still occur I did not have the opportunity to observe one. I did attend burials of research participants, who died while I was doing the study. I describe them to demonstrate the sociocultural elements they entail. On the day before the burial of Busisiwe (Case study 7) her body was brought back from the mortuary to her house in Cosmo City, where it remained overnight as her family and friends held a night vigil. On the day of the burial an African Christian burial service was held, with prayers, hymns and eulogies. Following the service a procession of walkers accompanied the coffin, which was borne through the streets of Cosmo City to the former house of her deceased parents. After further prayers and hymns in respect of her forebears (see James 2000: 157), the hearse bearing the coffin proceeded, followed by cars carrying mourners, via a back road from Cosmo City to the cemetery. The route out of Cosmo City was customarily symbolic of the departure of the corpse from the homestead to its new abode among other deceased individuals, and, symbolically the living returned via the main road to Cosmo City.

Busisiwe's daughter and sisters were the chief mourners and they observed the interment from a gazebo set up at the graveside. A third service was held before the coffin was lowered into the grave. Male mourners filled in the grave while the watching women sang. Prior to and after the burial mourners had the opportunity to offer their condolences and make their monetary contribution, which was recorded in a special book retained by the chief mourner.

I observed after-interment ceremonies at two other burials of research participants. One was for Bandile (Case study 12), whose mother and widow were the chief mourners. The other burial was of a cousin of Bandile, his MoMoBrSo, one of his *malume* Bongani's sons, whose mother, too, was the chief mourner. On both occasions female family members sat with the chief mourners in their bedrooms. The room had been stripped of furniture save the bed upon which the chief mourner reclined. Chairs had been placed around the walls for other female mourners. The women made general conversation and partook of the funeral meal in the bedroom. Male and other mourners ate outside.

I found few sources on peri-urban farm burial practice. Most readings pertained to traditional burial practice. Such readings led me to conclude that the burial, I had observed, reflected both sociocultural change and continuity. They manifested the syncretism of Christian and African churches. Reader (1961: 71), Mayer and Mayer (1971) and Pauw (1973, 1974a, 1974b, 1975), emphasise the religious and cultural importance of ancestor beliefs regarding death among peri-urban farm workers. James (2007: 84) also notes in her research that the African independent churches were favoured among rural dwellers, because they accommodate, unlike mission churches, ancestral practices. Reader (1961: 71) found traditional Xhosa burial practices were modified in urban environments, and this was evident at the funeral of Xhosa speaking Bandile, which was held at a Johannesburg Methodist Church.

Reader (1961: 71, 115) also argues that rural burials and funerary practices were modified to meet contemporary realities. Following the migration of rural Xhosa of the Eastern Cape Province to mines and urban centres from the 1920s, sociocultural change was introduced by a 'need for money'. The traditional

practice of burning down the homestead of a deceased person or leaving it 'unoccupied to decay' ceased, because of the value placed on accommodation.

In contrast to the paucity of detailed discourses on the modified burials of the syncretised churches, there was a vast body of literature on traditional ethnic burials among the Pedi, Sotho-Tswana, Zulu and Ndebele. Although the majority of farm workers and dwellers were Ndebele and Tswana, I have drawn on various ethnic traditions to reflect a possible historicity for kin group burials made on the farm. According to Mönnig (1967: 53), traditional rural burials took place on the night following the day of death. Because many relatives of the deceased were employed elsewhere, it became customary to delay burial until family members returned from their places of work.

Whereas, Mönnig (1967:139) and Hammond-Tooke (1974: 139) note that family heads were buried in the cattle kraal, Lamla (1981: 4) suggests that by the 1980s burial inside the kraal was no longer a common practice among southern Nguni (Xhosa). Less important men, women and children were buried in the proximity of the homestead (Hammond-Tooke 1974: 327; Mönnig 1967: 139). Setiloane (1976: 69) states that among the Sotho-Tswana adult men and the village head (*rramotse*) were buried in the cattle kraal, mothers and old women were buried near the homestead, and very old women and very young children, 'who are nearest to the spirit world' in the *lolwapa* of the homestead.

The traditional grave was shallow and round, sometimes with a recess for the corpse. Among different ethnic groups there were various ways of positioning the body, which was often accompanied by its personal belongings. The Pedi bound the body into a foetal position and covered by a freshly slaughtered

animal-skin bag, it was placed in a sleeping position. Among Nguni and Sotho-Tswana groups the corpse was placed in a sitting position (Mönnig 1967: 53, 139-141; Hammond-Tooke 1974: 327; Setiloane 1976: 69). Setiloane (1976: 69) adds that a corpse faced the sunrise from whence people originated, with seeds so they could continue growing food, and anthill soil, which symbolised the continuity of life among the community. Male relatives took turns, according to status, to fill in the grave (Mönnig 1967: 141).

After a burial everyone who participated washed the *ditshila* (contamination) from his or her hands (Mönnig 1967: 53, 139-141). Washing hands after a funeral, even Christian, was obligatory according to Lamla (1981: 5). The washing of hands was customary in Christianised burials, as well, signifying purification from the contamination of death (Pauw 1974b: 436).

There were various rites and ceremonies. For instance, an ox was ritually slaughtered and the chyme thrown into the grave by the mourning relatives (Setiloane 1976: 70). On the day following a Pedi burial unsalted meat of the slaughtered animal was roasted and eaten by mourners, and, so that dogs could not eat them, the bones were buried (Mönnig 1967: 140-141). Meat from the Sotho-Tswana pre-burial ritual slaughter was cooked and eaten without salt, signifying that no joy was experienced in the eating thereof (Setiloane 1976:70). Pauw (1974b: 436) observes that among some Christian believers a beast was also ritually slaughtered for the ancestors, and the mourners consumed the meat. Van Vuuren (1995: 238) states that Ndebele include 'the recital of clan praises (*isibongo*)' at the grave, followed by the slaughtering of animals at the deceased's homestead. The purpose of the rituals is to 'unite the homestead and family members.'

Kiernan (1980: 128) notes that among the Zulu, although an *ukubuyisa* ritual was usually held one year after the burial, its observance was flexible. It may take place five years after death and be repeated if necessary. Its purpose was to close the mourning period by 'finally laying the spirit of the deceased to rest, so that he or she ceased to be troublesome to the living and quietly accept its status of ancestor'. Kiernan's observation on the repeatability of the ritual was significant as research participants said that *ukubuyisa* would be the finalising ritual after the relocation of the graves. Many of the farm workers and dwellers said they performed *ukubuyisa* or a similar ritual. Lamla (1981: 8) regards the *ukubuyisa* as a 'festival' with much food and beer, celebrated in remembrance of death and was observed not at the grave but at home. '*Ukubuyisa ithongo* (to bring back home the spirit of the dead) was a ceremony observed two years or more after death,' and it finally incorporated the deceased into 'the group of ancestors for the first time' (Lamla 1981: 8-9).

A year after reburial of the mortal remains of her parents in Mauritius Road graveyard, Cosmo City, Lindiwe had an 'unveiling' of the inscribed headstones on her parents graves. The ceremonial erection of a headstone together with the 'unveiling' ceremony was conducted by a religious minister, and followed by a ritual slaughter for the purpose of 'pacifying or pleasing the dead'. It is 'commonly regarded as a substitute for a traditional sacrifice' to bring back the dead (Pauw 1974b: 436).

4.3.3 Linking living and the dead

The essence of sacred place is the relationship between the living and the dead. And, the relationship between the living and the dead is an intangible par

excellence in the social identity of landscape. In the case of the former farm workers and dwellers it was expressed in the belief of continuation of life after death in the realm of the ancestor spirits. The position of the corpse was metaphorically a sleeping person and it indicated the idea of a continuing but altered life (Mönnig 1967: 43). The significance of the link between living and dead especially when graves have to be relocated can be only understood after examination of what those beliefs are and the practices associated with it entail.

Since death was not conceived as the cessation of life, mourning was both 'institutionalised' and an expression of sorrow (Mönnig 1967: 53, 138-142). Among adherents to traditional ancestor religion, graves are places where descendants *go phasa* (give sacrifices and libations) for health, healing and communication. People tended the graves for 'health and freedom from misfortune.' Among syncretised Christians graves are places to show a 'veneration of forefathers', which entailed *go phahla* (to pray) (James 2000: 157-158).

After death it is believed the *moya* (associated with the physicality of the living human being) and the *siriti* (more psychical in concept) depart, leaving the body to decay. The *moya* is believed to unite with the *siriti* when they depart the body at death and as a single *siriti* unit 'continue the existence of the individual' (Mönnig 1967: 53). Where exactly the existence continues is only vaguely conceived. The location is the realm of ancestors, a place somewhere above the earth and somewhere under the earth. Although body and spirit are no longer united, the spiritual element is believed to reside with the corpse in the grave. Mpho explained that when a person dies within his or her house, the family communicates with the spirit of the deceased, letting him or her know that they

will be departing from the house and going to rest in the earth. The spirit is told: 'You are no longer living in the house, you are going to be living in the grave.'

Ngubane (1977: 50, 51, 55) notes that there are various terms used to refer to the dead of which the collective term is *amathongo*, and the concepts in everyday usage are *abaphansi* and *amadlozi*. A ritual slaughter is performed for every dead person to integrate the spirit into the body of ancestors and bring it home as an *idlozi*. The role of the *amadlozi* is responsibility to protecting and disciplining descendants, without which protection a descendant is 'exposed to all dangers' (ibid: 55). Mmusi spoke of the danger he would suffer because he had lost his father's grave. The *abaphansi* connotes spirits dwelling down below, beneath the ground, and sleeping in the grave.

In contemporary burial practice, shortly after death in many instances the body of the deceased would be taken to a mortuary. The body of the deceased is returned from the mortuary to the deceased's house on the night before the burial, so that the body and the spirit could be taken together to the grave. According to Mpho, when an individual dies, the spirit will remain at the place of death until told by a descendant or family member where to go. Similarly in a reburial, unless a spirit was told to go with its mortal remains to a new grave, it would remain at the original burial site. It was for that purpose rituals needed to be performed at Dainfern for the spirits left there after the removal of the Gert and Frans graves in the 1980s. Saccaggi's (2012) research into the problems caused by improper relocation of an ancestral graveyard in Limpopo is particularly concerned with the spirits the grave owners believed had remained in the original graveyard.

The reason Mönnig (1967: 55) gives for night burial was to avoid the dead body casting a shadow on the gravesite. It was believed that a human shadow, conceived as a spiritual manifestation, if cast from a dead body during burial could cause the spirit of the dead to re-enter the body and by so doing create a ghost (1967: 139). As a result of such incorrect burial process the *siriti* cannot enter the realm of the ancestors, but haunts the gravesite and brings misfortune to its descendants. With proper rituals and offerings a ghost spirit could be appeased so that it could join the ancestral world (ibid). However, according to research participants most farm burials took place during the day, and only people not wanting to pay for the plot made illicit burials at night unbeknownst to the landowner.

The *siriti* (spirit of the dead) of a person of status within the family is believed to acquire supernatural powers in the form of an ancestor (*badimo*) and lives, together with other lesser spirits of the dead, men and women, in the world of the ancestral spirits (*badimong*) (Mönnig 1967: 56). All deceased adults are considered *badimo* (ancestor spirits) and only through them can the 'High or Only God' (*Modimo*) be reached (Setiloane 1976: 70). Women are honoured only within the family circle (Mönnig 1967: 56). Mönnig (1967: 62) makes the significant observation that all graves were regarded as ancestral graves and were normal 'places of worship and sacrifice' and conceived as 'shrines'.

West (1975: 187) notes: 'Belief in ancestors may continue on one level in a situation of change, while on another level cults of the ancestral shades may decline or become modified.' There is also individuality in the approach to the belief and the practices (1975:188). The importance of ancestors among urban dwellers may range from 'general awareness', to purchasing butchered meat or

slaughtering of goats and home-brewed beer for a feast at the end of a mourning period, (Hellman 1962: 111, 189).

West (1975: 187) stresses individual decision-making in how beliefs are practised among Christians and members of syncretised Christian African churches. There is, however, a continued relevance of ancestor practices by the Christianised African churches (1975: 190-193). Interestingly, Hellman (1962: 111, 189, 1967: 8) found that among Johannesburg-working Zulu, the stress of black urban life was evident in an increase in the practice of ancestor religion during the 1960s and early 1970s. James suggests that, today, ancestor beliefs within the syncretised African church/Christianity of some Pedi speakers focuses on the *makgoto* (forefathers), rather than traditional *badimo* (ancestor spirits), with an emphasis on praying. Although, intermarriage with Ndebele speakers has meant some do include ritual slaughter (James 2000: 157-158).

The graveyards were located not far from dwelling place. Homestead place — the dwelling abode where the farm dwellers married and gave birth— and sacred place — the grave and abode of the deceased buried in the earth. Musa (Case study 13) emphasised the importance to his family of having all family burials situated in one graveyard, not far from the dwelling place of living family members and descendants. This was comparably demonstrated in the burial of Madala (Hill 2001), who died in 2003. His body (and spirit) was taken back to the Eastern Cape, where he was born, for burial and where his ancestors were buried, because he had no children or any family in Zevenfontein informal settlement. When Bongani's parents died, although not born in the area, they were not returned to the Eastern Cape to the place of the ancestral graves. They

were buried close to the dwelling place of their descendants and in that way created a new sacred place on Zandspruit.

The farm workers and dwellers indicated that the proximity between dwelling place and burial place made the ritual observance and reverential obligations more practicable. James (2000: 157-158) has argued the significance of the proximity of dwelling place and burial/sacred place. People needed to communicate with the ancestor spirits on the significant occasions of the lifecycle, such as births, marriages and deaths. This tradition is found among the Ndebele, who during initiation ceremonies visit ancestral graves, and people also visited graves in times of trouble (Van Vuuren 1995).

There was also a practice of visiting graves at Easter to tend the graves of their family members (James 2007: 84). Formerly family members maintained graves as acts of respect for the ancestors, and because neglect would incur the displeasure of the ancestor spirits. After the evictions and forced removals, being unable to visit as often as they had, they made a point of at least visiting at Easter, although the graves remained significant to everyday life. Most of the testimonies indicated that the Easter visit was their custom as were the visits at times of trouble and life cycle events.

Although an ancestor spirit may not be disturbed by where its bones are resting, according to Mmusi, it is angered when the descendant is not attending to the place where the bones lie. The burden of attending graves, to give thanks, offer prayers, water and snuff weighs solely on the descendant, and only he or she can be punished for the neglect. Paying respect to his ancestors was important

to Mmusi, because they gave him his 'life' and they were the line through which he claimed his 'identity'.

Colson (1971: 71: 11-16, 226) argued that sacred places associated with earthly ancestral gravesites in the 'cult of the earth' of the Gwembe Tonga was untransportable to the new settlement area, because the 'earth cult' was associated with the spirits of the dead (*basangu*) and agrarian rituals (Colson 1971: 211). Abandoning the graves created a 'sense of alienation' from the earth (Colson 1971: 226-227). Nevertheless, burials in the resettlement area made the new place more of a geographical base for the shades (Colson 1971: 225). And, after the *basangu* prophets had died and were buried in the graveyards, their graves would become earthly shrines and that agrarian rituals would resume (1971: 231).

The importance of ancestral graveyards is suggested also by James (2000: 157) who notes that after being evicted from farms some Pedi-speaking parents insisted that their children promise to bury them in the farm graveyard because even if they could not live near their ancestors at least they could 'ensure that they would re-establish communion' with them in death. James also suggests that the relevance of residing near ancestral graves were 'issues of health and healing', and the importance of making offerings and tending the grave in order to 'secure health and freedom from ancestrally-derived misfortune'.

James (2000: 158) asks:

What, then, is the significance of this ancestrally-based communalism: this mixture of Old Testament imagery with a commitment to the burial place of forefathers who might turn out to have been itinerants in any case?

And, suggests:

One effect of using an imagery of ancestors and graveyards is to establish the fixity of claims on land - to prove or legitimise ownership, citizenship, ethnic or clan identity. ... The ancestors' claim to establishing a place may prove the prior or even exclusive right to it for their descendants.

Although data in later research had shown that the emphasis placed on graves had 'grown in inverse proportion' to the distance from them as a result of eviction, James (2007: 98) argues graveyards remain significant to land claims, because the denial of access to graves reflected an injustice. The burial site was the visible and tangible evidence of ancestral heritage.

In terms of the farm dwellers and workers sense of place the dwelling place of the living and the burial place of the deceased family members, because of the continuing relationship between the living and the dead, were physically associated, and that was evident in their proximity to each other. The significance of the proximity of dwelling place to burial place was its relevance to the observing of ancestor beliefs. For pragmatic reasons it not only made tending to the maintenance of a grave more accessible, but also for immediacy of performing occasional and seasonal offerings and keeping the ancestors informed of family matters.

The genealogies indicated that for the majority of the oral testaments research participants could identify birth and burial places on one of the farms to no earlier than grandfather or grandmother. Ethnographic literature indicated the significance of lineal ancestors to at least great-grandfather. Without the proximity of the physical remains of earlier generations those ancestors appear

to have become less significant than those whose graves could be visited. That is, the graves that formed part of the ancestral interaction were no older, according to my research, than two generations. Thus, for the older ancestors, since their graves were not and could not be part of everyday life, their significance fell away and remembering who they were became less important.



Photograph 4.1 Lion Park graveyard with Lion Park informal settlement in the middle distance, farm Nietgedacht 535 JQ, 2008

The proximity of dwelling place and burial place is illustrated by the location of an informal settlement and a nearby graveyard situated on land owned by the Lion Park. The settlement grew around the original dwelling of a man who worked at the Lion Park. The granddaughter of the original worker pointed out seven or so of her and her grandfather's family graves. A recent burial in the Lion Park graveyard was evident, although the burials were not exclusively of deceased individuals from the informal settlement. Dates on graves indicated that the graveyard predated the influx of shacks and settlers.

The detailed discussions of ancestral and burial practices that I include may not seem to the reader necessarily directly pertinent to the study. My readings led me to observe that discourses on relocating farm graveyards and on graveyards as evidence in applications for land claims do not provide adequate detail, such as to facilitate in-depth understanding of what exactly is involved. My reworking of the ethnic ethnographies brings the past into the present context of landownership and development by reconstructing the tangible and intangible dimensions of ancestral graveyards.

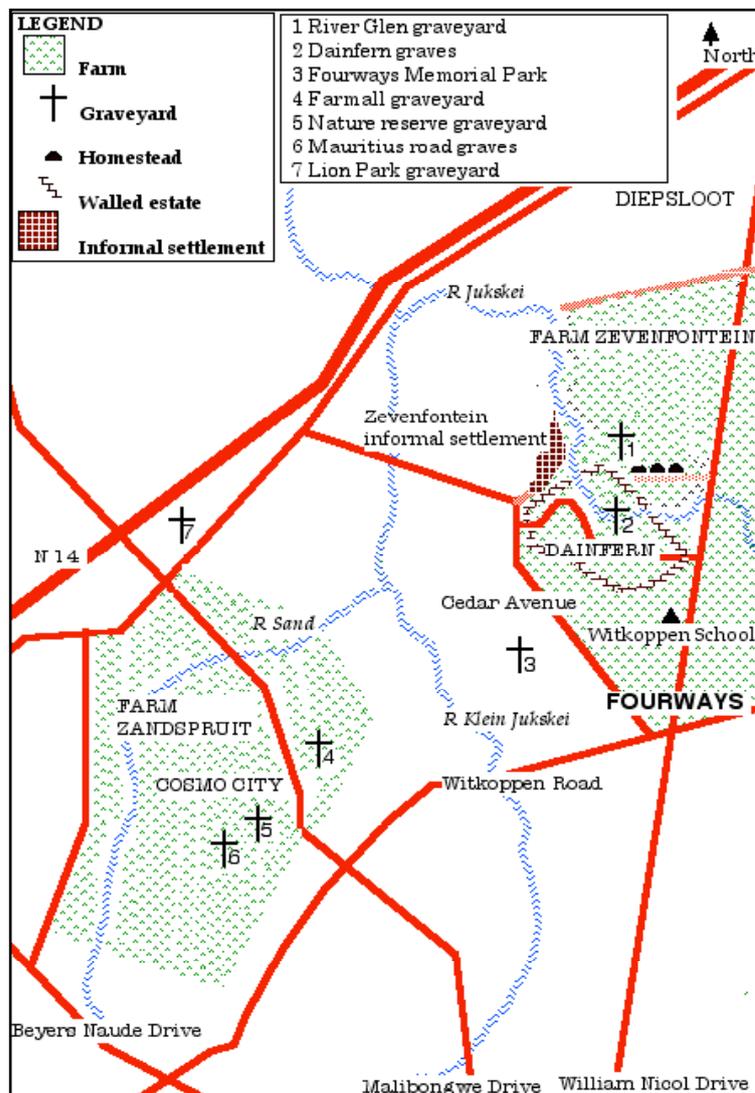
4.4 SENTIMENTS OF PLACE ATTACHMENT: LANDSCAPE AND MEANING

4.4.1 Tangibles and intangibles of place

The landscape of the farm Zevenfontein had undergone a great deal of sociocultural change since the years of dwelling and eviction, and it is discussed, here, as a landscape revisited. As the oral histories tell, many of the farm workers and dwellers had complied with eviction orders or been forcibly removed by the 1980s. By 2005 Fourways was an urban centre and various properties referred to in the oral histories were developed with town and cluster housing.

The accessible Portion 246 of Zevenfontein was still unoccupied, undeveloped veld. Van Vuuren (2010: 9-11) notes a 'pivotal message' of memory is conveyed by elements of the landscape — 'tree, river, soil and settlement'. His research showed that the memories of Ndebele labour tenants who were land claim applicants were charged with emotion, and applicants 'knew exactly who their former neighbours had been and often where and when they resettled.'

Trees, river, soil and settlement have primarily concretised dimensions that can be reconceived by revisiting the landscape and looking for the tangible evidence of settlement, or dwelling place and a past lifeway. For instance, Gosego and Dumisani returned to the farms and visualised the landscapes, as they were when they lived there. Douglas, Nel and Campbell of Witkoppen where Gosego's family were born and grew up had been developed into suburbs and various smallholdings he mentioned in his oral history were walled estates to which access was barred by gates. Many of the former gravel roads had been tarred and we explored the old footpaths of the landscape by motorcar.



Map 4.1 Sketch map showing graveyards situated on Zevenfontein and Zandspruit and surrounding farms that are referred to in the study, not drawn to scale

Concretised icons of the past instigated memories and anecdotes that revitalised the former landscape. Gosego pointed in the direction of his parents' homestead where he had lived when he was young, but nothing could be seen when peering through the dense foliage of shrubs and bushes. Pointing to a house situated close to the street and more readily glimpsed through the overgrown shrubbery, Gosego said: 'That's the old Nel house. I was a builder, I built the house together with Nel'. Nel's unmarried daughter, he said, still lived in the house. 'She is a strange one, doesn't like visitors'. Gosego pointed south in the direction of the Klein Jukskei River where he said there had been a small graveyard with the graves of his mother and father.

Revisiting the area three years later hoping to find the graves, we discovered the Nel house had been demolished and a development was underway on the site and like many others enclosed by a wall. Campbell's smallholding, where Gosego and Rethabile lived after they married and where family members were buried, was a cluster house estate to which we were denied entry. The subjectivity of memory and its accuracy was evident when I spoke with a local estate agent. As a child she had lived next door to Nel but, she said, she could not remember seeing any graves on the property. Oddly, though, she recalled often seeing a 'ghost' of a small black boy. When I asked Gosego about the ghost, he said he had never heard of or seen a ghost.

The old thoroughfare that linked Zevenfontein and Zandspruit and was used by the farm dwellers when visiting family and friends recalled significant relationship between individuals and the places with which they were associated. Such 'icons' of the past were recounted as nostalgic anecdotes that added to Gosego's sense of place (Spiegel 2004: 6). That 'big place,' he said,

'belonged to Brown'. He was 'a mining magnate and very rich'; 'those trees', indicating tall eucalyptus trees that bordered the road and surrounded the entire property, 'James planted.' 'James worked very hard all his life and was a very old man when he died.'

There were other places where his particular friends lived that brought back other memories. Passing my own home where his friend [AB] worked he recalled the 'black dogs' (our Kerry Blue terriers). 'Everyone was scared of them' he laughed. Then he asked me, as did some of other farm workers, was the doctor still living next door to me. Yes, I said and added that I did not think he was in practice anymore. He had run a medical clinic exclusively for farm workers and dwellers. 'He was a good doctor, everybody went to him', Gosego said. Passing the undeveloped smallholdings of the still rural Chartwell, Gosego indicated where other former farm workers lived. 'That's where Jabulani Ngidi lived,' and 'that's where Madala kept his cattle before he moved to Zevenfontein informal settlement.'

The access to Hans was from its northern boundary of School Road. The road passed an Eskom electrical substation and continued on to Losmacherrie informal settlement, after which it became un-drivable as it neared the Jukskei River. At the river the road turned south and followed the course of the river until it was it became part of Dainfern. Continuing south of Dainfern the road turned east at a right angle, where the River Glen graveyard was situated, and joined William Nicol Drive. After leaving the car on the side of the road and proceeding on foot, Gosego pointed to some trees close to the Jukskei River and said that was where his homestead used to stand.

Within a few minutes of reaching the copse Gosego discovered the remnants of his old homestead. Devoid of constructed landmarks, Gosego recognised the old indicators, though the trees were taller and denser. The house was but broken walls of fired bricks buried in veld grass and weeds and overhung by a tangle of branches. He pointed out where he had had his own well, a vegetable garden, *kraal* (livestock enclosure made of branches) for his goats and a fowl coop. Nothing remained of kraal and chicken coop which had been made of tree branches. They were simply figments of memory.

The homestead was, however, constructed of brick and that was significant and symbolic in meaning. Such a homestead — *ntlo* — was categorised as a permanent dwelling place whose tangibility rested in its form of construction. Such a dwelling is conceived quite differently from a shack or a dwelling made from corrugated metal as found in an informal settlement, such as the homestead of Mmusi after he was evicted. A *mokhukhu* (shack) is conceived as impermanent, temporary, and it signifies a place of transience (Hill 2001).



Photograph 4.2 Gosego's old homestead situated on Hans, Zevenfontein, 2007

The oral histories had all made the same point. Their dwellings were permanent dwellings, which had significance for their sense of dwelling place. By the materiality of the homesteads, the farm signified a permanent place, which they considered as their home. For instance, the family homestead of Duduzile (Bongani's sister's son) was situated on Farmall not far from the graveyard from where Bongani and Lindiwe's graves had been relocated. It, too, was a *ntlo*, made of mud brick and thus also conceived as permanent. The homestead was derelict but an old woman, recently deceased, had been living in it. Walking among the crumbled mud brick walls, Duduzile indicated separate rooms. He pointed out the room where his parents slept, and stepping into another room explained it was where he slept with the other young boys, and there was another room for the girls. Another room was where his grandmother had slept. He paced out the vegetable garden and the maize patch and indicated a site under some trees, which had been a fowl run, another site had been the cattle kraal and another the goat kraal.

Comparable evidence was found in Cosmo city. On the corner of Namibia and Windhoek Streets, not far from his own RDP house, Lucas pointed to a large pile of earthen rubble and weeds. It was, he said, Lindiwe's demolished homestead. It had still been intact when Lucas first arrived in Cosmo City and had only the week before been destroyed. The rubble was cleared in 2007 when the site was purchased for the construction of an African church, ironically, to which Lucas's own mother belonged.

The indelibility of a remembered dwelling place was expressed by Dumisani who on a return visit to the farm Zandspruit located the site of his father's homestead under the streets of Cosmo City. 'Right here on the corner of these

two streets,' he said. Getting out of the car, he stood in the middle of the intersection where, he said, his father's house had stood. On an earlier occasion Dumisani's brother Musa had pointed north to two tall eucalyptus trees growing on an undeveloped slope above the Sand River. 'I planted those trees,' he said. It was the place where his family homestead had been situated after eviction from south of the river in the 1950s. He indicated a copse of similar trees, among which a construction company had erected its prefabricated offices, from where, he said, he had obtained the saplings. Despite the intervening years the immediacy of the past settlement of Zandspruit remained as distinct in memory as if still visible in the altered landscape.

The landscape also revealed the related history of Hans the registered owner of Portion 246. On the south side of School Road there was a deep ditch and mound of earth, overgrown with weeds that stopped a short distance from the Eskom substation where the road curved to the south and continued on towards the Jukskei River as already described. Before reaching the substation, and despite no obvious landmark visible from the road, Dumisani recognised the entrance to Hans from the distance travelled. Struggling through shoulder high weeds and over the ditch and mound he exclaimed at the sight of the old stone gateposts. 'Gosego built these stone pillars,' he said. Fifty or so metres from the gate posts, a berm of higher ground overgrown by entangled flowering shrubs was the site of Hans's house. 'It had a beautiful garden.' Nothing, but impenetrable straggly exotic trees and bushes were visible and of Hans's house there was no sign.

Further south along the gravel farm road was where the amaNdebele lived, evident as a few low piles of fired and unfired clay and mud brick rubble.

Dumisani indicated that southeast of the rubble was the site of Mandla Sokhulu's father's cattle kraal and where he kept his herd overnight. Nothing of the kraal or other evidence of Ndebele material culture remained. All that was left was memories. He pointed southwest and said he and his family had lived in their own house which they built after Hans brought them from Zandspruit to live on Zevenfontein.

Van Vuuren (2010: 14) suggests that after development people fail to recognise the exact site of graves owing to what is called 'bodily amnesia'. However, searching for gravesites in areas where construction was taking place or where development had already occurred was more than just bodily amnesia. The problem lay in the changes in, for instance, roads and entrances to a property and in many instances the graves had already been removed. Spiegel (2004: 7 cited in Van Vuuren 2010: 14) suggests that '... wilderness, although seemingly impassable, represents the recognisable moment in bodily memory'.

Graves were another form of traditional material culture of the farm workers and dwellers and referencing the family structure through ancestry in the identity of an individual. Tilley (2006: 14) notes that: 'It is through making material references to the past that identification with place occurs, through the medium of "traditional" material culture and representations of life-styles, urban and rural, that no longer exist.' Thus, Tilley's observation could bring insight to the shallow depth of ancestor recall among the peri-urban farm workers and dwellers, in so far as there being no graves of the earlier ancestors, and thus, no material artefacts with which to associate them. The recall of ancestry required the material cultural referent.

Graves signify family pedigree (Barnes 2012 (1967): 103). The genealogical link of the Mnguni family was evident in their graves in the nature park at Cosmo City. Musa could only identify the grave of his father who was buried in 1950. He could not say if there were any earlier burials. According to his cousin Dumisani, most recent burials had been made in the late 1980s. Genealogy, evident in depth of lineage people were able to recall was closely linked to existence of graves, because it was at the gravesite that the living family inform the ancestors of the significant events of the life cycle, birth, marriages and death. Only the ancestors to whom these important events can be communicated continued to be part of the everyday life of the living.

Van Vuuren (2010: 14) further observes: 'Graves as mnemonic tools interlock the memorised past with the present as far as the ritually significant genealogical link is concerned. There is grave concern among families who fail to secure this interlock.' Although the identified generations were not deep, the graves were cultural and historical records and isomorphic of the link between the farm workers and the farms where they were born, lived and died. They also held significance as cultural assets and symbols of cultural heritage. James (2000: 157-158) suggests that graves reflect the ancestral presence in the land that implies 'collectivity and inclusivity' and a 'compelling symbol' of 'freeholders' property rights' and 'African communalism'.

4.4.2 Inscribed meaning and sentiment

I have shown that the historical and sociocultural constructions of Zevenfontein, (Zandspruit and other peri-urban Fourways farms) as a place of dwelling and burial and concomitant relationship between living and dead, were subjective

and unique realities for everyone who lived there. Essentially, landscapes can be experienced differently by individuals and groups, or be shared experiences. In either context, a landscape holds subjective and unique meanings for single and multiple individuals, and as a result can become a contested place (Rodman 2003: 208; Tilley 2006: 7). The cause for contestation is the unique social construction of the landscape by people who live and know it, and by other people who give their own alternative unique meaning to the place (Rodman: 212; Low & Zúñiga (2003: 15).

Tilley (2006: 7) further observes that singularly individuals may hold 'conflicting feelings about a place' with the effect that there are numerous 'permutations on how people interact with place and landscape.' Multiple individual feelings and associations with a place provide various 'possibilities for disagreement about, and contest, over, landscape.' Low (1992: 165) succinctly states it, thus: '*Place attachment* is the symbolic relationship formed by people giving culturally shared emotional/affective meanings to a particular space or piece of land that provides the basis for the individual's and the group's understanding of and relation to the environment.'

These observations on the essence of sense of place and place attachment were manifest in the former Zevenfontein farm workers and dwellers' historical and cultural symbols and icons of homesteads and graveyards that gave identity and emotive quality to the micro landscape within a macro peri-urban environment. But, as I have argued above, the macro environment had its own unique historical and cultural constructions and meanings. As such the macro environment with its dominant sociopolitical and economic context was not simply the broader environment of the farm, rather, it influentially impacted on

the micro landscape, and people's perceptions of farm. It was such implications that reflected the cited authors' conceptualisation of contested place. Tilley (2006: 9) argues: 'Traditions carry these experiences into the present, the past governs the present rather than the present governing the past.' However, despite the influence of the attachment to Zevenfontein and its cultural and historical associations and meanings, appraisal by the farm workers and dwellers from the basis of present circumstances, the macro environmental values were assimilated into the construction of *place*, because life is a field of continual experiences.

Nevertheless, the traditions of the past governed the present and were fundamental to any feelings about being barred from visiting graves, the loss of ancestors' burial sites and the relocation of a graveyard. Such traditions were contained in the constructing of homesteads, raising families, burying deceased family members, being evicted or forcibly removed and deserting homesteads and abandoning ancestral graveyards. These factors were cultural, social and symbolic constructs of the farm workers and dwellers' experience of sense of place. Homestead place —their dwellings signified the tangibility of a place of abode where they married and gave birth. After death they buried their dead in the earth near their homesteads and the grave signified a final abode — sacred place (Bromley 1995 cited by Horn 1998: 9-22). Loss of place as a result of evictions deprived the farm workers and dwellers of their traditional former lives, leaving them with only memories of previous experiences of farm and family life and death, and the practicing of traditions and customs associated with these, that is, the intangibles that underpin attachment to place. After homesteads were demolished the graves were their only tangible construct or material artefact.

De Jongh (2015: no page numbers) finds an analogy to sentiment about the South African landscape in the minds of its subjective historians in the 'songlines' of Australian first people inhabitants. Although quite intangible and incomprehensible to people who do not sing them, they are none the less very real to their creators. And, in order to understand *songlines* as a historical perspective it is meaningful to consider them, and in some way accommodate, them in a completely different mindset of people with alternative subjective histories and cultural constructs. So, too, the Zevenfontein farm worker and dweller-historians' construction of the farm as dwelling and burial place, which conflicted with the subjective historical and cultural constructs of landowners and developers, were no less real and valid.

Rodman observes (2003: 205) that places are 'politicised, culturally relative, historically specific, local and multiple constructions'. A definition that is important to bear in mind in order to comprehend the attitudes and sentiments of farm workers/dwellers and their eventual disputation with landowners and developers. The sentiments were linked to the meaning the former farm workers/dwellers gave to the farm Zevenfontein as a result of its imprinting on their psyches. In South Africa sense of place has especial relevance in discourses on land restitution, first person claims to land and the struggles against land eviction during the apartheid era. Tilley (2006: 18) captures the essence of what was experienced at Zevenfontein in his observation that 'The interpretation of the past meanings of place and most crucially rival claims about whose ends these different meanings serve become crucial concerns in a globalized world. People in places and moving within and between these places constitute landscapes, which are therefore spaces of personal and social identity.'

In conceptualising a contested place of the two histories of the farm — one by which the black farm workers and dwellers' claim to first person occupation and the alternative of the registration of land to whites — the black farm dwellers expressed their sense of ownership of the land. In a few of the testimonies one hears the farm workers and dwellers clearly express the notion that they believed they held some sort of 'legal' dwelling rights to the farms where they were born or lived. For instance, Gosego said he had a letter, Neo said the land was left in trust to his grandmother's descendants, and Mmusi knew only the name his father called the land — '*My grond*'. They also mentioned not being *informed* or *consulted* before land was sold or graves removed, and being 'owed' some sort of recompense by the landowner for loss of rights. For instance, Mandla said he was owed unpaid wages and Mpho thought she was owed financial recognition from Hans's beneficiaries for her years of trust and service.

The people not only culturally and historically construct their landscape, but also landscape has an indelible imprint on human beings. De Jongh (2015), at a workshop on proposals for drastic changes to land usage (namely, hydraulic fracturing for underground gas in the Karoo), points out how such drastic physical and conceptual changes impact not only on the agricultural and livestock rearing livelihoods of the current rural dwellers and workers, but also on their perceptions and conceptions of the landscape as place. His perceptive argument has pertinence for the Zevenfontein farm workers and dwellers' own perceptions of the land to which they had sentimental attachment. In a paper titled *There is no place like people* De Jongh (2015: no page number) suggests that conceptions about localities belong to the experience of the people living in them. And, playing on the interaction of people and landscape, coins the expression 'life takes place'. In other words, the physical and spatial

surroundings not only have an influence on human interactions and relations to them, but also on their subjective construction of identity.

Getting back to Zevenfontein, place is, thus, concretised within the microenvironment of the locality, for instance the farm, and in the macro-environment of the globalised peri-urban context. It is within these constructs and historicity that people experience life and conceive place. In the case of the Zevenfontein (and other) former farm dwellers/workers their experience of living — the physical realities of building homesteads, raising families, burying deceased family members and digging graves created the place, and the intangible realities of associated activities and interrelationship with other humans. Thus, the graves and ancestral relations were evidence of a life lived, and, ultimately, the farm workers and dwellers' conception of the farm as their own place.

In similar vein, I have suggested elsewhere (Hill 2005: 3) that as a means of concretising the farm Zevenfontein as space and place:

Graves [were] a way of land marking and of identifying the landscape as one's own. In the lie of the land, graves conjure up ideas about home, individual and community gatherings and conflicts, histories and oral traditions. In essence graves epitomise a relationship between people and the land. ... The relationship the landscape has with people in the different passages of its history is like a book with pages of implanting, imprinting and land marking, which accumulate as an anthology of symbols. The processes of implanting, imprinting and land marking are part nature and part culture. In a way it is a mythologizing process ... a narrative of beliefs and understandings of reality.

The farm workers' graves were one way in which they imagined or mythologized the landscape, but their mythology evolved with the changes in land use.

Zevenfontein had been the 'dwelling place of culturally different groups of peoples — cattle herders, farmers, and tenant labourers. It had been pastureland, farmland and burial ground' (Hill 2005: 3). And, at the time of the current research it was undergoing another change through its urbanisation. Thus, the farm workers' perceptions in terms of sense of place took into consideration the changing economics, demographics and political conditions of the lived space in a new relation between place and space and through which they evaluated their sentimental attachment.

Many of the research participants conceived *umhlaba* (literally translated as land) to include the experience of living on the land. *Umhlaba* entailed a relationship to soil for ploughing, clay for building homesteads, place for dwelling on and earth for burying the dead. Zevenfontein and Zandspruit homesteads and graveyards were inscribed with unique meanings, of memories, people and events that transformed 'space into place' (Low & Zúñiga 2003: 13). Low and Zúñiga (ibid) describe inscribed spaces as the 'fundamental relationship' between human beings and the 'environments they occupy'. It is through the inscribed space that the meaningful relationship between former farm workers and the locale they occupied (Low and Zúñiga 2003:13), that the formation and relocation of graveyards should be considered.

Low and Altman (1992: 2) postulate that within cultural and historical contexts emotional and cultural attachment to homestead place and sacred place is a 'unique subjective experience' of 'bonding' with a place. Central to the cultural context Low and Altman (1992: 5) identify emotion, feeling, knowledge and beliefs. Historical context includes linear time — past, present and future — and cyclical time — 'recurring meanings and activities' (Low & Altman 1992: 7).

Eviction or forced removals resulted in the people abandoning the connection to ancestral graveyards through no fault of the owners, family members or descendants.

Parmelee and Rubenstein (1992: 142-144) suggest that time and space are conflated in place attachment and it is through life experiences and objects that an individual assigns meaning to a particular place and time. Valued objects, Parmelee and Rubenstein (1992: 153) suggest, are 'elements of both place identity and personal identity' and they play 'important roles in the events, relationships and places that each individual sees as being formative or essential in her [/his] life'. 'At the collective level, 'objects may restate basic social and cultural premises.'

In analysis Low (1992: 165-170) suggests that place attachment includes not only emotional and cognitive experiences but also cultural beliefs and practices. She identifies certain typologies of place attachment of which the following were relevant to the study: genealogical links to land through history or family — birth, marriage and staying in a location (Low 1992: 167); ideological dimensions of religious and mythological conceptions that create sacred spaces through beliefs and practices (Low 1992: 167, 170); narrative links through story telling and place naming; and loss of land or destruction of community 'activated retrospectively, through the process of losing the place and subsequent reminiscing and re-creating through memory of a place that is now destroyed, uninhabited, or inaccessible' as well as resettlement, which evoked feelings of bereavement (Low 1992: 167, 169). De Jongh (2015: no page number, citing Norberg-Schulz 1985: 19), 'Even in our "global" epoch, the spirit of place remains

a reality. Human identity presupposes the identity of place, the “*genius loci*” therefore ought to be understood and preserved.’

4.5 CONCLUSION

The oral testimonies have been deconstructed in respect of subjective histories and accounts of land occupation and evictions, cultural constructs of dwelling and raising families, and of ancestral beliefs and burial practices. I have argued that the farm Zevenfontein (and Zandspruit) was a construct of both nature and culture. The tangibles and intangibles of place were foregrounded, and, by drawing attention to them I have signified certain principles of burial and ancestral graveyards that have bearing on relocating graveyards. In essence, I have pointed out principles of a former lifeway and of traditions that will be relevant as to whether graves, essentially ancestral graveyards, can not only be physically relocated but also, and more importantly, can the conceptual dimension of a sacred place be relocated.

The legislation pertaining to farm dwelling was discussed so as to locate the relocation of graves within the wider context of South African land tenure issues. Settlement pattern, and ancestry, births, marriages and death were explored. I have indicated, that despite the shallow depth of ancestor recall by traditional ethnic rural standards, it was not necessarily shallower than that of the whites in whose names the farms were registered. Oral history within the constructs of place attachment discourse, intrinsic to the issues, dispute, of Zevenfontein and its graveyards were indicated, as were subjective and emotional dimensions of sense of place. Since the focus of the study is

relocation of graves the inter-relationship of dwelling, burial practices and the conception of ancestors were discussed in detail.

I also established the *status quo* of the farm workers and dwellers at the time when they interacted with the Zevenfontein and Dainfern landowners and developers. The testimonies also indicated that all the farm workers or dwellers had either complied with eviction orders, or been forcibly removed. The exceptions were the households of Gugulethu Ngidi, Tshepo Guma and Dumisani Mnguni's brothers and sister's children still living in the homesteads on Hans (Portion 246), numbering more than fifty individuals, and the people living in Losmacherrie, of whom there were considerably more.

There was an ambiguity in the histories of the farm workers/dwellers in that they recounted both a first person occupation of Zandspruit and the experience of being farm workers or farm dwellers on the white-owned Zevenfontein. The dichotomy in their perspectives alluded to power relations and the demographics and the economic and political dynamics of the peri-urban landscape and its history. Power relations between first-person occupants and registered landownership were significant for how the farm workers and dwellers formulated problems with the relocation of their graves and perceived the continued occupation of Zevenfontein by some of them.

The following chapter explores the facets of how the farm workers and dwellers' reformulated sense of place as specific issues and collectively made decisions within the frame of altered senses of place created by landowners/developers, power relations and the general urbanisation of the peri-urban context.

CHAPTER 5: ISSUES AND DECISIONS OF GRAVE CONCERN

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 4 discussed not only the subjective histories and cultural constructs of the former farm workers and dwellers' experience of dwelling and burying in the micro landscapes of Zevenfontein and Zandspruit, but also the impact of the dominant social stratum's alternative history that caused evictions and forced removals resulting in farm workers/dwellers deserting homesteads and abandoning graveyards. The ambiguity of a history of, on one hand, first person occupation of the land, and on the other, working and dwelling on and eviction and forced removal from the white-owned Zevenfontein was characteristic of the peri-urban landscape.

Chapter 5 focuses on the farm Zevenfontein, and it explores not only the reformulation of sense of place constructs as specific issues premised by the relocation or dislocation of the graveyards as a result of the urbanisation of the farm, but also the context of a peri-urban past and the growing urbanisation of the Fourways environment with its concomitant implication of sociocultural power relations.

In Section 5.2 I discuss the farm workers and dwellers' collective approach to the identifying of issues with and formulating decisions on the relocation of graves. 5.2.1 examines power relations and the sense of community and collective worldview, and 5.2.2 discusses leaders and followers in decision-making. Section 5.3 outlines the *status quo* of peri-urban farm graves in terms of graves and landscape change focusing on River Glen and other graveyards where

the symbolic nature of graves are impacted upon by peri-urban context and urbanisation. Section 5.4 focuses on the problematics of the Dainfern graves and power relations between grave owners and landowners/developers. Section 5.5 considers the remaining dwellers on Portion 246 in respect of subjective past and present realities of sense of place.

In discussing sense of place and the history of the farms I pointed out the differing and subjective readings of history. In this section I continue to differentiate between the two histories as and where it is relevant. However, for the most part the context of relocating graves was heavily impacted upon by the dominant history of the landowners/developers. Thus, I consistently refer to the graves as being situated on white-owned farms, although bearing in mind that it was not necessarily how the farm workers/dweller saw reality or framed their issues.

5.2 COLLECTIVE DECISION-MAKING

5.2.1 Power relations and the collective approach

Essentially in contesting Zevenfontein, its homesteads and graveyards, there were unequal power relations. The dominant power-holding stratum had the greater evocation with its cultural construct of registered ownership. Hence, the farm workers/dwellers resorted to collective bargaining to identify issues and make decisions regarding Portion 246 and the River Glen graveyard with the developers of a vast and costly upmarket development, and to contest and claim restoration for a destroyed or desecrated ancestral burial place with the Dainfern landowners and developers.

I have indicated that specific graves were the concern of individuals and individual families, however, when it came to discussing them or their relocation they were dealt with as a collective concern. In one respect by adopting a collective approach the farm workers and dwellers increased their negotiating power base. However, from the perspective of the developers' dominant stratum of power, since they were paying for it, the relocation of graves could only be done *en masse*, and the families with graves were obliged to make collective decisions.

In the study of power relations, power has been defined as 'the ability of a person or social unit to influence the conduct and decision-making of another through the control over energetic forms in the latter's environment.

Furthermore,

as societies expand or evolve demographically and technologically there is... [not only] ...an overall increase in power (and energy)... [but also] ...an increase in the concentration of power in the hands of ruling elites or classes, to such an extent that while the lower strata have more power in absolute terms, they have less power in relative terms (Seymour-Smith 1986: 230 citing Adams 1977).

An alternative approach to power relations considers the imbalance of political and legal power in negotiations as a 'relationship between persons with different resources, attributes and goals' whereby in the context of decision-making the more powerful social stratum has control over the environment of the less powerful (Seymour-Smith 1986: 230).

In considering the character of the power relations between farm workers/dwellers and landowners/developers they reflected both definitions. The dichotomy of senses of place in the peri-urban environment meant that

despite the farm workers and dwellers' subjective histories and psychological and mythological constructions of their sense of place, they had to approach issues concerning the Zevenfontein graves from the context of the power relations of the changing sociopolitical, economic and demographic environment. The Zevenfontein township developers were involved in creating an alternative sense of place for an urbanising and elitist enclave. And, that sense of place was epitomised in the form of walled golf and countrified residential estates, providing security and ease of life. Thus, essentially, the 'economic relations' in the change in use of the landscape from agricultural to township were, unfortunately, essentially a matter of relations of power, which Cohen observes, are a 'major part of the political order in any society' (1969: 217).

When it came to operating as a collective the Zevenfontein farm workers and dwellers were not a corporate or ethnic group. They spoke various languages, predominantly isiNdebele, Sesotho and Setswana, and by 2004 only a very few still lived on Zevenfontein. However, as James (2000: 144) has observed, establishing a community stressed 'communal ownership' and emphasised 'that land, in African culture is a jointly-owned resource.' At meetings ethnic groups were not emphasised in respect of the grave ownership or even dwelling on the farm, other than as a general observation, that most people were Ndebele. As Tilley (2006: 9) has pointed out, the attributing of polysemic ethnicity to individual identity is transient. This was apparent particularly in the context of the peri-urban farm graves and farm dwelling, because of the changing geographical and demographic context. Furthermore, in the peri-urban context ethnic origins as social identity had no real sustainability, and when presenting

themselves as a group, drawing attention to ethnic differences, served no purpose.

In negotiating with landowners and developers over the Zevenfontein graves, there was among the Zevenfontein farm dwellers a sense of a joint ownership of the ancestral graveyards. With the focus on ownership of the ancestral graveyards, the group extended beyond just the Zevenfontein dwellers to include anyone who had a grave situated anywhere on Zevenfontein, or had a grave that at sometime in the past was situated on Zevenfontein. In other words sense of place extended beyond the confines of a bounded farm and its local residents to include everyone who had graves anywhere as a tangible reality to conceptual and intangible dimensions of domicile in the broader peri-urban area.

A sense of 'African culture', as indicated by James (2006: 9), inherent in ancestral graves was also a bond among the farm workers and dwellers, and they used the term in conceiving the issues they had with the relocation of their graves. The rather nebulous *African culture* was politicised in its use by Undertaker, the meaning of which the farm workers and dwellers understood quite well. It was a generic term used by black South African farm workers and dwellers for undifferentiated ethnic cultural traditions — cultural constructs not embraced by the white social stratum. In other words, its use implied not only a commonalty among the farm workers, but also exclusion of white comprehension. It was a sweeping affirmation of a subjective history that had been ignored by earlier British colonial and Nationalist Party sociopolitical structures. And, by using it conceptually and in communication with landowners and developers the farm workers, and particularly the highly politically

articulate Undertaker, opposed the alternative white dominant history. Ngubane (1977: 24) explains the term anthropologically, however, since she uses it herself, as way of *thinking* that acknowledges differing ethnic cultures and languages, while at the same time recognises 'an affinity' among different ethnic groups regarding worldview.

The unity implied in collectivity and community is both an ethnographic construct, and an instrumental construct used by the Zevenfontein farm workers and dwellers for decision-making. From an ethnographic point of view Amit (2002: 4) has suggested that multi-sited research necessitates anchoring a study in a collectivity in respect of its economic, political and cultural connections. That has relevance, as the study focuses on a group of people who share issues with graves, which in South Africa is closely linked to economic, political and cultural dynamics. However, it is the second sense that is explored.

From the farm workers/dwellers perspective the pertinent questions to ask were in what way did they conceptualise their collectivity, what was its rationale and political and sociological implications, and in what way was the collectivity utilised (Amit 2002a: 1, 4). Conceptually the collectivity of farm workers and dwellers was of the sort that Amit (2002a: 5) characterises as 'often partial, ephemeral, specific to and dependent on particular contexts and activities' where she defines consociations. The Zevenfontein workers and dwellers community was entirely conceptual. It did not exist outside of the issues and the decisions being made about Zevenfontein and its graves.

As far as conceptualising their collectivity, consociations, such as that of the farm workers/dwellers' interaction group, provided 'fellowship without

necessarily giving rise to highly charged collective categories' (Amit 2002a: 5). The collectivity of the farm workers/dwellers reflected Rapport's (2002: 7) cognisance of the 'individual actor' as being 'conscious, intentioning, creative, and ironic' and more than his or her membership of the community. This construct is important in understanding the role of Undertaker and others who acted outside the group at times.

The political and sociological rationale was expediency in dealing with economically powerful landowners and developers. The rationale for community formation was originally so that family members could give consent to the relocation of the River Glen graveyard and more importantly the matter of the Dainfern graves. The rationale for its function was decision-making in respect of politicised and economic referents related to grave relocation. However, grave relocation was not dissociated from issues of landownership and land occupation, because both dwelling and burial construed sense of place and establishing a community had nuances of South African legal land claim applications. In the imbalance of power relations between the farm workers/dwellers and the landowners on whose property the graves were situated, a strong and authoritative leader such as Undertaker was needed in order to confront the landowners/developers as equal negotiators.

'Rhetorically, communities may represent themselves to themselves, as well as to others, as homogenous and monolithic, as *a priori*, but this is an idiom only, a gesture in the direction of solidarity, boundedness and continuity,' argues Rapport (2002: 8). In working together to achieve their aims the community of Zevenfontein farm workers and dwellers and other people with graves presented an image of bounded continuity that evoked their cultural and human rights. It

was as this supposed monolithic homogeneity I perceived disjunctions caused by relocating graves that developed in interactions within the group, between interacting groups and in disharmonising the relationship between individuals and their ancestors.

It was apparent that the Zevenfontein community was primarily instrumental. Its interactions arose from circumstantial associations, conceptualised with reference initially to the graves and African culture, but primarily to the land. Musa, as already indicated, although concerned about his graves in the Cosmo City nature reserve, had collected a history of all the people born or dwelling on Zandspruit for the purpose of establishing a land claim but made no record of gravesites. Interestingly, Undertaker had said that all graves were important, because they have some relative to the deceased who might not be visiting because they lived too far away. Thus, all graves, those with identifiable family members and those that appeared to be old or abandoned, should be treated equitably. The statement is somewhat redundant, but it has two extrapolations. On one hand the graves are so old they should to be considered as heritage sites and of archaeological value, and on the other that at some time in the future a relative might make an enquiry about the grave, and its whereabouts should be known so that he or she can visit it.

Amit (2002a: 24) argues that

... if people imagine themselves, even when they do not know each other, to share distinctive collective identity, then they can mobilize themselves as a community [with] shared experiences of participation in particular associations and events (Amit 2002a: 58-60).

The open-endedness of Amit's (2002a) argument implies that both the Zevenfontein and Zandspruit decision-making groups comprised a number of individuals operating on a collective basis and not as corporate groups acting under prescribed leadership. For instance, Musa was able to change the leadership dynamic of the group negotiating on the relocation of the Zandspruit graves. He was able to prevent the graves from being relocated from the nature park to Fourways Memorial Park, by speaking outside of the group and directly to the developers.

By offering two suggestions, remove the graves, or leave them in Cosmo City, individuals within the Zandspruit group could make decisions in keeping with their own values. Although at Zandspruit within the collective there were alternatives, the developers would only agree to a collective decision. There could be no individual personal preference. If an individual wanted his or her graves relocated somewhere else, it would have been at their own expense. For instance, Duduzile had a grave he wanted the landowner to relocate because it was in danger of collapsing into a sand quarry. However, he was ineffective in organising the relocation of his grave on his own, because of the personal expense. From his point of view if graves had to be removed, the costs had to be met by the developer, and it was more effective to negotiate through a group.

With regard to the collective approach to the relocation of the River Glen graveyard an advertisement in various media formats placed by the funeral service company that was hired to remove the graves summoned the Zevenfontein families to attend a meeting. Some farm workers/dwellers, such as Gosego and those living some three hundred kilometres away in Polokwane, Limpopo Province, heard a radio announcement. Social networks extending from

Witkoppen School informed many people because younger dwellers, such as Thandi, had remained in contact with former school friends. Other former pupils maintained contact with the school because it provided a weekend venue for social groups, such as churches and women's associations. Through the school network news of a meeting about the Zevenfontein graves spread by word of mouth to people living in Diepsloot, Zevenfontein and Losmacherrie informal settlements, and the remaining dwellings on Hans. Whereas, people living, for instance in Cosmo City, Soweto and Alexandra, as well as the former so-called Ndebele and Tswana homelands, such as Soshanguve, Klipgat, Mabopane and Hammanskraal north of Pretoria, were informed by relatives still living locally.

The meetings were not confined to Zevenfontein graves. As early as 2003 anyone with graves on farms was called to meetings. Most grave owners wanted Undertaker to help them with finding out why they could not visit graves, such as an old man who had graves situated in a game farm near the Hennops River on Doornrandje. Zenzile had graves, other than those on Slack, situated east of William Nicol Drive on the eastern half of Zevenfontein 407JR, and Gosego's niece Lesidi had graves on Witkoppen. Their problems were either that graves were 'lost' as a result of development or requiring relocation in view of prospective development. Some such as Lesidi gave up in the end, whereas Zenzile's graves were successfully and satisfactorily relocated.

The school was instrumental in advertising the meeting to people without graves. Some research participants said they joined the group as a show of solidarity. For instance, Mpho said she also began attending the meetings out of solidarity with family members, and only later discovered she, too, had a grave

on the farm. Others, such as Dudu, were promised reimbursement for travelling expenses if they attended. Dudu heard about the meeting because she was employed at the clinic adjacent to the school. Undertaker, she said, encouraged her to attend the meetings in solidarity with the grave owners. However, when the promised reimbursements ceased, she told me she would not participate any longer. The meetings continued for so many years that occasionally a son or daughter of an elderly former farm worker substituted for the parent or took over if the parent died.

Dudu's comment was a clear indication that some people were incentivised to attend meetings, however, there was limited personal gain if it was only reimbursement of expenses. Nevertheless, research participants indicated that they contributed financially for legal costs with the expectation that it was a sort of investment that would render some financial return. Nevertheless, the cost to individuals in attending meetings was a financial burden for many, which without financial incentive was an expense hard to bear. Research participants stated that after 2006 nobody received money for travelling expenses. Because of the costs involved a few farm workers attended only some of the meetings, although most people said they went to as many meetings as they could, or to those promising important feedback. The possibility of incentives implied, too, that a community's identifying with graveyards as applied in land claims could be open to exploitation for personal gain.

The assembly place for the group was Witkoppen School and people arrived in their own vehicles or by minibus taxis from Diepsloot, Alexandra, Soweto, or further afield. In some instances people caught more than one taxi and had to set off very early in the morning so as to arrive by 10h00 when the meetings

started. Gosego said he left Klipgat the night before and stayed with his daughter in Cosmo City. Former Zevenfontein farm workers and dwellers attending meetings knew each other and greeted another with hugs or handshakes. The importance of and formality of attending the meetings were reflected in how people dressed. The older men generally wore a suit or jacket, a tie and well-polished shoes. The younger men were more casually dressed and occasionally one or two of them quite poorly. Women dressed fashionably and, occasionally an older woman wore a traditional blanket. The relative wealth of individuals was discernable in the clothes, and vehicles that ranged from the old and barely roadworthy, middle-priced to high-end sedans and a SUV.

5.2.2 Leaders and followers

In respect of dealing with the graves a coalition of individuals contains the possibility that

every man (sic) is seeking to maximize his power by perpetually scheming, struggling, and making decisions, and that every action is the outcome of transaction in which the returns are at least equal to, if not in excess of the outlay (Cohen 1969: 223).

He (1969: 217) also observes that power relations are 'manipulative, technical and instrumental, as men (sic) in different situations use one another as means to ends and not as ends in themselves...' (ibid). Cohen's observations apply to both negotiating between groups and social relations within the group itself. Thus, before continuing with my discussion, let me observe that it may well be that Undertaker had his own agenda from the inception and throughout the

discussions and negotiations on relocating River Glen and Dainfern graves. He was after all in the business of relocating graves.

Nevertheless, his personal history (Case study 11) of dwelling on the farm and his genealogical depth of births and burials indicated an association with the farm over at least three generations. Although most of his graves had been on Slack and were relocated to Fourways in the 1980s, he had, he said, other graves elsewhere on Zevenfontein. Searching for the Dainfern graves, and researching the matter of their relocation, as he explained it, was a 'personal quest'. His dominant role during meetings had, therefore, economic implications, since he was the individual who would benefit financially more than the other farm workers.

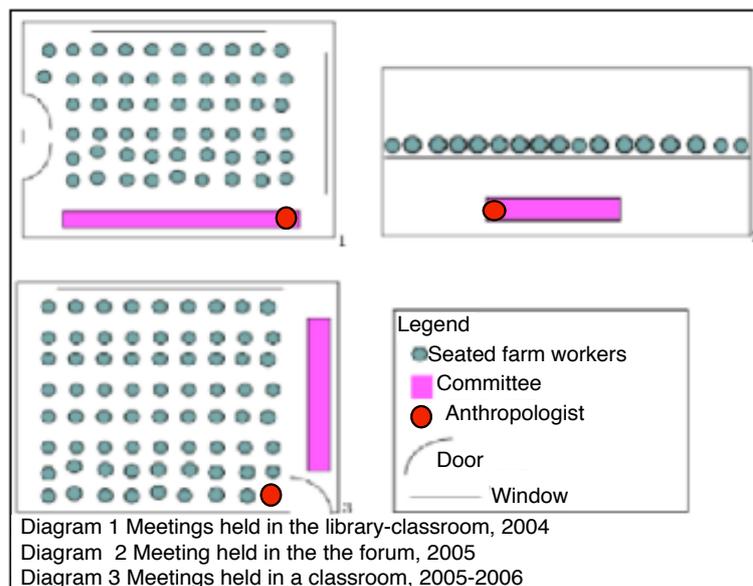


Figure 5.1 Diagrams of seating arrangements at meetings held from 2004 to 2006

There was a hierarchical structure to meetings with the Committee seated at a table facing rows of seated farm workers, and an atmosphere of goodwill. Younger people tended to sit to the back of the room with the older farm workers in the front. People were attentive during the discussions and latecomers quietly joined the group with a brief acknowledgement to the

chairman and found an available seat. From time to time people would slip out to take a smoke-break, or answer a cellular phone, or for some other personal reason. After a meeting people chatted for a while before bidding each other farewell. No discussions took place outside of the meetings. For instance, if I asked while waiting outside for the meeting to start what we might expect to hear, the reply was: 'We will see what is said.'

The Committee comprised two older male members of one of the dominant Zevenfontein families, Undertaker, the proprietor of Funeral Services, which was hired to remove the River Glen graveyard, and two Funeral Services employees. Everyone on the Committee was a former farm dweller or worker with graves situated somewhere on the farm Zevenfontein.

Funeral Services had been hired to relocate the Portion 246 graves, because of its increasing expertise in removing farm graves from urbanising Gauteng farmland, I was told. The prevalence of relocating graveyards for urban development, among other changes in land use, had brought economic change to both funeral undertakers and forensic archaeological businesses. For small-scale undertakers, such as Funeral Services, it had meant a sustainable enterprise. In 2000 Funeral Services conducted burials from a shack in Zevenfontein informal settlement for deceased dwellers. By 2004 the change to relocating graves was reflected in the form of brick and mortar offices in Diepsloot.

Undertaker had the most knowledge on the graves, as he indicated in the media report on the disappearance of 'nearly 600 graves' from Dainfern (Christoforou & Grobler 2003: 16). It was also reported by Mahlangu (2004a: 6) that there was

documentation of the removal of the graves dating from 1987. Being the most informed about Zevenfontein graves, Undertaker did most of the talking. As a former Zevenfontein dweller he was also well known to the former farm workers. By assuming a 'familial style' of trust (Bailey 1988: 83), and because of his authoritative knowledge he was predisposed to an instrumentalist and dominant familial leadership style. In praxis he was both commander and leader (Bailey 1988: 9, 119). The former farm workers and dwellers followed Undertaker and the other Committee members, because, Gosego said, as younger farm workers/dwellers they had more 'knowledge'. By that he meant in terms of power relations, negotiating and legal aspects. The younger generation had more learning and understanding than older people like him, who had not received the same level of education.

Although Undertaker often referred to 'elders', an appellation that implied a cultural emphasis on communally structured authority, its use was ambiguous. It could be construed to refer to the power and authority of the Committee, or in a traditional sense to leadership of a 'tribal' community. 'Elders' could also imply senior status within the family unit, and to whom deference to their authority was shown by Undertaker. Whichever sense was intended, it implied a structured community of decision-makers.

Within a family unit the eldest members would speak, but there were no elder or senior persons who spoke from within a structured group. Usually only one member of a family actually attended a meeting. Although the few older farm workers invariably spoke at the meetings, they were not leaders of the group. Their opinions were given hearing out of respect for their age, but no more. For instance, one old man who frequently had much to say was, I was told, querying

personal matters not relevant to the general discussion. Thus, the deference to so-called elders appeared more a form of communal endorsement on decisions led by younger members of the various families of farm workers and dwellers.

The community meetings were conducted in a manner comparable to any contemporary small group, association or societal meeting. When everyone was seated and quiet Jabulani Ngidi as Chairman formally opened the meeting by welcoming attendees. People stood and one of the religious leaders, either Jabulani or Mandla, identifying specific factors the farm workers/dwellers were dealing with, prayed that God (*Modimo*) guide and bless them. Then, one of the women led everyone in singing a struggle song, some of them quite lengthy. A meeting was closed with further singing and praying.

Topics were listed in a printed agenda, a few of which were handed out to the farm workers. One of the Committee reported on any actions the Committee had taken since the previous meeting. That was followed by suggestions of the way forward and discussion. The Secretary captured the proceedings in English either in an exercise book or on a laptop computer.

When a committee member had ceased speaking the farm workers were given an opportunity to comment, ask questions and offer their suggestions on what the Committee had done and express their opinions and personal concerns.

Undertaker explained any matters arising from those meetings and suggested the way forward. Speakers from the floor raised their hands and stood to speak, while the others sat silently listening. Body language and facial expressions of the listeners were generally benignly attentive or passive. The way forward provoked much discussion and some disagreement, but in the end consensus

was reached. The camaraderie among the farm workers themselves at the meetings was expressed by attentiveness to what each had to say, jokes and laughter, as well as praying and singing together. Although there were disagreements, in the end consensus was reached on what action to take, and in essence, there was undoubted group cohesion in the final making of decisions. Nevertheless, Undertaker's personality and knowledge made him a dominant member.

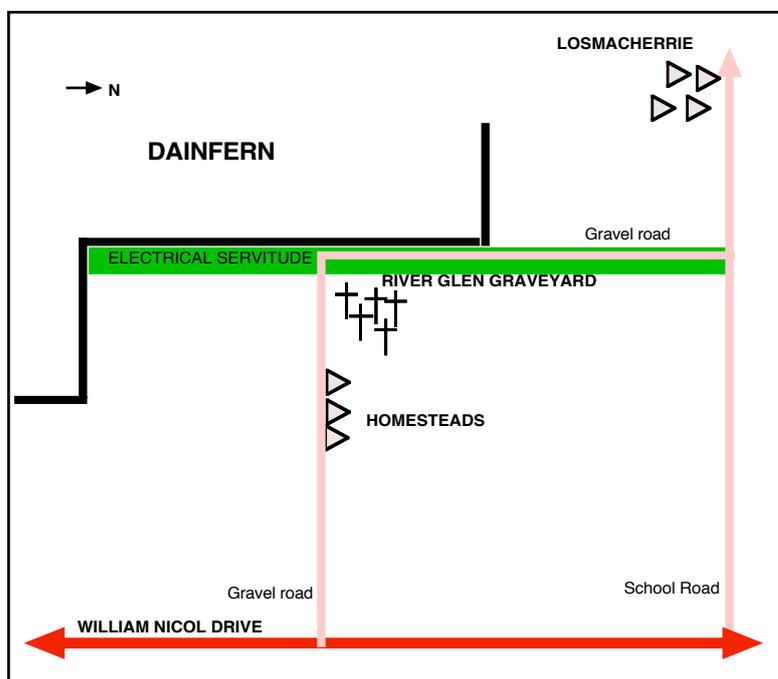
5.3 RELOCATING GRAVEYARDS FROM FARMS

5.3.1 Graveyards in situ

Farm burials of black and white people living on Johannesburg's peri-urban farms were sociocultural norms prior to the establishment of the city's municipal cemeteries (Johannesburg City Parks 2014), and research indicated that graves were widely dispersed across the local farms mentioned in the study. Sometimes the established farm graveyards, such as some of the Zevenfontein gravesites, were indicated on Government Printer maps of the 1950s and 1960s. Other than that there was no documentation of farm graves, because documentation of graves relies on the collection of headstone inscriptions, rarely found on farm graves. And, judging from what Musa indicated, farm workers or dwellers did not document peri-urban farm graves or collect the names of buried individuals and their familial associations as a general history, other than as their own personal histories and genealogies.

River Glen graveyard was situated on Portion 246 of Zevenfontein where a gravel road that led west from William Nicol Drive, passing three homesteads, made a

right angle turn to the north at an eastern wall of Dainfern. The road continued north to School Road. The informal settlement of Losmacherrie was situated northwest of the graveyard. This portion of Zevenfontein was not fenced, and people could access the graveyard from the gravel road off William Nicol Drive until 2004. None of the people who attended the meetings had made further burials in the graveyards since the 1980s, and Portion 246 was purchased for township development in 1994.



Map 5.1 Diagrammatic map of River Glen graveyard, showing location of homesteads and Losmacherrie, not drawn to scale

Generally, landowners and farm dwellers point out the location of farm graves, found situated adjacent to boundaries and access roads and more or less visible (Cultural Heritage Society of South Africa, Bev Moss personal communication, 2005). From the farm workers/dwellers' perspective the graves were situated where they could access them or where the landowner had provided a space, such as in the corner of the farm where visits could easily be made as evident at River Glen. Graveyards were of various sizes, some had as few as six or seven

graves, others have more than seventy, and there were even individual graves situated at the sides of roads, such as two found in Cosmo City.



Photograph 5.1 Personal items of deceased placed on the grave to identify it, River Glen 2004

As a means of recognising individual graves, relatives placed objects on top of the graves that the deceased had used during his or her life, such as teapots and cups. More often the only indicators to a relative's grave were an assemblage of plastic bottles and snuffboxes, left on the grave because of their ritual significance in an offering of water or snuff. Such ritual objects not only indicated the lineage significance of the grave as that of an ancestor, but also how recently or regularly the grave was visited. The generic nature of the ritual artefacts suggested that some additional means of recognising a grave was used. In some instances people recognised the grave by its geographical orientation and their bodily memory, or, as in the case of Zenzile, she counted the graves from the access point of a break in a wall.



Photograph 5.2 Unknown graves situated near a gravel road, not far from squatter dwellings, located west of Cosmo City on farm Zandspruit, 2007

Despite the perceptible neglect of graves hidden by long grass, evidence that someone had visited a grave was observable in the assembly of various objects left on the grave. In assessing the frequency of visits to graves or their importance to a family, opportunities to visit had, of course, to be borne in mind after the evictions and the distances between graves and the relocated dwelling places. The growth of weeds, however, did suggest that some graves were not regularly visited, since the customary practice was to attend to graves at Easter. However, the apparent neglect should not be enough reason, as some developers seem to have suggested, for them to draw the conclusion that the graves had been abandoned, although the graves may have been of less importance to the family (James 2007: 99).

Typically, stones surround farm graves, and sometimes a large stone or an aloe marked the position of the head. There were other styles of grave furniture comparable to Mmusi's description of his grandfather's grave, surrounded by cement-plastered bricks and covered by small stones. Although a few graves had old-fashioned headstones, such as those in Cosmo City Nature Park, graveyards also displayed modern inscribed granite tombstones. At one graveyard, although the dates of burial were in the 1950s, the tombstones appeared recent. The erection of more monumental grave markers not only reflected change in financial circumstances of former farm workers and the honouring of the dead, but it also claimed permanency for the graves as the 'sleeping' or 'resting' places of ancestor spirits.

There were graveyards on various portions of the farm Zevenfontein. More than seventy graves were removed from River Glen. There were the Gert and Frans graves that were removed with the development of Dainfern, and those on Slack the human remains from which were reburied in Fourways Memorial Park. I was shown a graveyard that was situated west of the Jukskei River and to the north of Zevenfontein informal settlement. It contained twelve graves surrounded by stones and with makeshift headstones, including those of members of the Mnguni family. Most of the graves were clearly marked with the name of the deceased and the contact number of the family member.

There were also gravesites that people said they 'knew about' or 'remembered'. The interesting thing about these graves was that unlike visible graves, no one named a relative that was buried in one of the supposed graveyards, and whose grave had 'disappeared'. These supposed graveyards were quite different from the circumstances of Gosego or Lesidi's graves, or even the Dainfern graves lost

as a result of development. The location of the 'remembered' graveyards was still undeveloped farmland, and yet there was no evidence of any visible graves.

One purported graveyard was said to extend from River Glen graveyard to Dainfern (Mahlangu 2004a: 6), of which there was no visible or archaeological evidence (Coetzee, personal communication 2004). Another graveyard, it was said at a community meeting, was situated close to the Jukskei River and the Zevenfontein informal settlement. It was described as 'ancient', suggesting that it was in existence prior to white registration of the land. When I researched the area with Busisiwe, there were no stones that might have demarcated graves, nor sunken areas that suggested the presence of grave pits. And, a subsequent exploration by the farm workers/dwellers' Committee came to the same conclusion that the site had not been a graveyard. Clearly the purpose of identifying ancestral graveyards was to propose that they should be relocated before the land was developed, and the possibility existed that spurious graves might have been an intention to inflate the number of graves.

There were some graveyards of which research participants knew nothing other than their being aware of the existence of the graves. For example, there was an old graveyard that looked as if it could have been in use at the time when Bongani and Duduzile lived on Zandspruit. It was located not far from where their homesteads had been situated. Gosego, also, knew nothing of who was buried in an old graveyard in Cedar Lakes Estate on Houtkoppes, although he lived on the adjacent Witkoppes and as a child he played nearby. The subjective association between individual farm workers and dwellers and graves was apparent in this sort of the lack of knowledge about graveyards in general.

The exact age of the graves and the graveyards was difficult to assess from cursory observation, because so few were dated. The earliest dates I found on headstones in River Glen graveyard were of the 1970s and the sand quarry graves dated from the 1950s. The graves on Zandspruit in Cosmo City Nature Park, where there were a number of established indigenous trees, had three very old graves with headstones and barely readable inscriptions of birth and burial dates in the nineteenth century. The names indicated they were those of black individuals.

5.3.2 Relocating River Glen

Tilley (2006: 19, 23) has drawn attention to the reality of heritage landscapes, such as those containing gravesites, being contested places and political issues caused by factors such as self-definition, individual and collective experience, and 'memories of a nation's past'. And, what has been culturally constructed as heritage served as 'a counterpoint to the flux of modernity' in the effort 'to arrest time and change'. Thus, domestic dwellings, for instance, provided something 'traditionally authentic', a 'cultural capital' and an indication of 'social positioning'. 'Yet', Tilley (2006: 23) states, 'the distinction between public and private, self and society is not so simple, as the home, as often as not, also acts so as to mediate the public and private spheres.' Such a premise informed the farm workers and dwellers on Zevenfontein issues regarding the impact of development on their family and ancestral graveyards.

When conducting research into existing graveyards I found that sometimes people could no longer find the sites due to development changing the landscape to such an extent it was difficult for research participants to get their

bearings. This was apparent when Gosego tried to find his graves that had been situated on the Nel, Campbell and Douglas properties, following township development. In the isomorphic structure of the former farm workers/dwellers' Zevenfontein landscape, its sociocultural meaning was contained in a dwelling and burial place. In their view their place was being contested by developers for whom there was no historical meaning, other than a space of which they could take economic advantage. Duality of history was, therefore, significant, because as a contested landscape there was the alternative sense of place conceived in an urbanising residential area of upmarket townhouses.

Because of the township development of Zevenfontein all the graves were removed (or lost according to farm workers/dwellers). However, change in land usage did not necessarily mean all farm graves were relocated. Some graveyards had remained in situ surrounded by the activity of the new land user. A small graveyard, which was situated within the confines of a brickyard and had been weeded and protected by a fence, contained the grave of one of Duduzile's sisters. People who wanted to visit the graves obtained permission from the manager of the brickworks. The old Cedar Lakes graveyard (Houtkoppes) remained where it was, situated in a corner of the walled estate, rather than being removed prior to the development of the land. The estate's security informed me people did not visit the graves. No explanation was given as to whether people tried. The nature park graveyard also remained where it was situated in Cosmo City, as did the street-side Mauritius graveyard. These graves people could continue to visit. A reason for leaving some graveyards may have been the fact that there are South African War graves in the area (Cultural Heritage Society of South Africa, Bev Moss personal communication, 2005). Although graveyards could be left in situ, most land developers removed them.



Photograph 5.3 Sand quarry undermines small graveyard, a lineal ancestral grave, surrounded by stones, is situated extreme right, farm Doornrandje 386 JR, 2008

For the most part the impact of sociocultural change in farmland use in peri-urban Johannesburg endangers graveyards. For instance, the graves on both Zevenfontein and Farmall (Zandspruit) were removed as the farmland was incorporated into the residential development of the urban nodes. In another instance, a small graveyard with two graves bearing headstones dated 1967 and 1957 was situated on the precipice of a sand quarry, and in danger of being undermined. In such cases, individual former farm workers and dwellers, whose graves were threatened by township development or change in land use, were not, necessarily, opposed to the relocation of the graves. There was, for instance, cement works with a limestone quarry northwest of Rooivaal where there were also overhanging graves, some of which were dressed with tombstones. The owners of the graves — former farm workers who had inherited the adjacent holding from the deceased landowner—were negotiating for the relocation of the graves with the owner of the cement works.

Duduzile, whose father's grave was near the sand quarry, wanted the grave relocated to Krugersdorp where he lived. Because of the grave's precarious situation as a result of quarrying of either falling into the quarry or unearthing the corpse, Duduzile argued that the sand quarry's management was responsible to see to the relocation. He could not, he said, afford to pay for the relocation himself and he wanted the owners of the sand quarry to pay for the exhumation and reburial. I tried to make arrangements for Duduzile to speak with the quarry manager, but because Duduzile no longer lived in the area, he found having a meeting during the week difficult. A couple of years later when I spoke with him again, he had still not discussed the matter with the landowner and the grave was, he said, still where it had been.

Heilen, an archaeologist (2012a: 23, 27) states that although many graveyards and cemeteries in America remain undisturbed, 'cemeteries are routinely abandoned and the land containing them repurposed' in accordance with 'cultural resource management' dictated by 'development and legal requirements'. Comparably, in South Africa farm graveyards, without graves with dated headstones to the contrary, are protected under the *NHRA 1999* (Act 25 of 1999). Qualified archaeologists and undertakers with proven track records, and in full cognisance of all relevant legislation should conduct relocations.

Other relevant legislation includes the *Removal of Graves and Dead Bodies Ordinance (Ordinance no. 7 of 1925)*, *Human Tissues Act (Act no. 65 of 1983, as amended)* and the *Ordinance on Excavations (Ordinance no. 12 of 1980)*, as well as any local and regional laws and by-laws (Coetzee 2004: 3).

Heilen notes graveyards that are not 'abandoned' are also relocated, and that the 'interests of identity groups with a stake in a project's outcome' need be

consulted (2012a: 27). The River Glen graveyard was surveyed according to SAHRA requirements and was deemed not to be a national heritage site (Coetzee personal communication, 2004). The family members had been informed and representatives of the landowner/developer attended the July 2004 meeting to answer any queries by the farm workers and dwellers before the graveyard was removed. The farm workers/dwellers wanted to know how much they would be 'paid for ceremonies' and what the process of relocation entailed. Originally, thirty graves were numbered for relocation. Further visual survey of the land beyond the graveyard, in view of affidavits that there were more graves, concluded there were no graves other than those in the graveyard (Coetzee personal communication, 2004, 2012).

When I observed the graveyard a few weeks after the survey, I found seventy-six graves in the graveyard numbered for relocation. Between the archaeological survey and my visit there had been a veld fire that revealed more graves, according to Undertaker. The reason for the absence of visible evidence of graves outside the graveyard was, Undertaker said, because people took the stones from older graves to put around their own.

The farm workers and dwellers were informed that the elder of a lineal descent (*isibongo*) group would receive the sum of three thousand rand per family grave. Payment would be by cheque for which people would sign. There was concern among the farm workers regarding the payments being made to them by Funeral Services and they said that they wanted a 'Commissioner of Oaths' to be present. In the end there was no Commissioner of Oaths involved, and in any case the payment being made to Funeral Services was based on its success in being hired

to remove graves of which a portion was due to individual families for ceremonies.

It was important that the process encompass the appropriate cultural observations. Undertaker suggested a group ceremony should be held, but the families said they would prefer to conduct ceremonies privately as people had different ways of doing rituals. They asked that the re-location be deferred until they had had time to inform everyone and to perform the ceremonies. The specific rituals would depend on the family, but it would entail a ritual sacrifice at the family homestead to the ancestor spirits informing them that the graves were to be removed and to ask the ancestor spirits to accompany the mortal remains to the new burial site.

As far as the manner in which the exhumations and reburials would be done, there appeared to be ignorance as to what was actually involved. However, since the farm workers and dwellers knew Undertaker, and they were not unduly concerned. He explained what the relocation entailed, emphasising it would be conducted respectfully and in a culturally correct way. No mechanical digging or earthmoving machinery, such as backhoes, would be used. All digging would be done by hand. The mortal remains from each grave would not be picked out of the soil in the manner of archaeologists, or taken to a laboratory for examination. When graves were exhumed from Dainfern in 2002 'skeletons were cleaned, studied ... measured ... analysed' (Nienaber & Steyn 2002: 12-14). All mortal remains, Undertaker said, would be lifted in their entirety and placed in a three-quarter-size, 1.2m-coffin for reburial. The small boxes usually used in reinterment would not be used, he said.

Funeral Services had bought a burial site in Fourways Memorial Park for five hundred thousand rand. The reburial site was grassed and the reburials would follow the same order of the original graves in River Glen graveyard. In terms of the purchase agreement no individual gravestones were to be erected, instead each grave would be given a number that would correspond with an inscription on a memorial wall. The choice of Fourways Memorial Park appeared to satisfy the farm workers because it was the closest cemetery to the farm Zevenfontein.

The discussion was rational and subdued. The farm workers and dwellers listened to what the Portion 246 representatives had to say, and asked only a few questions. People were informed that the relocation of River Glen graves would commence the following week at about 08h00. There was little further discussion, everyone appeared quite satisfied and the representatives departed. However, from the farm workers perspective their graves were affective and conative symbols of kinship and inheritance, and as such could 'agitate feelings and sentiments, and impel people to action (Cohen 1969: 217). And, once the representatives of the landowner and developer had gone, the farm workers expressed what they really felt.

They vehemently expressed their resentment to the relocating of their family graveyards in politicised and racial terms. They emphasised how black people in general preserved their cultural heritage and ancestry in the substance of the soil, whereas 'white people put their fathers and mothers in bottles,' referring to the keeping of created ashes in urns. In linking the land with dwelling, burial and genealogy Zenzile said the 'graves are our grandfathers' land'. She went on to express a dislike for Representative RGB saying he was 'arrogant' and that he thought all 'black people are lying'. She referenced former experiences under

white apartheid government by saying 'we get educated in gaol'. Such emotional and singular outbursts were characteristic of protest statements. Someone else wanted to know where Representative RGA came from, and complained about RGA's explanations, adding that they could not 'negotiate with non-South Africans like Nigerians and Ugandans.' (Representative RGA was neither of these.)

I could see no reason for the outburst from anything that the representatives had said. The vituperation seemed very much *non sequitur*, and no explanations were forthcoming. I can only conclude that it was a general resentment to having the graves relocated and a suspicion that whites do not believe, or at least do not understand, the importance black people placed on their graves. The graves were conceived collectively. Thus, not only their individual personal family graves but all graves of all black people, whether they knew them or not. The inference was that powerful white developers bullied powerless black farm workers and dwellers and were dismissive of their graves. Individually, people, for instance Duduzile and Zenzile herself were quite agreeable to have their graves relocated to a place of their own choosing. Collectively, the attitude was different. River Glen was linked to Dainfern and collectively Zevenfontein graves insinuated dispossession of land.

The grave relocations began on 28th July and ended on 8th September 2004. At the August meeting Undertaker gave a progress report-back on the relocation and showed the people newspaper articles on the relocations and fliers advertising the plush houses to be built on Portion 246. It was stated in an article titled *Digging into the past* (Fourways Review 2004b: 6) that the developers of Portion 246 were 'funding a full exhumation of a small cemetery

on the site they own, on land bordering Dainfern Valley and Dainfern Estate'. The graves were, the news report quoted Undertaker as saying, 'on average 30 to 40 years old. At least now the ancestors can rest and families can know where their roots are. Now each family can perform their individual traditions as they wish.'

The article ended by again quoting Undertaker on behalf of the farm workers/dwellers:

We thank [Company B] for its responsible outlook regarding the informal cemetery on their land. Developers in general should learn to respect old graves and place advertisements asking relatives of the deceased to come forward before any development goes ahead (Fourways Review 2004b: 6).

At the time that the article was published the farm workers were trying to engage Dainfern in discussing the graves that had been relocated in the 1980s. My interpretation of the tone of the article was to hold Company B as the exemplar of the correct way to do things, as opposed to the incorrect way exhumations were done by Dainfern. However, in commenting on the 1980s grave removals sometime later he suggested that newspaper advertisements were inadequate as notification.

5.4 PROBLEMATIC OF THE DAINFERN GRAVES

5.4.1 Power relations and senses of place

I have woven a few threads from the discourses on the peri-urban interface, power relations and sense of place to background the problematic of the

Dainfern graves with its dichotomous realities of Zevenfontein's local and rural space/place past and its global and urbanised space/place present.



Photograph 5.4 Southern corner of Portion 246 with a view of Dainfern, 2009

The construction of sense of place entails a sense of belonging to a particular space, of uniqueness, identification and settlement in relation to nature. The sensory experience of the landscape and nature is a psychological and sequential sense embodied in the sentiment and image of a place. Its *genius loci* and its unique spirit makes an impression on the mind, and it endures after individuals have relocated from it to other settings. The subjective feeling a person has about a place is experienced visually, physically socially and emotionally (Bokomoso Environmental 2013: 61).

The above construct was used by environmental impact assessors in explaining a white landowning social stratum's cultural conception of sense of place. That and another environmental assessment report were compiled for proposed landscape change as a result of constructing major road and electrification infrastructures through a peri-urban area east of William Nicol Drive in the

eastern side of the broader Zevenfontein 407JR, needed for the urbanising environment of greater Fourways (Bokomoso Environmental 2013: 61; Envirolution Consulting 2014: 59, 60). These reports that mention sense of place and the one I have already discussed of the farm workers (Chapter 4) indicated the extent to which landscapes were contested in a peri-urban environment by both black and white rural dwellers against developers.

The problem with a contested peri-urban landscape rests upon the fact that *peri-urban* entails both rural and urban dwelling, and the urban dwellers also had a sense of place. In the case of the Fourways urbanising environment the urban sense of place was that of an upmarket, wealthy and predominantly white, but by no means exclusively, social stratum living in walled estates. Thus, when it came to the contestation of a peri-urban landscape, such as Zevenfontein, power relations were overwhelming forces, and the dominant history recorded in registered landownership, urban expansion and the growing demographics of a wealthy society prevailed.

In essence two contesting senses of place were involved. One sense of place held by the wealthy residents of walled estates versus the old subjective history of a powerless social stratum for whom no legislation provided for their peri-urban context. Essentially in contesting Zevenfontein, its homesteads and graveyards, there were unequal power relations. The dominant power held the greater evocation with its cultural construct of registered ownership and its growing stratum of social wealth. Hence the farm workers/dwellers resorted to collective bargaining, and collective identification of issues and decision-making in contesting Portion 246 and the River Glen graveyard with the developers of a

vast and costly upmarket development, and the contestation of a destroyed or desecrated ancestral burial place with the Dainfern landowners.

Rose (1995: 100-102) draws attention to how power relations can structure senses of place where one sense of place obscures the other. The power relations have particular relevance in economic restructuring. That was the case with the investment in developments and the making of exclusive walled estates in Fourways creating a different sense of place from that of the rural farm. The priorities of the developers (such as occurring with Dainfern and River Glen) differ from those of the 'local people'. Such reinterpretation of the landscape by developers Rose argues can lead to protests by local people.

Rose continues that these protests take

a variety of forms, and have been organized by many different groups, but a persistent theme is that local people have a right to be heard because, in the words of a poster made for one protest, 'this land is our land' (Rose 1995: 102).

When considering the politics of identity, the less powerful identity is socially marginalized (Rose 1995: 104). In summing up Rose argues that in order to understand the multiple constructs of sense of place they have to be linked to the 'wider social relation with their significance relevant 'only in the context of unequal power relations between different groups' (Rose 1995: 105).

Adell (1999: 3-4) in an historiography of the discourse on the peri-urban interface draws attention to how it is dominated by its urban identity, but with an additional problematic lying not only in the conceptualization of the two social fields, but also the blurring of the two identities. This idea is apparent in

the development of walled golf and countrified residential estates on Zevenfontein in the Fourways urban node. Such a problem is intensified in a developing country such as South Africa with its economic and social disparities. Thus, the transformation of one sense of place (farm dwelling) into another sense of place (walled countrified estates) is without doubt a recipe for dispute not only because of the change in land use but also the sociopolitical and economic implications.

The dispute had a particular dynamic in the case of the Dainfern graves, that is the removal of the Gert and Frans graves. As a result of the evictions and forced removals of the black rural dwellers from the peri-urban zone and the destruction of their homesteads, the 'abandoned' graveyards were the sole symbolic or iconic referents to the former sense of place.

5.4.2 Lost graves and ancestors

After the farm workers and dwellers were forcibly removed or, in compliance with eviction orders, had relocated from Zevenfontein, they left behind graves and graveyards on Gert and Frans. People continued to bury in these graveyards until the 1980s when the golf course was enclosed with walls and palisade fencing and became part of the first residential estate, which was launched in 1991. Family members had access to and visited these graves until sometime in the 1980s, when, they said, they were either refused entry, or they could not enter because of fencing, or they saw or heard the graves were gone.

The denial of access was in itself an issue, because although the graves were relocated prior to 1994, the farm workers and dwellers were dealing with the

loss of the graves at a time when they were guided by newer legislation. James (2007: 135) quotes a research participant as saying that landowners should

treat black farm dwellers whose ancestors owned this land before it was stolen, with respect, and ... you [landowners] are obliged to cooperate and support poor black farm-dwellers in the community, even if it means allowing them access to your land to pass through or to pray at the graves of their ancestors (James 2007: 135).

It was impossible to ascertain an actual date for the destruction of the graveyards. Gosego said the graves had gone by 1983, another research participant said she buried her father on Gert in 1983, and Undertaker said it was 1987. Initially Dainfern said there were no graves (Mahlangu 2004a: 6), but later conceded there had been some. After the evictions and forced removals people did not visit their graves as often as they used to, so the dates when individuals discovered they could not access their graves or the graves had been removed would not necessarily correspond. For the most part people did not know what had happen to their graves, some, such as Mmusi, heard rumours that mortal remains were collectively reinterred in Pretoria (Hill 2001: 77).

According to Undertaker he 'discovered' the re-interments were in eight mass graves in Mamelodi Cemetery, Pretoria. Other than Undertaker the farm workers had done nothing about finding the graves other than a few enquiries from the security guards for the development project. Even the astute Musa and Mmusi took no real action although clearly embittered. It required a younger and more politically and legally aware individual such as Undertaker to bring the post-apartheid political dispensation into effect in order to challenge the prevailing dominant social stratum of the Fourways area.

The farm workers and dwellers stated the graves were removed without their knowledge or permission during the development of Dainfern. Ironically, the failure to obtain permission despite legislation still occurs today as Saccaggi's research into the relocation of a graveyard in 2008 indicated (2012: 12). Farm workers/dwellers also conjectured that some graves were not removed prior to the constructing of houses. This was both a collective perception and an individual one. Mmusi, who was never part of the collective, had told me in 2000 that his grandfather's grave was still on Dainfern. He identified the specific site for his father's father's grave as the crèche (Hill 2001: 77). None of the other farm workers could state specifically where on Dainfern their particular graves were situated. But, in discussing sense of place and memory people needed, as I have already shown, bodily recall to locate the whereabouts of a specific gravesite.

An old woman said she wanted to go to her graves on Good Friday and have a ceremony. Undertaker concurred that people wanted visit the graves on Good Friday but where could they go, he asked. Another speaker said that people were not told about the removal of the graves, and he did not believe that 'even five graves' were removed. Another elderly woman said it was because the graves were underneath the houses of Dainfern that 'those people [Dainfern residents] will (sic) suffer,' she said. Such comments and observations were not only indicators of religious rites that needed to be performed, but also facets of the abuse of cultural rights by a power stratum that prevented people from performing them.

Nor could the farm/workers explain precisely why they thought that some graves were still on Dainfern. It appeared to be based on the hearsay of people

still living in the area, in the homesteads, Losmacherrie and Zevenfontein informal settlement. Mmusi said someone had told him he had seen a backhoe loader digging up graves. There were areas apparently, such as the crèche, where such activity did not place, and based on that, people assumed the graves were not removed. Human remains can also be left at burial sites as a result of careless exhumation. Saccaggi (2012: 46) makes the point that mechanical digging of farm graves not only destroys the assemblage of mortal remains but also rakes over the graveyard in such a way that bones can be spread or dug back into the soil elsewhere.

‘In respect of the law,’ and ‘the multi-cultural, multi-ethnic nature of South African society,’ (Hocctor 2001: 176) states, ‘there is a common veneration of graves’. And, that ‘... the basis for the crime [of violating a grave] is the protection of the dignity and autonomy of human beings after death, that is, human rights exist and are deserving of protection after death’ (Labuschagne 1991, cited in Hocctor 2001: 176). Hocctor concludes (2001: 179-180), that ‘... the human grave is regarded as deserving of deep respect and reverence ... This concern for the dignity of the dead (and the concomitant protection of their final resting places) is so ingrained in the *boni mores* of the community that where graves have been violated by people building their informal dwellings on existing graveyards, this has led to outrage and confrontation.’

In addition to not knowing when, or to where, graves were removed, there was also imprecision as to exactly how many graves there were on Dainfern.

Research participants were precise as to which family members’ graves were lost, both removed and still on Dainfern. However, Undertaker was quoted in Fourways Review (2004a: 1) as saying he had been ‘searching for almost 590

graves exhumed in 1987 from Portion 172 of the old farm' and that the graves were 'missing without record of their relocation'. I did not see any documentation referencing the existence of graves on Dainfern, Gert or Frans. My interpretation of his reported statement was that the five hundred and ninety graves were his conjecture of a graveyard he described to me as extending from River Glen graveyard into Dainfern. But, as I have already mentioned, of this graveyard there was no visible evidence (Coetzee personal communication, 2004).

Another confusion as to the actual number of graves was caused when, at one of the meetings in 2006, Undertaker mentioned three hundred graves as having been situated on Dainfern (part of the five hundred and ninety, presumably), again, of which I saw no documentation and none was shown to the families. It was of the three hundred graves that some, he said, he had discovered reinterred in Mamelodi Cemetery. In criticising the relocation of graves by undertakers Saccaggi (2012: 48) makes the assumption that funeral services contracted to relocate graves may 'invent' graves for economic gain. When Undertaker made these statements, at that stage of research there were no data to question the veracity of his claims regarding the number of graves exhumed from Dainfern and the number of graves left behind. Only Mmusi was adamant his father's grave was not removed, for the other farm workers inferences about the graves were based on hearsay.

When they discussed what they wanted from Dainfern, the farm workers expressed it as financial compensation for the loss of their graves. Dainfern on the other hand eventually raised funds in a spirit of goodwill for a project to re-exhume the mass graves and rebury individuals properly in individual graves

and restore relations between descendants and ancestors. Compensation versus project funding were divergent ideas, the basis of which was a matter of how the farm workers thought the moneys should be utilised and/or shared amongst them. Compensation implied sharing of a sum of money amongst individuals in the community, funding a project implied the covering of costs.

The idea that the money was compensation, although not explicitly stated as such to Dainfern, indicated that there was incentive, perhaps encouraged by Undertaker, for the farm workers and dwellers to see that the mass graves were exhumed. However, sight must not be lost of the religious implications of restoring lost graves that, for many of the farm workers especially the older ones, had real and significant importance. The restoration of a lineal ancestral gravesite, which a descendant could visit for seasonal and occasional rituals and communication as a part of everyday life, was the real purpose of finding the lost graves and having the desecrated mortal remains properly buried.

The Zevenfontein farm workers and dwellers' outrage at the destruction of their graves reflected the feelings cited by one of James's (2000: 96) research participants, who said, when he was forbidden to visit his graves he felt 'his rights had been violated'. What the farm workers/dwellers perceived as having happened to their Dainfern²³ graves may be understood, therefore, as a highly emotive issue for the collective and for individuals.

Gosego, Mmusi and Bheka spoke subjectively of the loss of the graves. Gosego

²³ *Dainfern* encompasses three separate housing estates, which to a greater or lesser extent lie across an area that constituted the Zevenfontein cemetery. The original estate was Dainfern Golf Estate, developed in the 1990s. Dainfern Ridge and Dainfern Valley were developed in the 2000s.

had said it was a requirement of his ZCC church to show honour to his forefathers, which he described as 'elders', and descendants demonstrated this by paying respect at the gravesite. Bheka spoke of the misfortune he had suffered from their ancestors because he had lost his father's grave. And, Mmusi described the sense of 'danger' to his wellbeing because he had lost his grandfather's grave. Ngubane (1977: 55) has explained that the role of the *amadlozi* (ancestor spirits) is the responsibility of protecting and disciplining descendants, without which protection a descendant is 'exposed to all dangers'. When misfortune falls on a descendant the *abaphansi* (spirits as associated with their burial places) are said to be 'facing away', having withdrawn protection. The spirits with the greatest influence on a descendant are father and mother, father's father and mother, and mother's father and mother (Ngubane 1977: 51).

Ngubane (1977: 55) draws particular attention to the belief that 'angered' ancestor spirits will withdraw their protection 'as a group'. Although Ngubane refers specifically to Zulu beliefs, such as held by Bheka and not Tswana beliefs such as those of Gosego and Mmusi, there is a commonality in ancestor beliefs across all ethnic groups. One may interpret the implication of group ancestral action having reference to all the destroyed graves on Dainfern. However, the sense intended by Ngubane's explanation of 'group' means the family group, and not the collective group. Nevertheless, it was the collective sense of all the Dainfern ancestor spirits of all the graves that the farm workers and dwellers implied in their outrage.

Although no one could explain in what way the ancestor spirits were affected by mass graves, they could express how the loss of graves or the multiple re-interments in a grave affected their relationship with the affected ancestor.

Mönnig (1967: 55) has observed that people who were not buried properly are excluded from the world of the ancestors, and these spirits are conceived as ghosts haunting the gravesite and making life unpleasant for descendants. According to the Ngidi elders, ghosts would hover at the graves that were not removed.

There was, I was told, evidence of ghost activity in the form of the cracks in the walls that many Dainfern houses suffered shortly after construction. I, too, had seen cracks in Dainfern houses, but it was more likely to do with the inadequate foundations in an area where there is a high water-table that surfaces as springs (personal communication with my late mother, who had explored the area in the 1970s before the construction of the golf course). Geologically, the composition of the soil is gravel and sand with some underlay of clay and substructure of granite-gneiss, with a perched hydraulic system in places. The latter following heavy rain could cause underground water to bubble to the surface as springs (Bokomoso Environmental 2013: 42; Envirolution Consulting 2014: 36).

However, as Mpho had said an important aspect of the relocation of the graves from Dainfern was the need to go to Dainfern and inform the spirits to go to the new burial site in Fourways Memorial Park. Without doing so, the spirits remained in Dainfern after the exhumations in the 1980s. Saccaggi's (2012: 69) research participants made similar observations that because some bones were left in the original gravesite, the spirits would not go to the new burial place.

According to a Dainfern resident there were no graves on the estate where he lived, he thought the graves were elsewhere, although he gave no explanation why he thought so. The varying opinions were characteristic of how

psychological, emotional and the subjective projections were brought into play from everyone concerned.

What Undertaker said at meetings he repeated in newspaper articles, because it was said at one of the meetings that if Dainfern would not talk to them and a legal approach failed, then they would publicise the issues on various media formats, television, radio and newspapers. In an article titled 'Africa's scatterlings buried' (Grobler 2005) Undertaker was quoted as vowing to ensure the heritage of African culture and that he would not allow the graves scattered on the farms in the area to be desecrated without a legal battle.

'In our African culture it's taboo to open a grave, or even worse, move it from its place of origin. With the development mushrooming, we see this happening on a daily basis and it is severely impacting on our culture and traditions.' He went on to say: 'Until African burial culture is recognised, we will continue legal action and get court interdicts to halt developments' (Grobler 2005). Although one cannot deny that the sentiment of outrage is genuine, none of my research participants suggested that graves could not be relocated. The reason for this is the characteristic of ancestral spirits as existing both above and below the ground as Ngubane explains (1977: 51-55). Saccaggi (2012: 85) has shown that his informants also suggest it is possible to relocate graves as long as the spirits are taken with them. He goes on to say it may be necessary to seek advice of an *isangoma* and that the original grave may need to be cleansed. Attention to such rituals and ceremonies is to ensure a continuing relationship between descendants and ancestors (Saccaggi 2012: 85).

In the newspaper article Undertaker concludes by saying:

The routine of placing advertisements in newspapers and notices on site means nothing to relatives, who are often uneducated and cannot read. In this way, skilled interpreters could (sic) relate information back to relatives and inform them of their rights. We would like to warn those touching our graves that there are spirits involved and if no provision is made for that, it (sic) would come back looking for them (Grobler 2005, no page number).

Undertaker proposed workshops for developers on the spiritual value of African graves.

5.4.3 Grounds for dispute

Communication with and the demands on Dainfern were characterised by conjecture from the families and denials from Dainfern. For instance, the abovementioned article stated one Dainfern estate representative as claiming there were no records of graves being either situated on the estate or removed from it (Fourways Review 2004a: 1). But, in the same article and at meetings Undertaker reported that Funerals Limited had acknowledged it conducted the exhumations, but claimed to have lost all its records of the project. Dainfern's poor engagement with the problem of their graves made the farm workers and dwellers resort to making their voices heard by publicising the Dainfern graves in the news media.

Another approach was through the courts in the form of a 'criminal' suit brought against the developer responsible for the removal of the graves, and the Douglasdale police were informed. My own research included speaking with the officer involved, but other than advice and taking down information, speaking with the police seemed ineffectual. Furthermore, the court case, the families were told by Undertaker, would cost a great deal of money. It would also entail

people making statements for court and running advertisements in various media formats in order to contact everyone with graves. The estimated costs for legal action would be in the region of six hundred thousand rand. The farm workers response to this was that they would need to think how they were going to deal with the money problem.

The feelings expressed at meetings was that whites generally and affluent blacks residing in 'golf estates' were indifferent to the sanctity of the graves and did not engage with the problems the families experienced when farmland was rezoned for township development. The former farm workers and dwellers claimed that white farm graves were not treated in the same way that theirs were. Undertaker went so far as to say that the current law on the removal of farm graves did not take sufficient consideration that, because of eviction, coerced voluntary relocations and forced removals, even in the present day people were hard to trace and were unaware of the impending danger to their graves. The face Undertaker presented was that of a champion of the farm workers with a determination to see that their human and cultural rights were protected.

The farm workers and dwellers resented the idea that unless they were attendant to their graves regularly every few months, a grave was supposed by external agencies to be of no consequence or abandoned. Their attitude consistently pointed to the conflicting historical bases for premises on the evictions and forced removals by the dominant social stratum that again impinged on the sense of place and cultural values of the less powerful farm workers. White graves on farms they said might never be visited, but because they had tombstones, names and dates they were given greater respect. The

white-black tension that arose because graves of poor and in some instances homeless black farm workers were being removed for the sake of upmarket residences for affluent mostly white people, was constantly suggested in the discussions. Some individuals adopted a racist stance saying that they were 'not going to accept what whites have done' and the other farm workers did not disagree.

Racial argument was focused on landownership, and the wealth and power of whites over the rightful owners of the land indicated by homesteads and graves, and their protestations of their being marginalised. They wanted a letter sent to the then President Mbeki and to Gauteng Provincial President Shilowa (in office at that time) about Dainfern. Their marginalisation was a matter of land tenure and its particular South African economic and political context and inferences of land claims. The convoluted problematic articulated by the farm workers/dwellers was, Undertaker said, a landmark case in South Africa.

Undertaker informed the families that the African National Congress (ANC) had met with Dainfern, but that he did not know what they spoke about. This information caused someone to say that some ANC members tried to enrich themselves. It was suggested that President Mbeki was not taking enough grassroots concern of 'domestic people'. Blacks, they said, were still where they were before 1994 and democracy. Undertaker told the farm workers and dwellers that he had discussed the subject with various provincial governmental officials.

There was a call for mass action with Undertaker saying that he could 'not do it all' and they, the farm workers and dwellers, should 'show themselves'.

Compromise and discussion, he said, were over. It was time for mass action. The younger farm dwellers also called for a demonstration against Dainfern. At a meeting someone called out that the Dainfern issue was a *struggle*: 'We want mass action.' 'We want our land back.' 'We need what belongs to us.' In reflection, although Undertaker may have initiated much of the mood, and his call on the others to raise their profile, might indicate a personal campaign, the younger male family members and many of the older women quickly picked it up. This was evoked in the singing at the opening and closing of meetings of struggle songs. Although Rose (1995: 104) has indicated that such protestations are characteristic of contested landscapes, land issues have their own particular meaning in South Africa.

The failure of Dainfern to take them seriously, to agree to their requests to have the Dainfern graves re-exhumed, and to pay for it, was met with reactive demonstration. The high-handed attitude of Dainfern provoked enormous resentment. Dainfern, one speaker said, was 'pushing' them to 'a ceremony outside bedrooms'. The proposed demonstration would not have been the first. One was held outside Dainfern's western gate on Cedar Road, which included rituals and the carrying of coffins and *izangoma* who communicated with ancestral spirits in January 2004 (Mahlangu 2004b). However, the suggestion that it was held 'outside bedrooms' was exaggerated rhetoric and figurative in content. No demonstrations were ever held within the confines of Dainfern.

The intended second demonstration would include 'slaughtering one hundred' head of cattle to communicate with the ancestor spirits left in Dainfern after the graves were removed. They would slaughter cattle, Undertaker said, 'until Dainfern ran with blood'. The suggestion sounded preposterous, and I do not

think it was said with the intention to be taken seriously. The point of demonstrating, especially in the style of *toyitoyi*, was that it frightened and intimidated white people, I was told.

The tone of Undertaker suggested popular rabble rousing. However, despite resentment, outrage and grief over what happened to their graves, there was nothing in the behaviour of any of the farm workers, including Undertaker, to indicate that any extreme behaviour was in their psyche. As with exaggerations of demonstrations 'outside bedrooms' these suggestions reflected the psychological response to loss of place and the emotionalism of a subjective history that was disregarded in the greater history of the dominant social stratum, and in a way the frustrations of the less powerful. When in the end the demonstration did not take place, because they needed permission to enter Dainfern, Undertaker said people were 'tired of running with coffins.' They hated making 'sacrifices and drumming outside Dainfern bedrooms'.

Undertaker incentivised the farm workers to demonstrate by saying that there was a 'chance' for people to get something for the land where they were born. The developers, he said, were making millions in the Fourways area. His observation on the changing landscape and the huge costs involved in developing an elitist suburban sense of place promised by developers to its customers indicated not only the economic environment, but also how the farm workers reformulated their sense of place to be evaluated in terms of the new sense of place. In December 2004 a march, commencing from Witkoppen School along William Nicol Drive and ending at the eastern entrance to Dainfern, was finally organised. (It is discussed in the next chapter).

5.5 DWELLING NEAR GRAVEYARDS

The relocation and loss of graves were the main issues, however, as the discussion on sense of place indicated graves were closely associated with dwelling and the presence of homesteads. Although the two graveyards were technically unrelated concerns of different landowners and developers, the farm workers and dwellers did not conceive of them as entirely separate issues. The remaining homesteads and shacks and the dwellers/occupants of Hans/Portion 246 were another dimension in the construction of Zevenfontein as place and place attachment. Whereas there were religious and political dimensions to the River Glen and Dainfern graves and relocating graves and graveyards, the homesteads and informal settlement were essentially sociopolitical issues. In the changing landscape and the dichotomous senses of place — dwellers and estate residents — it is pertinent to briefly consider the issues of the remaining dwellers within frames of land tenure and housing demographics.

The isomorphic implications of graves, homesteads and a former way of life were apparent in the attitude of many of the Losmacherrie and homestead dwellers' decision not to relocate from the farm. There had been legal applications and discussions over a number of years after the land was sold to Company B in 1994 but the dwellers would not leave (Van Schie 2010: no page number). From the homestead dwellers' perspective their homesteads indicated their historical and genealogical links to place as reason enough why they should not vacate the farm. However, other than the existence of the homesteads and shacks there was nothing tangible left of the former Hans. After 2004 the graveyard was gone. There were some cattle roaming the hillside, but they belonged to JM who lived in Zevenfontein informal settlement. The

dwellers on Zevenfontein kept no livestock and did not practice any horticultural activities, although Gugulethu and her family continued to hold traditional Ndebele initiation ceremonies for daughters and granddaughters.

There had been throughout the discussions at meetings implications of a land claim in references to a history of land occupation and the presence of ancestral graveyards. Nevertheless, a land claim on Zevenfontein was only clearly stated by the former farm workers and dwellers in 2012. James (2007:84) points out that claims among non-homogeneous communities (such as Zevenfontein) differ from title-deed claimants. She observes (2007: 122) that in restitution land claims there are 'iconic tropes of localised cultural experience such as gravesites, initiation lodges and cattle byres that have acquired new significance' as 'verifiable evidence of effective possession,' and therefore 'proving what the Land Claims Commission calls "informal rights" in - land' (James 2007: 122). In essence as far as the Zevenfontein dwellers were concerned, however, it was the memories of the 'earlier existence [that] sharpened a sense of loss' (James 2007: 15). Since the River Glen graveyard had been relocated, and Gert and Frans had disappeared under walled estates, all that remained as evidence of the former farm workers and dwellers' occupation of Zevenfontein were the remaining homesteads and the Losmacherrie shacks.

De Jongh (2008: 6-7) suggests:

Places are politicised, socioculturally relative, historically specific, local and multiple constructions. Place ... features prominently in shaping identity, and the assertion of locality can be a manner of political activism (De Jongh 2008: 6-7).

Locality, according to De Jongh (2007: 27-38) is based upon a perception of reality and sense of entitlement. It is 'rooted in claims of autochthony and ancestral lands' (De Jongh 2006: 79). These constructs were inferred from the farm workers and dwellers' attitude. And, Undertaker indicated autochthonic constructs when he claimed that an ancestral graveyard extended from River Glen into Dainfern despite there being no archaeological or visible evidence to substantiate his claim. His argument was based on a rationale that if there were graves situated on Hans (River Glen) and on Gert and Frans (Dainfern), then it was logical that they were at one time connected. He claimed that the supposed cemetery dated from the nineteenth century and contained some five hundred-and-ninety graves. Based on that assumption he made the following statement:

Even in the old regime, no landowner would have allowed so many gravesites, livestock and homes to be established on their land. This proves the land belonged to the black people and we are going to court to get it back (Fourways Review 2004a: 1).

However, as I have already shown traditional burials (Mönnig 1967; Hammond-Tooke 1974; Setiloane 1976; Lamla 1981) were not made in extensive graveyards as Undertaker suggested.

The significance of his statement was the association between ancestral graveyards and land claims as suggested by James (2007: 98). The emphasis placed on the significance of ancestral and forebears' graveyards echoed the cultural revival that accompanied the land claims process (James 2007: 98).

The importance of gravesites is an incessant refrain in the activist literature documenting title-holders' triumphs in regaining land and visiting graves that reconnected land occupants and their ancestors (James 2007: 96).

James (2007: 97) also argues that among her research participants, those who still lived close to the farms where the graves were situated, and whose access to them the farmers permitted, the graves featured less prominently among reasons to reclaim land. Since the graves had been relocated, or at least there was no opposition to removing the River Glen graveyard, the graves were less important than the occupancy.

In a newspaper article titled *Land claims could shake foundations* (Fourways Review 2004a: 1), a reference was made to the homesteads and informal settlement on Portion 246 where it was stated that there were thirty families 'living in mud houses and shack dwellings beside the William Nicol/511 road (sic) and behind Dainfern Estate and Dainfern Valley's perimeter walling.' I find it difficult to concur with this statement, because I saw and was told by Tshepo there were three households and there may well have been some forty people living in them. Losmacherrie dwellings were not mud huts but typical informal settlement *mekhukhu*.

Although Company B had posted an eviction notice in 1994, Tshepo said, the courts in 1995 told him he should continue to live in this house and one of his sons was living there in 2004. The article went on to state that Undertaker represented '220 Ndebele, Basotho and Tswana families' who were forcibly removed from one of the Dainfern portions 'in 1971'. Despite the contradictions the media report was of anthropological interest because the particular reference to the ethnic differentiation of the families insinuated their historical and ethnic connections with the area.

Although he referred to graves the inference was that the portion of the farm was a place of dwelling and occupation, the remaining dwellers/occupants were not a community, and their consociation in discussing the matter of their eviction notices were founded on the fact that they all required some sort of restitution from the landowners/developers in the form of an alternative dwelling place. Musa's collecting of dwellers' histories rather than their gravesites with respect to Zandspruit and Zevenfontein, placed an emphasis on the history of dwelling rather than burial. That was the situation with the homesteads and Gugulethu, who had lived in one of the homesteads since her marriage circa 1951. She was born on Zevenfontein circa 1935, and her *isibongo* had a long association with Zevenfontein.



Photograph 5.5 Gugulethu's homestead on Portion 246, Zevenfontein, 2004

As with all matters to do with the issues of peri-urban landscape there was imbalance of power relations. When speaking about the River Glen graveyard, Representative RGA included the remaining occupants in the homesteads and in Losmacherrie when they attended the meeting. He mentioned there were 'other

people involved' in the development of the northern portions of the farm Zevenfontein, including Portion 246. This statement was *sine qua non* and did nothing really to inform the farm workers other than to suggest limitations to his decision-making capacity as the representative of the landownership of Portion 246. By suggesting others were involved he created the perception of a hierarchy of political and economic power relations within his own group.

Representative RGA implied a conglomerate of various other companies was involved in the development of the northern portions of Zevenfontein. But, in fact, landowner and developer were part of a single and large Company C that had diverse interests, one of which was the development of land. The import of the statement suggested that although he could speak in his capacity as a representative of the landownership of Portion 246, he did not have the ultimate say. The landowner's representative's focus in dealing with the existing occupants of the farm was housing rather than restitution of land and sense of place.

In the discussion with the former farm workers and dwellers regarding the people living at Losmacherrie and in the homesteads, Representative RGA suggested they should relocate to Cosmo City. The farm workers were not happy with this. One former farm worker, who had difficulty with walking, said he wanted to relocate to Diepsloot. A form of compensation was also suggested in that the homestead dwellers would receive bond houses rather than RDP housing in Cosmo City. If they were to relocate to Cosmo City, they said, they wanted to see house plans and how the process would take place. Company B, they were told, would pay for the construction of the houses. A discussion on the pricing of such houses followed. The houses under discussion, according to

Tshepo, specifically referred to the homestead dwellers and did not include the shacks in Losmacherrie. In essence what was being sought was economic compensation for eviction from what they perceived as their rightful dwelling place, or their land as they referred to it.

Although the farm workers said that they did not want to go to Cosmo City, they complained that they, as former farm Zevenfontein dwellers, should have received housing there before the people living in Zevenfontein informal settlement, of whom they said only a few were local farm workers (Hill 2001). They also mentioned Norweto, which was an apartheid-era proposed black township that would have been situated where Diepsloot is today, but was rejected in the 1980s by white landowners. Norweto, they said was a township intended for them even if it was not situated on Zevenfontein but on the adjacent Diepsloot farm. This introduced a significant factor about the peri-urban landscape and its urbanisation. That is, the matter of housing.

The contrast between the walled estates of Dainfern for the elite and RDP housing and shacks for the marginalised in Diepsloot perpetuated the apartheid spatial clustering under the guise of differentiated economic strata. It reflected the multicultural urbanisation of a globalising landscape in which the former Zevenfontein dwellers sought to find their own identity in the modernising peri-urban interface. Tilley (2006: 18) argues that

the unique character of places have become effectively ...'borderlands', betwixt and between sameness and uniqueness. In the process the particular identities of places have become contested, their meaning varying for different social groups and the manner in which they wish to project their identities in relation to projected futures (Tilley 2006: 18).

Adell (1999: 20) describes the South African phenomenon as the

perpetuation of multiple, diversified, spatially-extended livelihood strategies and efforts to retain a secure base, [that were] a defining feature of late twentieth century capitalism, exemplifying the fiscal crisis of the nation state and its retreat from welfare provision, as well as the imperatives of flexible accumulation and global competition (Adell 1999: 20).

As Low (2014: 34) says of 'spatializing' phenomena they are a 'basis for fighting proposed changes that often destroy the centers of social life [and] erase cultural meanings...'

The perceived reality of the homestead dwellers was their subjective history of Hans and an era before Hans was landowner as opposed to that of the current landowner of Portion 246. Tilley (2006: 23) argues:

Domestic dwellings are material media through which relations between self and society are both objectified and negotiated. The home is the prime site for expressions of creativity, for appropriating and individualizing an alienable realm of consumer goods. It is also a site in which stocks of 'cultural capital' may be accumulated and displayed in relation to others and their social positioning (Tilley 2006: 23).

The indication that there was a double claim to housing and land as two sides of the same issue was the common protest that they wanted to go back to the place where they were 'born', which was, of course, the farm Zevenfontein. At the same time they wanted to be provided with housing. Part of the discussion was that the homestead dwellers wanted to relocate as a community and at a subsequent meeting it was suggested that Company B would purchase land in Honeydew to the west of the research area (see also Van Schie 2010). Younger

family members went to view the site, but complained that it would need to be levelled before they would agree to live there, because the land sloped down to a river.

Throughout my research I saw the fusing of graves and land in the minds of the farm workers, whether it was instigated by individuals, or was the general perception of all the farm workers was hard to say. For some people, such as Gosego, they were separate issues. The only link was that all the graves were situated on the farm Zevenfontein, from which there was a genuine feeling that the former farm workers and dwellers had been wrongfully and forcibly removed. Zevenfontein farm was a place that they perceived as their own and they protested that they wanted, they said, to 'reclaim' it as their own.

5.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter has explored various aspects regarding relocating graves from the peri-urban interface of Fourways as a result of the urban nodes sociocultural changes from a semirural landscape through processes of township development into an urban landscape. I have shown that at the time of research when the farm workers and dwellers framed issues with the relocation of their graves, the peri-urban environment was characterised by two senses of place. On one hand there was the old sense of place of the farm workers and dwellers and on the other the new sense of place created by the developers for a wealthy elite. I also indicated how the two historical perspectives of land dwelling by farm workers and registered landownership resulted in an imbalance of power relations, with the dominant history and stratum controlling sociopolitical and economic relations.

I began by discussing the collective approach the farm workers and dwellers took to negotiating and to decision-making as being the only way to deal with the imbalance in power relations in the periurban environment. The form and function of the Zevenfontein farm workers community was shown to be an instrumental entity used to identify issues and as a decision-making body by indicating the structuring of the community into leaders and followers. I explained how a dominant leader led the group because of his specific knowledge not only as an undertaker on relocating graves, but also on the Dainfern graves because of his personal research into finding the lost graves. I also drew attention to how leaders tended to, if not actually imposing their will, did direct the decisions and actions taken by the farm workers and dwellers

I unpacked various issues with relocating graves by first explaining the *status quo* of graveyards in situ and the changing land use, before discussing the issues and decisions regarding the relocation of River Glen. I pointed out the problems faced by individuals when graves need to be relocated and the need for it to be carried out in such a way to preserve the integrity of the relationship between ancestors and descendants. The problematic of the Dainfern graves and the senses of place in the peri-urban landscape and urbanisation, the issues with the lost graves and the ancestors, and the foundation of the disputing with Dainfern and two conflicting histories over a contested landscape were revealed as hostility outrage and resentment and expressions of protest

Finally, I reflected on the aspect of dwelling near graveyards and extrapolating from the relocation of graves to the problematic of dwelling on the farm and the refusal of occupants in homesteads and an informal settlement to leave the farm. The purpose was to indicate dislocations of dwelling and burial place

brought about by the prevailing dominant history and legislation in order to point out that farm workers and landowners premised arguments on differing perspectives on registered ownership and first person claim to occupation since these attitudes had bearing on how the farm workers interacted with developers and landowners.

Chapter 6 will provide ethnographic data of: the farm workers and dwellers' public demonstration, which they used to force Dainfern to respond to their demands; the rituals and ceremonies practiced by the farm workers and dwellers in association with the grave relocations; and, the processes involved in exhumation and reburial in keeping with perceived culturally appropriate methods.

CHAPTER 6: GRAVE PERFORMANCE, ACTIONS AND EVENTS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides ethnographic discussions of three sociocultural scenarios that pragmatise the relocation of the Zevenfontein graves. Section 6.2 explores how the Zevenfontein farm workers and dwellers raised the profile of the dispute with Dainfern in a public protest, and considers the construction and function of the demonstration as a means of provoking Dainfern to enter into dialogue. Section 6.3 examines the relation between ancestral mortal remains and descendants in a study of private and public ancestral rites and ceremonies enacted to inform ancestral spirits about, and to convey them to, the new burial ground. Section 6.4 discusses the processes of exhumation and reburial of both original graves and mass graves in order to comprehend the attention to cultural values that were required to maintain the religiosity and symbolism of relocated graves.

A common factor of all three scenarios was a greater and lesser degree of performance. Turner (1987: 11) distinguishes between *types* of 'social performance', such as the public demonstration, and *genres* of 'cultural performance' such as evident in rituals enacted prior to and after relocating graves, and the observance of cultural values in the relocation projects. Every sociocultural context of performance, Turner argues, has its own goals, rhetoric and characteristic roles.

Data in this chapter make valuable contributions to discourses on dispute and negotiation and the symbolism of graves in sense of place and land claims.

6.2 PERFORMANCE FOR THE DEAD

6.2.1 **Demonstration roles and choreography**

The Zevenfontein farm workers and dwellers decided to publicly demonstrate their grievances over the lost Gert and Frans graves when Dainfern seemed not to be taking them seriously. The demonstration was not a spontaneous eruption of protest, it was planned and organised throughout. Collective performance, such as the Dainfern demonstration, was an ordered and 'organised event, both of persons and cultural elements,' and it had an evocation of 'staging', social 'message' and 'meaning' (Turner 1987: 3-4). 'When legal redress fails,' Turner argues, groups may turn to 'ritualised' activities that have a 'diachronic structure, a beginning, a sequence of overlapping but isolable phases, and an end.' Significantly, Turner (1987: 3-4) finds that participants in social drama 'do things' and 'show others what they are doing or have done', with the effect that 'actions take on a "performed-for-an-audience" aspect' (1987: 3-4). Additionally as Rose (1995: 102) has observed, protest demonstrations are characteristic of the marginalised and less powerful local people in situations where landscape is undergoing urbanising change.

In performing for a Dainfern audience, the participating demonstrators created an alternative reality. They enacted, with a degree of pretending, a social message. I understood from their gestures and behaviour, actions and statements the 'meaning' to be their protest on behalf of their moral and cultural values in the form of symbolic and political constructs. Lamberth (n.d: 1-4, citing Bruner 1994) draws attention not only to the use of performance theory as a critical tool to reflect upon communicative processes, but also to the

historicity of performance as a 'means of resistance' or 'critique' of structures of 'power and domination'.

The message of the Dainfern demonstration was desecrated graves. The meaning of the demonstration outside the Dainfern gates, which as a venue symbolised barriers to ancestral graveyards, was a critique of a structure of domination and injustice, namely, unequal power relations between poor black farm workers and rich white landowners in an urbanising landscape. Among anthropological sources on public protest I found that Björkman's (2015) study of public demonstrations in Mumbai a useful guide for interpreting the activities and roles I observed during the Dainfern demonstration. Björkman (2015: 143) distinguishes between public demonstrations that are spontaneous mass political action, and those that are politicised strategies structured within the institutional framework of democracy 'as a form of political communication and claims making.' As an instance of the latter, the Dainfern demonstration was legal, and permission was obtained from local authorities, the police and the Dainfern estates, and set for a certain day.



Photograph 6.1 Former farm workers/dwellers arrive for demonstration as band starts to play, Witkoppen School, 2004

On the day arranged for the demonstration farm workers and dwellers, younger family members and members of the Committee, began arriving at Witkoppen School by 08h30. There were a church band with drum and trombones, a choir, and women from a church union that held meetings at the school. There were also African National Congress (ANC) representatives acting as marshals, and people showing support and solidarity.

None of the farm workers said they were reimbursed for participating in the demonstration. The band, church ministers, ANC members and choir, as well as some of the crowd were probably hired, because Undertaker said the demonstration had cost him 'three hundred thousand rand'. He did not itemise the costing, but it would have entailed the hiring of the buses, the services of the choir, band and religious ministers, as well as catering of the meal served to everyone after the demonstration. He did not disclose the source of the funding, but since the ANC was involved that political party may have provided some of it. Björkman inquired about paid crowds in Mumbai and was told: 'People need to see a crowd; they need to see how much public you have.' When she pressed for more information her informant stated, 'but everyone knows you're *paying* the public!' (2015: 155).

The crowd for the Dainfern demonstration arrived by minibus taxis and commissioned buses from Diepsloot, Alexandra, Soweto, Zevenfontein informal settlement and more remote areas such as Soshanguve, for the march that was scheduled to start at 09h30. Since there was a lack of spontaneity at Mumbai and the crowd was paid, Björkman (2015: 155) remarked peevishly that everyone participating in 'the demonstration would know "it's all just a lot of acting"'. Although I would not call it acting, in the form and function of the Dainfern

demonstration I observed people had roles to play in the staging of the social drama and the conveying of its message to its audience.



Photograph 6.2 a) Coffins are displayed, women and older men sit and wait; b) ANC demonstration marshal hands out protest placards to waiting women, 2004

The older farm workers and dwellers, women and men, and even some of the younger ones, were dressed as if for a public occasion, rather than the hurly burly of a political protest. Displayed on the steps of the forum in front of the old men and women seated on chairs were nine coffins (more adult and infant coffins were brought later). The emphasis on women protagonists was indicative not only of widowhood, but also conveyed the historical realities of labour tenancy, and Zevenfontein farm as the dwelling place of families — husbands, wives and children — hence, too, the sizes of coffins. The old women and men sat quietly talking and patiently waiting for instructions. An ANC marshal handed each person a protest placard.

The local and national news reporters and cameramen/women from *Fourways Review* and the South African Broadcasting Corporation had been notified of the event, and the placards were held up for the cameras. The quiet assembling of protestors was hardly enough to draw media attention of its own accord. Rather than spectators attracted by the excitement of its drama, the media had a role in publicising the historicity of the event. They may well have hoped for more

vibrant action, and been disappointed, because I observed they did not remain to the end of the demonstration. Nevertheless, the topic of the Dainfern graves was of public interest as indicated by previous reports by the media.



Photograph 6.3 a) Local and national press capture the moment; b) Protest placards held up for press to photograph, 2004

The absence of extensive and intensive media attention would seem to be typical of an organised demonstration as noted by Björkman (2015: 153) in Mumbai, which she described as ‘organised and choreographed demonstration of mostly women with professionally printed placards’. In my trying to assess the role of the news media in view of the lack of excitability and emotionality in the demonstrators, Björkman’s (ibid: 154) perspective on the Mumbai demonstration was enlightening. The performance was not only for the audience, who were the local officials at Mumbai, or in this case Dainfern, but also the crowd, that is the farm workers and dwellers.

The invited media gave a façade of newsworthiness for the demonstrators, as well as the people for whom the demonstration was intended. Since 2003 *Fourways Review*, *The Citizen* and other national newspapers, such as the *Sunday Times*, had reported on the Dainfern graves, the historical ancestral graveyards said to extend across Zevenfontein, and the dwellers in the homesteads and Losmacherrie as news of local and national interest.

The demonstration was organised by members of the Zevenfontein informal settlement branch of the ANC, who, Undertaker informed me, had made and printed the slogans on the protest placards. None of the demonstrators brought his or her own handwritten placard, and during the actual march to and demonstration at the Dainfern gates even members of the choir, none of whom had graves on Zevenfontein, carried posters.

The message of the slogans referred to the graves lost from Gert and Frans in the development of Dainfern. The context was ancestral place, and calls upon national government to help — *Dainfern where is my father, where is (sic) my roots? [BP] you know where your ancestors are, where did you (sic) take mine; [BP]: my claim is only one, give me my roots; Mandela please help me find my father's bones because the grave is lost. [TR] my quest for satisfaction is my ancestral bones; [TR] & your criminal 'friends' we need what is rightfully ours; [TR] give me back my culture, tradition and my ancestors what you stole from me 17 years ago. [Company A]: you are next, it's coming.*

Rose (1995: 102) has indicated that in disputes over changes to sense of place, local communities protest against the refusal by developers and landowners to respond in what they consider appropriate ways. That was evident in slogans naming individuals and the development company. Nevertheless, they were also generic message of 'our land' described by Rose in protests against urbanisation and formulaic in expressing the loss of identity as a result of the loss of graves and ancestral land. Although the farm workers and dwellers themselves were not the authors of the slogans, they captured the bitterness and resentment about lost graves expressed at meetings.

Read in sequence the messages progressed from appeals for sympathetic sensitivity and redress to a slim edge of threat. However, no farm worker/dweller actually read the slogan on the placard she waved. The placards and the slogans were the material and immaterial artefacts of a demonstration, the significance of the message was in my observation not to be taken literally, they were simply accusatory elements of a public protest. As individuals they had no comment to make other than the decision to *toyi-toyi* if Dainfern would not meet their demands. The lack of personal involvement added to the impression of a staged performance devoid of emotion.

At the demonstrations about water in Mumbai, there were also placards and slogans (and even shouting), but the crowd did not 'articulate' or communicate specific complaints about water to the audience of governmental officials (Björkman 2015: 143). Similarly, despite the intensity of the slogans, there was no articulated demand made by community leaders to estates' management. When the demonstration was being organised the protest was about Dainfern's failure to respond to the problem of the 'lost' graves. The message of the slogans was for Dainfern to negotiate, but there was no placard asking for Dainfern to respond to them. The message of the demonstration was contained in the rhetoric of slogans and coffins.

Again, as I have indicated, the farm workers and dwellers did not enter into the demonstration as individuals, they came as a collective, and everyone participating was there to demonstrate solidarity of a communal grievance and demand. When I asked them they simply said they had gone to Dainfern to collect bones. But no memorandum to that effect was read out at the previous meeting indicating what it was the group actually demanded of Dainfern. The

reason being, other than Undertaker, no one had any real knowledge of what had happened to their graves, whether they were removed or not. For the individual farm worker and dweller 'loss of graves' could mean graves relocated or left in situ. For practical purposes loss of graves meant the denial of visiting a grave for whatever reason. From that point of view the unarticulated demand of Dainfern was to redress the intangibles of 'loss' and for that reason individuals had no comment to provide me, other than that they were there to demonstrate and collectively publicise a grievance.

I interpreted the cultural dynamic and social meaning contained in the empty coffins, symbolically. But, they were not, Undertaker told me, to be understood as tropes for missing and wrongfully exhumed graves. The coffins were to be taken literally, he said. According to Undertaker and to the Secretary the farm workers and dwellers had gone to collect the lost bones left under the houses of Dainfern. However, they did not carry any spades. Despite what Undertaker claimed, the coffins could only be interpreted symbolically and as artefacts of performance. Nevertheless, there was a genuine desire to retrieve lost bones, lost graves, and anger that their graves should be shown so little regard by the developers of Dainfern. Without taking spades to turn the turf, however, the coffins could not be considered as an articulated demand on Dainfern.

I tried to ascertain whether the number of coffins correlated with the number of graves not removed from Dainfern, and hence the number of mortal remains being sought. I obtained no response. I observed that individuals, who told me about their graves, did not actually carry coffins. Undertaker had spoken of hundreds of missing graves, and yet barely more than fifteen coffins were carried to Dainfern. I asked the Secretary, whose two brothers each carried a

coffin, where on Dainfern Estate and Valley. Such an exaggerated response iterated the hyperbole of performance. However, as the oral histories had indicated, none of the former farm workers and dwellers did or would have done anything about the loss of their graves on their own. Undertaker on the other hand, whether motivated by his own economic reasons — relocating graves was his business — had sufficient political access to ANC structures and perhaps financial backing to tackle Dainfern both publically and privately, however, he needed the power base of the mass of farm workers and dwellers.

The unreality of exaggeration overlapped the reality of a possibility that graves had been left behind, or even destroyed during the clearance of graves by the developers. In talking about lost graves the farm workers/dwellers implied the graves having been left intact and houses constructed directly on top. In memorising a former landscape it seems unlikely that they could pinpoint the actual gravesite after the reconstruction of the landscape with houses. Other than Mmusi's grave situated on the site of the crèche, by saying 'everywhere' the reference was graves, but the meaning was ancestral land.

Whenever the farm workers held a gathering, they gave thanks to God for their safe arrival and invoked His blessing on their activities. As a form of ritual/ceremony it was the 'articulation point between the belief system and the network of day to day interactions' of a social group, and it entailed the roles of priest and of 'congregation'. Hammond-Tooke uses congregation in the Durkheimian sense of a group of worshippers (1974: 344-345). At meetings congregated farm workers and dwellers stood in front of, or surrounding, the priest as he invoked the blessings of Modimo/God upon them in a direct religious interaction as suggested by Hammond-Tooke.



Photograph 6.4 a) Church ministers lead demonstrators in prayer and hymns; b) Leaders observe ceremony of prayer and hymn, 2004

At the demonstration there were four spiritual leaders and church ministers from various African church denominations. Some of the demonstrators stood behind the priests/church ministers holding their placards up for the cameraman and woman, who were afforded an unobstructed view. The demonstrators, who were not standing behind the priests, stood to the side of the forum. There was no congregation of worshippers, although no doubt blessing was the action.

On one hand it was a ritual norm of social collectivity, and on the other hand its communicative function was a message that the demonstration had a religious dynamic. The messenger was the camera in the absence of the audience — Dainfern. The sense of performance for a specific sociocultural context was emphasised not only by none of the priests being the usual two who led the community in prayer, but also by there being no spontaneous singing from one of the farm worker women. The staged arrangement of the 'congregation' and priests transformed the meaning from a cultural to a political reality. And, as soon as the prayer service was over, the marchers rallied with cheerfully raised open hands in unity, and the next phase of the social drama commenced.

6.2.2 A toyi-toyi subtext



Photograph 6.5 a) Words of advice to marchers, b) Demonstrators rallied to march 2004



Photograph 6.6 a) March sets off with male demonstrators carrying coffins and females carrying placards; b) Older demonstrators and band take the bus, 2004

While marching to Dainfern young male demonstrators carried coffins and women waved the banners. They jogged or walked with enthusiasm and good humour. Older marchers boarded the buses or rode in private motorcars. The cavalcade set off for Dainfern along William Nicol Drive, and the news reporters ran up and down the procession taking photographs. There was no shouting, no megaphones, or incitement to aggression. Everything was done cheerfully with laughing and some singing, and marshals directing the crowd. To all intent and purpose it was a peaceful demand for acknowledgement of the issues and a request for dialogue. In that respect it was a structured even formulaic performance intended to ‘try and produce a desired outcome’ similar to Mumbai where leaders ‘directed the crowd of women’ (Björkman 2015: 149).



Photograph 6.7 a) Marching along William Nicol Drive to Dainfern; b) Anthropologist follows buses and marchers in one of the motorcars, 2004

At meetings the farm workers said they would *toyi-toyi* to make Dainfern listen to them because ‘white people are scared of *itoyi-toyi*’. Although the term may more or less be translated as ‘demonstration/s’, a *toyi-toyi* takes a particular and popular form in South Africa that originated as a vigorous protest against the National Party regime in 1976 (Cape Town Magazine 2014). At that time and during apartheid, grievances were expressed in massive street demonstrations characterised by foot stomping and the chanting of slogans and singing of protest songs.

A *toyi-toyi* expressed shared common beliefs both constructive and destructive, and emotions from joy to despair. As a performance it stated that although marchers have ‘no money or guns as a mass of people they were powerful as a weapon of intimidation’ (Power to the People 2008: 1). Labour dispute protests and strikes, which can become violent in today’s South Africa, generally have episodes of *toyi-toyi*. Thus, the inference of *toyi-toyi* can be in the minds of some people, generally white people according to farm workers, somewhat intimidating.

A Dainfern security officer stated that the farm workers and dwellers had applied to local authorities and Dainfern to hold a prayer meeting outside

Dainfern. He said they were not informed that it was to be a demonstration with marching and banners. In effect the demonstration was neither a prayer service, because they uttered the prayers at Witkoppen School, nor was it typically a *toyi-toyi* because the demonstrators did not stomp and chant the slogans. Nor was it the destructive despair of political public protests against government or mining houses, for instance, as portrayed in the South African media.



Photograph 6.8 a) Leaders confer with police; b) Barred from continuing in vehicles, demonstrators disembark from buses and motorcars, Dainfern, 2004



Photograph 6.9 a) Placard-waving and swaying women march on towards Dainfern Estate; b) Police watch and Dainfern residents and visitors follow the demonstrators, 2004

What the demonstration did do was display a mass of people affected by the loss of graves from Dainfern. And to the demonstrators themselves it united them in a stand against injustice. The *toyi-toyi*, thus, demonstrated collaboration and unity among the demonstrators evident in the sense of fun, of derring-do, of occasion and of positivity that it would render desired results. Björkman (2015: 143) notes of two Mumbai demonstrations she observed one turned

violent when police appeared in riot gear and the other was 'a veritable celebration'.



Photograph 6.10 a) Thirty-metres from Dainfern Estate's gates police erected a barrier; b) Former Zevenfontein farm workers and dwellers, their supporters and ANC demonstration marshals stand before Dainfern with empty coffins and slogans, 2004

For the younger Dainfern demonstrators there was an element of celebration, for the older and elderly it was a commitment to the cause. And, somewhat wearying, when some five hundred metres from Dainfern gates vehicles were disallowed and everyone progressed on foot, until they were halted by portable barriers erected about thirty meters from Dainfern Estates' imposing gates.

The coffins were placed in front of the barrier, displaying placards bearing slogans directed at Dainfern residents and mentioning the names of individuals — *Dainfern: your private property has my private property inside; Our ancestors are trapped behind the gates of Dainfern valley (sic) and Dainfern estate (sic); Dainfern is a very cosmopolitan community a very international and most importantly a very cemetery (sic); Dainfern is a very sacred place, cemetery; [TR]: your city on it's own is a cemetery; Dainfern the evidence is under your house; Dainfern claims it is sold out, but it's built on top of graves; [B] at least you know where your grandfather is, what about mine; and Dainfern the evidence you are looking for is right under your nose.*

6.2.3 Audience reaction



Photograph 6.11 a) Imposing gates of Dainfern Estate; b) Dainfern security and management passively observe the demonstrators, 2004

The crowd stood behind the barrier while leaders spoke to the police. There was no shouting or anger, from either police or demonstrators. Comparable to the peaceful Mumbai demonstration controlled by ‘only a scattering of police constables’ who were without riot gear and ‘stood by calmly’ (Björkman 2015:143), Dainfern Estate security officers waited in front of the entrance gates, their facial expressions passively and benignly observant. Police moved among the leaders or remained near their barricade. One disgruntled Estate representative stated that I looked like a reporter, and would not be interviewed, and I interpreted his reaction to mean that Dainfern management wanted to keep the demonstration’s profile low.

Dainfern it seemed had seen it all before. I asked a group of not more than half a dozen spectators standing behind a pedestrian gate at Dainfern Estate what they thought was going on. There had been a previous one at Cedar Avenue entrance one informant said. That one included *izangoma* performing rituals, the display of placards and carrying of coffins. Little information had been conveyed to Dainfern residents about the current demonstration. What they knew they said they read in the media.

I live in Dainfern, we have not been informed about it [the demonstration]; I know only what I have read in the newspapers; The committee hasn't informed residents about the issue. Yes, I have read about it in the papers, but the graves are not on [Dainfern] Estate, they are on [Dainfern] Valley; Yes, I live in Dainfern and do know what it is about. It is about some graves that apparently are on Dainfern. I can understand why the people are upset, but they don't have to block the road; Yes, I live in Dainfern and it's about graves, but it's ridiculous they can't dig up my house; Yes, I know what it's about. It's politics; Yes, I live in Dainfern. It's about graves and people wanting Dainfern to give them money; What, I want to know, is who is financing all this? No, I do not live in Dainfern; I'm just looking to see what's going on.

The reactions were not unexpected, from their narrow perspectives they were the haves from whom the have-nots were making unreasonable demands. And, from their perspective their sense of place was being threatened. It was, they thought, some sort of hoax paid for by somebody making trouble with an intention to extort money. One informant even mentioned a sum of between one to two million rand. It was reported in a newspaper he said, but he could not provide the date of the publication. There was no independent knowledge about graves by residents nor, I surmise, the media. Although I had not read the article the informant mentioned, from my own research of media reports any information about graves would have been from leaders of the farm workers. Throughout the dispute of graves over the years the media were an important instrument in making grievances heard.

Having made their stand outside Dainfern Estate, a small crowd of demonstrators proceeded to Dainfern Valley. Unlike Estate no management

personnel were waiting to receive or observe them. Since there were no crowd barriers, two coffins were placed against the gate, and the demonstrators stood looking perplexed as to what to do next. Choreography can only go so far, and at some moment in time, someone will react to the action of other people. The waiting crowd noticed that a Dainfern Valley security official was watching them from inside the gatehouse. The demonstrators grew angry and started to shake the gates.



Photograph 6.12 a) Demonstrators crowd gates of Dainfern Valley; b) Security guard ignores and nonplusses demonstrators, 2004



Photograph 6.13 a) Demonstrators spot lurking Valley security official in his office and start to get angry; b) Police and Dainfern Estate security arrive at Valley and take control, 2004

The catalyst of violence was the lack of acknowledgement by Valley management not only to their presence, but also by extrapolation in the view of the demonstrators, to the farm workers and dwellers' grievances. They regarded it as a show of disrespect. But, the violence was a consequence of the conceptualisation of the demonstration, and it was paralleled in the Mumbai

street protest observed by Björkman. At Mumbai as at Dainfern there was no articulated message.



Photograph 6.14 a) Dainfern Estate security watch demonstrators while older women rest in the shade; b) Police with riot shields guard Dainfern Valley's gates while weary demonstrators consider what to do, 2004

At Dainfern there was not a specific complaint or a request directed to the Dainfern estates. The demonstrators relied, as Colson (1995: 67) observes in her own research, on a 'dramatic' performance displaying only 'rhetoric' in an 'attempt to gain support and undermine the opposition'. Where rhetoric might have worked at Mumbai, at Dainfern rhetoric was not enough for powerless farm workers confronting the powerful landowners. As mentioned by one of the Dainfern residents a similar demonstration had already been held.

Aggression was brief and quickly quelled by the police with riot shields who arrived with security personnel from Dainfern Estate. The timely arrival was not, I think, because of the violent reaction, but because they were on their way, anyway. There was, again, a parallel with the demonstrations that turned violent at Mumbai. The peaceful Mumbai crowd was disrupted by the *reaction of the audience*. That is, suddenly without any provocation Björkman observed police in riot gear charging the quietly demonstrating crowd (Björkman 2015: 143).

Following the brief moment of gate shaking some of the younger demonstrators trampled on flowerbeds, but the watching security officials ignored their activities. I asked the security officer if he could distinguish genuine demonstrators from agitators and he replied: 'No comment' and I could get him to say no more. My own observation was that there were no agitators. Although the crowd was not exclusively farm workers and dwellers and despite party political representatives organising the event, I observed no one intent on making serious trouble.



Photograph 6.15 a) Ignored by Dainfern Valley, some annoyed demonstrators trample in a flower bed; b) Good-natured young female demonstrators act-up for the camera, 2004

Dainfern Estate security was much more approachable while they stood around watching the small crowd outside Valley and were willing to answer my questions. In response to whether the demonstration was getting out of hand, and whether people had overstayed their welcome, the answer was: 'No, not at all.' People could stay until 16h30 then they had to go. In further explanation he said a letter informing the estates' managements about the demonstration had arrived only on Wednesday. It was stated in the letter that the people wanted to hold a prayer service at the gates. There had been no mention in the letter of a request to meet the committees, he said, and for that reason there was no committee or management representatives present — They did not know about it, he said.

6.2.4 Effectiveness of intention

The elderly former Zevenfontein farm workers and dwellers were the core of the decision-making community. When I asked them how they thought the *toy-toyi* was going, they replied they would stay at the gates all night until Valley responded. This was not a message conveyed to Valley, but an *ad-lib* soliloquy among themselves. As the morning stretched on apparent weariness and boredom caused some to sit and talk under a tree and await further instruction.



Photograph 6.16 a) Weary and somewhat bored older women wait for the demonstration to end; b) Lack of interaction by Dainfern Valley leaves the farm workers and dwellers wondering how to proceed, 2004

The demonstration continued until about 13h30 with people resting on the grass, some standing around, others giving an occasional gate shaking, and a few excited young demonstrators trampling on a flowerbed. 'It's nice to trample on flowers, they are soft', one of them said. It was a rhetorical message with senseless meaning. Though no doubt the security officers did not apprehend it like that. Björkman (2015: 145) implies that an articulated message is needed for an audience to make sense of the intention behind the demonstration.

Björkman (2015: 143) argues that the crowd is the audience of itself, and at Dainfern Valley it was clear they were waiting for something to happen and the next phase of the social drama. Ignored by Valley the demonstrators were at a

loss as to the demonstration's significance and focus. Some placards lay discarded on the grass; others provided shade or served as fans against the heat of the morning sun.

Considering the lack of activity at a stage at one of the Mumbai demonstrations Björkman (2015: 149) notes that one of the demonstrators viewed the demonstration as a waste of her time. She had she said to go home to 'cook lunch'. Björkman interprets the remark as the 'participants *themselves*' having their own narrative and outcome in mind. 'By the same token, her friend's response — "you go, I'll tell you what happens" — gestures toward the character of the event as performance — as something that is *watched*, something that has a particular and anticipated narrative structure, but whose final outcome is not yet certain.' The crowd Björkman concludes was not only the 'subject' of the demonstration but also its 'audience' (ibid: 149).

Turner (1987 citing Moore *Law as Process* n.d: 39) perceives 'endless variety' of situations of social life providing 'arenas of continuous competition' with 'ever-shifting sets of persons, changing moments in time altering situations and partially improvised interactions (1987: 8, 9). Björkman (2015: 18) makes a similar observation of the Mumbai crowd that became its own audience eager to see what would happen as the drama unfolded.

In essence the demonstration symbolised the religiosity and politicisation of the graves with its band, choir and church ministers, mass marching and slogans that implied the disparity in power relations. Altogether they enacted the farm workers' sense of place, of ancestral graveyards and lost graves and land rights. They signified the sacredness of the ancestral dwelling and burial place. It was

ritualised drama in which the symbols were apparent to the demonstrators, and were conveyed to some members of the Dainfern audience as the subsequent meeting with the farm workers and dwellers indicated.

At the time of the demonstration the audience, Dainfern, had not interacted with the drama. In the narrative of the crowd the role of Dainfern was to interact, but it appeared not to do so. Rather Dainfern distanced itself from it. Dainfern appeared to require a clearly worded demand. As I have mentioned one of the Dainfern Estate security officers had said there was no request, when the demonstration was planned, for any interaction with Dainfern management

I had observed the indirect communicating with landowner or developers at community meetings. At no time at meetings did the farm workers and dwellers make an actual demand from landowners and developers. No doubt, the Committee made actual demands. But, when it came to the community in dialogue with landowners/developers there was never a direct and articulated statement of what they wanted. It appeared that the request was to be understood, and Dainfern should respond of its own volition. This was evident at the meeting following the demonstration, and more so during the demonstration. The protest was a social and cultural drama the choreography of which was quite obvious to the actors but incoherent to the audience. In fact Valley seemed rather more intimidated by the activities, and the demonstration did not bring them to the negotiation table as it did Estate.

By way of unsolicited mediation I asked one of the ANC representatives I knew from Zevenfontein informal settlement whether the community/demonstration leaders could ask Dainfern Valley to agree to a meeting — committee to

committee. In reaction to my enquiry I saw the ANC representative talking to the senior Dainfern security officer. As a result of that conversation the ANC representative told me the security officer had agreed to take a message to Estate and Valley. As far as the timing of this interception went it seemed the demonstration had gone on long enough and it was time to bring it to an end. I asked the security officer whether being a negotiation facilitator was part of his brief, and he replied it was in so far as it was his responsibility to maintain order and security by doing whatever was required.



Photograph 6.17 a) Demonstrators discuss written request to Dainfern for a meeting;
b) Memorandum is held aloft signally the demonstration is over, 2004

Undertaker had kept a low profile during the demonstration. In drama every action has its cue and shortly after the security officer's agreeing to intercede with Dainfern management, Undertaker arrived with a memorandum requesting a meeting between the community leaders and Dainfern Estate and Valley management. He held up the memorandum and told the demonstrators the aims of the demonstration were achieved. The *toyitoyi* was over, and everyone should return to Witkoppen School for lunch. 'Everyone', I was told, knew the demonstration would end at lunchtime. The intention of the demonstration was to 'wake up' Dainfern residents. I asked Tshepo whether the *toyitoyi* had been effective, he responded by asking me what the Committee said. Other

individuals would not commit themselves to a personal opinion either. They wanted me to ask the Committee for the official version. When I asked Undertaker he told me it had not been an entirely satisfactory day: 'We did not speak with Dainfern and we have not got our bones. We will come again for our bones.'



Photograph 6.18 Demonstration over, demonstrators stroll back to Witkoppen School for lunch, 2004

6.3 ACTIONS FOR THE ANCESTORS

6.3.1 Elements of ritual and ceremony

The exhumation and reburial of human remains required the religious solemnity of prescribed order of things done and observed through ritual actions and ceremonies. It was important for individual families to inform their ancestral spirits, and, they insisted that 'ceremonies' should be done according to family custom. By suggesting 'custom' it implied both form and structure of rituals and ceremonies.

A reason given for doing rituals according to family custom was because who was considered an ancestor was a matter for individual families, they said, although they all acknowledged their lineal ancestors. Within the context of the Zevenfontein graves and the history of dwelling and working, all relatives were incorporated as ancestors into the construct of religious and sociopolitical significance. It implied that the 'sentimental ties' to all family graves were proof of informal rights to burial sites, which as James (2009: 245, 238) suggests acquire 'heightened significance as sites for the concentration of social memory'. Thus for the Zevenfontein dwellers and families religious observances may well have included, sociopolitical innovation for time and place. But that does not necessarily negate ethnic roots and meaningful cultural constructs.

Furthermore, the opinions of research participants suggested that reverence of ancestors had adapted to the periurban farm life style. Hellman (1967) observes that ethnic groups absorb one another's customs as a result of contact with urban environments. The concept of ancestors also depended upon ethnicities within marriages. It appeared to be weak, for instance, among some younger farm worker descendants and survived more intensely among the older generation, such as Gosego and his adherence to ZCC church values, and Mmusi, whose grandfather had been an *isangoma*.

Most significantly, of course, in performing ceremonies or rituals for exhuming and exhumed deceased family members there were no 'traditional' rituals or ceremonies. When I asked what specific rituals were needed research participants said they did not know any specific rituals. Thus, those that were performed had no formal construct or definition. There were basic elements of ritual such as sprinkling of snuff, spitting of beer accompanied by utterances

informing ancestral spirits what was going to happen and inviting them to go to the new cemetery.



Photograph 6.19 a) Snuff enjoyed by ancestors; b) Traditional sorghum beer sipped from ritual clay pot

The only ritual form they did mention was *ukubuyisa*, but again probably adapted to the circumstances. A communal ceremony of ritual slaughter in the form of an *ukubuyisa* would be required, Mpho said, to lead the spirits left after the relocation of graves in the 1980s on Dainfern to Fourways Memorial Park. But, she insisted, it did not have to take place at gravesites, or on Dainfern, but at a place where the farm workers and dwellers could be together. A factor of the ceremony was the perceived troublesomeness of the Dainfern spirits that needed to be laid to rest. Kiernan (1980: 128) notes that among the Zulu although an *ukubuyisa* ritual is usually held one year after the burial, its observance is flexible. It may take place five years after death and be repeated if necessary. Its purpose is to close the mourning period by ‘finally laying the spirit of the deceased to rest, so that he or she ceases to be troublesome to the living and quietly accepts the status of ancestor’.

Lamla (1981: 8) states that *ukubuyisa* is a ‘festival’ with much food and beer, it is celebratory in remembrance of death and is observed not at the grave but at

home. 'Ukubuyisa ithongo (to bring back home the spirit of the dead) is a ceremony observed two years or more after death' (Lamla 1981: 8), which finally incorporates the deceased into 'the group of ancestors for the first time' (1981: 9).



Photograph 6.20 a) Lighting incense cone of herbs and oil; b) Dried herbs set alight to make smoke

Prayers and hymns were ceremonial to the commencement and closure of every occasion. Ritual offerings of snuff, sorghum and incense smoke were offered before a grave was opened, as the mortal remains lay displayed next to their coffins and at Fourways memorial park before the coffins were placed in their graves. Snuff was sprinkled because 'ancestors like snuff', that is it was something used during life and enjoyed, similarly ancestors knew and liked sorghum beer. Murray (1975: 63-69) states that *kwae* (snuff) is the presentation of tobacco and is merely a communal gesture to 'make the shades happy' and 'in justification people explain that their "grandfathers" and "grandmothers" were very partial to tobacco' and that a common method of communication is through *kwae*. *Izangoma* 'sprinkle a few pinches on the ground for the shades to "open up their heads".'

The farm worker elders, men and women, and the senior *isangoma* burned incense, consisting of *mphephu* (Tswana-Sotho) or *isiphephetho* (Zulu), which consisted of a handful of loose soft herbs, and *vuka ku bafilea*, a small cone of compressed herbs and oil, of which the rising smoke was offered to reconcile the ancestors to their disturbance from their sleeping place. Incense was an offering, the *isangoma* said, that would appease the ancestors who might be angered by the disruption to their bones. Such socially approved medicines are also burned to promote solidarity among the group, and its wellbeing and protection and some families prepare their own medicines the recipes of which are handed down for generations from father to son (Hammond-Tooke 1974: 341-342). Most people, however, obtain the herbs from specialist herbalists, *inyanga* (Zulu), *ixhwele* (Xhosa), *ngaka*, (Sotho) (Hammond-Tooke *ibid*). Krige and Krige note that the burning of herbs used in shrines and offerings is 'to make the ancestors forget their complaints' (1954: 63).



Photograph 6.21 a) Sorghum beer spat upon earth; b) and poured from a ritual calabash

There were also different ways these offerings were made. For instance beer was sometimes taken into the mouth by the communicant and spat out upon the ground. Hammond-Tooke (1994: 8-9) suggests that: 'Reconciliation is essentially ... religious in character,' and notes that the personal emitting of spittle and

liquid from the mouth indicated 'a heart free from grievance and anger'.

Willoughby (1928: 352) suggests spitting out —*tsu*— is a means of 'forwarding' consecration to the ancestors. According to Wilson and Thompson (1969: 161) spitting out water expressed goodwill and cleansing oneself of angry thoughts — 'with the expectorated spittle whatever feelings of hurt or evil that may be in the heart will be expelled.' Other elders poured the sorghum beer on to the ground from a special gourd container.

6.3.2 Private homestead rituals

The ritual slaughter appeared to be an informal event that would take place in the late afternoon once everything was organised. While waiting for the ceremony to start I sat with Rethabile, Gosego's wife, and their adult daughters around the dining-room table and made small talk about the family, who had all come home for the special occasion. The grandchildren played outside the homestead, and Gosego, his son and adult grandson discussed and prepared what was necessary for 'making a job' (ritual slaughter) or *imbasa* (fire, an alternative term for 'job'). They were being informed by Gosego's sister's son who was trained by his father as an expert in ritual slaughter. Although not of Gosego's lineage, the ritual expert would do the slaughtering.

According to ethnographies the different South African ethnic groups used to slaughter various animals, such as sheep, goats and fowls (Tswana) bullocks (Zulu) and cattle on 'tribal' and on special family occasions (Pedi) (Addison 1924: 168, Mönnig 1967: 61, 68). Murray (1975: 70) makes the following distinctions of a goat for a *bokoma* ritual and a sheep for a 'feast of *badimo*'. This was not a

distinction made by Gosego, which could either reflect sociocultural changes in contemporary times or adaptation of the ritual for the circumstance.

My research indicated that choice of animal depended on the contemporary circumstances of urbanised people and family custom, rather than prescriptive ethnic custom. For instance, although both Tswana, Gosego preferred to slaughter a goat, and Lucas my research assistant, said his family would slaughter a sheep because it would not bleat as its throat was cut. Furthermore, my impression from what research participants said was that despite the belief in the ancestors, ritual slaughter was an exceptional offering, and many of them had done so with a fowl.

Ethnographies on ethnic groups describe different forms of slaughter being performed for various reasons, either at the graveside or at the homestead. The sort used to inform the ancestral spirits of the exhumation of the Mamelodi graves was in the form of a homestead *ukuhlabela izinyanya*, so that the ancestors may 'taste blood' (Lamla 1981: 8). The ritual expert brought his own fowl to offer to his ancestors and Gosego said he paid 'eight hundred rand' the previous day for a young goat from a local Klipgat farmer. Although the purpose is to spill blood for the ancestors, the feast of meat, which is for family, neighbours and friends, is equally important. An older goat would have been cheaper, but the meat would be tough, Gosego said. The slaughtering of a white goat and fowl was their symbolism of health, purity and light, expressing 'to shine forth'. White in rituals signifies to walk along 'pathways' to the light, life and good fortune (Ngubane 1977: 114-115).

Ngubane (1977: 59) lists the ritual contexts of slaughtering a goat, including bringing protection to the lineage, giving thanks to the ancestors, integrating the deceased with the ancestral spirits, invoking ancestral protection prior to a risky endeavour, appeasing ancestors if they have been annoyed, and also to show ancestors a new home. In the absence of a specific ritual for the circumstance of relocating a grave, meaning and purpose can be understood from all the associations Ngubane provides.



Photograph 6.22 a) Ritual offerings of sorghum beer and white fowl, and vegetables for the stew; b) young white goat bought for ritual slaughter and feast, Klipgat, 2006

The contemporary peri-urbanised and 'township' environments in which many of the farm workers and dwellers lived also revealed how ethnically specific differences in customs were no longer practiced. As farm workers/dwellers said their customs were family oriented, rather than strictly ethnic in form. Apart from buying a goat and the vegetables traditionally essential for the stew, sorghum beer was also bought, because the family does not brew its own. About fifteen litres was bought of which only half a dozen mouthfuls ritually used. Clearly it was to be enjoyed at the feast. Beer was ladled from the store container into a special earthenware and enamel-painted bowl that was used only for offerings. Shaw (1974: 104) notes the absence of specific ritual objects associated with the ancestors, and according to Rethabile it included offering

vessels. The bowl, for instance, used in the ritual had no especial symbolic value. It was simply kept from everyday use for such an occasion, in much the same way an exclusive set of crockery and cutlery is kept for Jewish Passover. On a visit to the family after the ritual Rethabile asked me whether I would like to buy the bowl and two matching smaller ones. When I said I would, she laughed and said, 'Now, I can buy a new one.' She was tired of the one she already owned.

Holding a ritual slaughter was an especial occasion for the family, for whom neither ritual nor everyday slaughtering was a common practice. Usually Rethabile bought butchered meat from a shop. The grandchildren looked forward to the activities with excitement, but Rethabile said she would not attend the actual slaughter because she was not of the lineage. Furthermore, she did not like seeing animals killed. The animal was kept in the back yard, tethered within a shelter, which also covered a fireplace, where a small fire was burning.

At about 16h30 the ritual started with the family taking the goat into the homestead for the ancestors to hear and acknowledge the purpose of the 'job'. Gosego said that once he had done the ritual slaughter his ancestors would be 'all right'. He would tell them what was going to happen — that their bones would be exhumed and taken to Fourways Memorial Park. Willoughby suggests that by taking the animal into the homestead it became 'consecrated' (1928: 352). Both Rethabile and Gosego assured me that ancestral spirits would neither mind my participant observation, nor my photographing activities.

As well as informing the ancestors about the ritual, they also asked the ancestors to bless all the family's activities and the slaughter. Rethabile attended

the prayers and was included because she was a member of the family and homestead, although she took no further part. Since I was part of the group in the homestead, I was considered a fictive family member, and so, Gosego informed me, he had included me in his prayers and asked the ancestors for their blessings on my research activities.



Photograph 6.23 a) Consecration of ritual goat among household within the homestead; b) Lineage elder and descendants offer beer to the ancestral spirits at place outside where they will 'make a job', 2006

With the conclusion of the prayers the ancestors were then invited to accompany the family 'outside'. The ancestors were not asked to go to a specific place, simply to *accompany* the family in the same way that they would ask the ancestors to go with them on a journey. Gosego made no distinction as to whether it was a single parental ancestor, or only the ancestors who were to be exhumed. At the homestead all his ancestral spirits were included. At a graveside it would have been a specific ancestor, but in the case of Mamelodi they referred to the interred, and the ancestors in general.

The place where the ritual slaughter was performed had neither a particular place name nor, according to Gosego and Rethabile, a particular form. The ritual was to be performed beneath an aloe, but the plant was not symbolic or significant, according to Gosego, the place was simply 'outside' the homestead.

Ancestors knew what was meant by 'outside', he said. Rethabile said she had put the stones in place at the foot of the aloe as decoration and protection.

Lucas, Gosego and other farm workers said there was no traditional shrine or offering place within in the urban homestead/household. As and when they wanted to make a 'job' they would simply find a convenient corner of the yard.

Lucas and Gosego's information indicated not only the sociocultural change introduced by urbanised ethnic groups, but also the datedness of much ethnographic literature substantiated my observation of the sociocultural change from the way rituals used to be done.



Photograph 6.24 a) Ritual expert explains protocol; b) He makes his own offerings to his ancestral spirits, 2006

Sociocultural adaptation was evident in all aspects pertaining to graves in the urbanising areas. Even so far as, in the absence of an ancestral grave for whatever reason, a special place such as the aloe growing in the backyard of his homestead, Gosego said, could be an alternative place of offering and communication. Furthermore, the site in Gosego's backyard had no lineage

affiliation. Within the marriage offerings to ancestors of either spouse could be made at the same place.

Outside at the slaughtering place Gosego followed by all the adult members of the lineage spat beer and sprinkled snuff on the earth one after another. Snuff (*kwaē*) which is 'a prayer to invoke their sympathetic interest in family affairs' and sorghum beer are traditional elements in a propitiatory 'feast of *badimo*' (ritual slaughter for the ancestral spirits) (Murray 1975: 69). Then, having instructed the family what to do, the ritual expert made his own offerings of beer, snuff and blood to his ancestral spirits. The reason Gosego did not perform the ritual slaughter himself, was because, he said, he was not adept at slaughtering an animal such as a goat. Two of the young grandsons watched fascinated by the entire process, joining in when allowed to do so.



Photograph 6.25 a) Goat is gently laid upon a corrugated metal sheet taken from yard fence; Held firmly by its legs so it cannot struggle goat bleats once as its throat is cut, 2006

Great respect and humaneness was shown to the goat from the moment of its purchase from the farmer. It was gently led from place to place and comfortably tethered so that it would not be distressed to give up its life. It was firmly held

because it was important, Gosego said, that the ritual goat should not struggle or be unduly distressed. Calmness and quietness during the ritual was important, he said.



Photograph 6.26 a) Blood of dying goat seeps into earth for spirits; b) Waiting until it is dead, 2006



Photograph 6.27 a) & b) Skinning and butchering the meat, 2006

There was an informal spontaneity about the entire occasion. Consultation among themselves, buying the necessary components, looking for things, fetching a sheet of corrugated metal from the fence and selecting the best knife characterised the event. Nothing was laid out and ready in a ritualistic manner. The ritual purpose of offering blood to the ancestors, confined the action and the actors to finding the best way to do it, rather than there being prescribed performance or a set of choreographed actions that symbolised the meaning of

the ritual. Two animals had to be killed and the ritual expert made sure the knife was properly sharpened so that the deeds could be done as quickly as possible with as little suffering as possible. The blood was the ritual component, not the killing.

It was essential in the preparation of the ritual feast following the slaughter to boil the meat with vegetables and salt. No spices could be used because the ancestors 'do not know them'. According to Mönnig the meat is cooked and eaten without salt, implying no joy in the eating (1967: 68). That was not the intention of the feast, the blood had been given to the ancestors, the meat was for enjoyment and sharing, but it had to be cooked in a particular way. Gosego's explanation is indicated in Lye and Murray (1980: 124) who states that at a feast of *badimo* as well as the family, friends and neighbours are also invited depending on the 'quantity of meat and beer available'. Rethabile said she would cure the goatskin and place it on the floor next to her bed. Indicating the variations in cultural values, Ngubane (1977: 4) notes that in Zulu ritual slaughter a goatskin is 'sacred' and taken into the homestead and stored for posterity.



Photograph 6.28 Old-fashioned campfire used to boil meat for ritual feast, Klipgat, 2006

6.3.3 Public graveside ceremonies

Whereas the cultural drama of the homestead sacrifice was a private affair, the rituals performed at River Glen and Mamelodi were done in the public domain. Turner (1987: 3-4, 11) distinguishes within *genres* of 'cultural performance' the collective rituals of an ethnic group that are held in the public social field. In that sense the group 'ceremonies' at Mamelodi, which included prayers and offerings prior to and after relocating graves were observances of cultural values associated with relocating ancestral mortal remains from graves. In essence the rituals needed to be done at Mamelodi in accordance with ancestral beliefs and practices, but just as with the interplay of crowd and audience in a public protest, people had to see the rituals being done. Cultural performances include 'prayers, ritual readings and recitations, rites and ceremonies', that is various genres of religious action (Singer 1972, cited by Lamberth n.d: 1).

The exhuming of *mass graves* held a political and symbolic message as did the public demonstration of the imbalance of power relations and thus the actions and events at the cemetery had to be demonstrated to an audience holding the greater power. This audience included the Dainfern residents who funded the project, developers who re-interred deceased farm workers/dwellers in mass graves, and the public at large. As occurred at the demonstration, the media were informed and the day before the exhumation of the mass graves Undertaker held a 'press conference'. In a sense the media documented the rituals for the absent audience of the Dainfern residents and public at large, as to the genuineness of rituals and ceremonies that should be observed before graveyards and ancestral spirits are relocated to a new cemetery.

With regard to the public display of rituals at Mamelodi it is worth considering what James (2000: 158) suggests:

One effect of using an imagery of ancestors and graveyards is to establish the fixity of claims on land - to prove or legitimise ownership, citizenship, ethnic or clan identity. ... The ancestors' claim to establishing a place may prove the prior or even exclusive right to it for their descendants (James 2000: 158).

Nevertheless, 'Many people are concerned that their traditional cultures be maintained because these cultures serve to give them an identity and some kind of security in modern society (Bourdillon 1993: 14). Public display of cultural practices especially those concerning ancestral spirits and graveyard ceremonies emphasise the cultural significance of the mortal remains.

The rituals performed at gravesides at River Glen and Mamelodi cemeteries were undoubtedly the sincere actions of individuals. Similar to what I had observed at the homestead ceremony, there was genuine informality and spontaneity. Nevertheless, the publicising of the ceremonies was for public scrutiny, and more specifically for the developers of Portion 246 and the Dainfern donors. Since the Dainfern graves were removed without the knowledge of the farm workers and without proper ceremonies, it was important that landowners and developers see for themselves exactly what was required.

The Sekuruwe families stated that when graves were relocated only family members could perform rituals and they needed to be present throughout the process to inform the spirits of the 'new home' and to 'lead' them to their graves. Beer and slaughter ensured they were 'happy with their new home' (Saccaggi 2012: 86). Very few Zevenfontein workers and dwellers identified River

Glen graves, and only Tshepo and Ngidi family members regularly attended the exhumations.

On most occasions Jabulani made offerings of water and snuff before each grave was exhumed, communicating to the *abaphansi* of the graves through his own ancestral spirits. Hammond-Tooke (1993: 182) mentions the symbolic 'cooling' properties of water. On one occasion his brother prayed and sprinkled snuff before the excavation of possibly spurious graves. Although they were not their own graves, Musa explained that ancestral spirits hear the voice of their own lineage. Similarly, at Mamelodi, when on the first day of the exhumations the grave pits were found to be empty, the *isangoma* communicated with her ancestors through trance to find out where Dainfern re-interments were situated.



Photograph 6.29 a) & b) Water and snuff offered before graves are opened at River Glen, 2004

Communication in the form of prayers reflected not only interaction between individuals and the supernatural, but also religious interactions between individuals within the group and as a group. The prayers sanctioned within the context of differing cultures not only the intention to inform the ancestors about what was to happen and to invite them to go with the bones in the coffins

to the new burial site at Fourways, but also invoked the blessings of the Almighty on the justification of having mass graves opened and affording the disrespected deceased individuals the dignity of individual reburial.

Musa, whose brother's wife performed rituals at Mamelodi, suggested, she would have told the Mnguni ancestors buried in the mass graves what she was doing. She would have told them that the diggers were going to remove their remains from the mass graves and rebury them 'back home' [that is Zevenfontein area] in Fourways Memorial Park. Musa said, Nomzamo would have said something like: 'We are taking you to a certain place; we are going to do it this way, because this burial in Mamelodi was a mistake. It was because of the white people who wanted to build there and they did not let the relatives and descendants know.'



Photograph 6.30 Spiritual leader prays with congregated farm workers and dwellers at start of day's activities, Mamelodi Cemetery, 2006

Gosego did not know whether there existed any especial rituals for exhumation, nevertheless, burning herbs/*mphephu* at dawn pertained specifically to

appeasing ancestors, according to the senior *isangoma*. Whereas for the morning ritual *mephephu* herbs were burned, the post-exhumation offering called *vuka ku bafile*, entailed the *isangoma* lighting a small cone of compressed herbs and oil and letting it burn. Although the elders also knelt alongside the *isangoma* not all of them made any offerings. If they did it was snuff. Mandla as an African church spiritual leader and someone with graves on Dainfern and the elders shared snuff and beer among themselves.



Photograph 6.31 a) & b) Snuff, sorghum beer and *mephephu* smoke offered to ancestral spirits before grave is opened, Mamelodi Cemetery, 2007



Photograph 6.32 a) *Izangoma* kneel at nearby grave to consult ancestors; b) Exhausted by her trance senior *isangoma* is helped by one of the others, 2006

After the first mass grave opened on the first day was found to be empty, the senior *isangoma* communicated with her own ancestors through trance in order

to find out whether any human remains from Dainfern were nearby. All the *izangoma* knelt around a nearby grave where the senior *isangoma* with eyes closed invoked her ancestors. On the conclusion of her communication and weakened by her trance the dazed looking *isangoma* was led away supported by her trainee *isangoma*.



Photograph 6.33 a), b) & c) Farm workers/dwellers and *izangoma* dance, sing and play traditional musical instruments, 2006

The presence of colourfully costumed choristers elevated South African indigenous culture at Mamelodi, and foregrounded the political history of black South Africans, in the singing of struggle songs and hymns. As a genre of cultural performance it reinforced the message of the importance of a so-called 'African cultural' process to relocating graves. In contrast to the choir's performance, however, the dancing and singing by Mandla, the *izangoma* with the elder female farm workers and dwellers had undeniable sincerity and traditional authenticity. 'The importance of the dance, with its accompanying drumming, is reflected in the names for mediumistic diviners which all have the root *-goma* (Zulu: *isangoma*; Sotho: *mokome*; Tsonga and Venda: *mungome*; Lobedu: *mugome*) meaning basically, "a drum", and the tendency for this institution to diffuse to other groups is striking' (Hammond-Tooke 1974: 350).



Photograph 6.34 Offerings to ancestral spirits made after the exhumations as mortal remains lie on traditional grass mats next to their coffins, Mamelodi Cemetery, 2006

In the programmatic of the day's religious ceremonies the post-exhumation ceremony reversed the morning's order, and Jabulani led the farm workers in prayer following the ritual offerings, before human remains were placed in respective coffins, and the coffins transported to Fourways Memorial Park. A second round of rituals of snuff and burning herbs was conducted in front of

the grass mats upon which accumulated mortal remains of individuals lay next to their respective coffins.

6.4 EXHUMATION AND REBURIAL EVENTS

6.4.1 Attention to cultural values



Photograph 6.35 a) Early morning start to exhuming graves; b) Erecting hessian screens around graves, River Glen, 2004

The relocation of graves was nothing unusual, and the meetings, discussions and negotiations, the demonstration and the rituals were aimed at seeing that the graves of Zevenfontein farm workers and dwellers were relocated in such a way that communication between members of former farm workers/dwellers and their deceased family members as ancestral spirits could continue. The rituals were instrumental in informing the ancestors of the disturbance to their sleeping place. According to Undertaker the processes of undertaking, namely, exhuming graves, removing mortal remains and the reburial of the physical dimension of ancestral spirits were equally important. In determining the cultural requirements as indicated by Undertaker in the context of River Glen and the Mamelodi mass graves I refer to archaeological discourse and legislation on the subject.

Archaeologists and undertakers both argue they know the correct way to do such relocation, and that the other does not. Saccaggi (2012) argues for the relocation of the Sekuruwe graveyard in Limpopo by archaeologists after an undertaking service provider had destroyed mortal remains with the effect that ancestral spirits could not be relocated. Whereas Undertaker argued that only a 'black undertaker' with knowledge of African culture should relocate ancestral graveyards because white archaeologists do not understand cultural values. 'In what he calls an attempt to educate the masses, [Undertaker] has proposed workshops for developers, relating to the spiritual value of African graves' (Grobler 2005).



Photograph 6.36 a) & b) Excavating graves with picks and shovels, River Glen, 2004

When I asked Bongani whether he was satisfied with the manner in which the archaeologists performed the exhumations at Farmall, he said 'no'. It was only after Undertaker, who was in charge of the reburial, explained what should be done regarding the handling of the mortal remains and coffins that he was satisfied. In the end he was happy that his ancestors were properly reburied in Mauritius Road graveyard, Cosmo City. The successful relocation of Rooivaal was a joint effort, too. Archaeologists did the excavation and Funeral Services

the reburial. The difference seemed to be the careful attention paid by Archaeological Grave Relocations to documenting and numbering graves prior to exhumation, so that each grave could be identified in the new cemetery, followed by the attention to cultural aspects of reburial by Funeral Services. As a result Bheka could identify and visit his mother's grave in the new cemetery.

The use of a backhoe loader destroyed the graves and their contents at Sekuruwe and Saccaggi (2012: 46 footnote 7, 47) states their use is suitable only for 'formal graves' in removing 'the first 4 to 4.5 feet of soil', but inadvisable for farm graves. Undertaker, on commenting on the use of mechanical diggers to relocate Dainfern graves, said backhoe loaders were regularly used on black graves. It was insulting and sacrilegious, because traditionally graves are dug only by hand. When relocating graves, he stated, they should be opened by hand digging as demonstrated at River Glen where men worked in pairs. One digger used the pick and the other shovelled the earth out of the grave. Those diggers not actually working stood round the grave and watched. Each pair worked for about three or four minutes and then another pair took over.



Photograph 6.37 a) Signs of decomposition in the soil; b) Loosening the shrouded mortal remains from grave pit, River Glen, 2004

According to Undertaker the 'handling' of ancestral physical remains, that is archaeological sorting and documenting, as argued by Saccaggi (2012: 46), was

disrespectful and 'un-cultural' in African values. The relocation of graves by forensic archaeologists associated with universities include analysis of bones for research purposes such as gender, height, disease as well as identity (see Nienaber & Steyn 2002). Bones should not be taken to a laboratory, Undertaker said. The opening of a grave, extraction of human remains and their reburial should be done as quickly as possible. Heilen makes a similar observation that in America relocation projects are completed as fast as possible (2012a: 27).



Photograph 6.38 a) Lifting entire mortal remains from grave; b) Contents from grave placed in coffin with decomposition in soil; c) Soil containing only 'decomposed matter' placed in coffin

Another reason for the expeditious extraction of mortal remains Undertaker said was because (I was unable find any corroborative legislation) reburials had to be completed before 14h00. If not, human remains should be taken to a mortuary and reburied the following day. As local authorities and police had to document the human remains from mass graves, for the most part reburials were not completed in time, and yet the remains were not taken to a mortuary.

Undertaker insisted that the reburial coffin should be a minimum three-quarter size, that is, not less than 1.2 metres in length. The small boxes commonly used in reburials were unacceptable, he said. One of Saccaggi's research participants implied a similar point of view claiming that 'the remains were placed in a cardboard box for reburial, and some bones were purposefully broken by the undertaker to fit into the box' (2012: 67). An additional reason for a coffin of adequate size was that any grave goods from the original burial needed to be taken with the body for reburial (see also Nienaber & Steyn 2002: 10; Saccaggi 2012: 46). There were uncertainties about what should and should not be reburied. For example, Saccaggi (2012: 46) includes grave markers for reburial and on one occasion the Funeral Services diggers placed objects that were lying on top of a grave in the coffin. Tshepo said, however, that because they were only the grave markers, they should not have been placed inside a coffin. They were, he said, signifiers for family members, and held no meaning for an ancestral spirit. Ritual artefacts left on graves were of a different typology and they were symbolic.

Undertaker insisted there should be no sorting through or removing any soil from around bones. Where complete decomposition of the body was found, the soil itself was removed from the grave and placed in a coffin, along with any

coffin pieces and shroud fragments. In other words any element of the original burial, organic and inorganic, found in the grave had to be reburied. I found little ethnographic literature on this aspect, other than Willoughby (1928: 26, 32) who mentions spiritual intensity as the body decomposes. Such a notion of integrated spirit and earth after complete decomposition supports Undertaker's argument that such soil should be taken from a primary grave for reinterment in the ancestor's new abode. Van Vuuren (personal communication, 2016), states that he has observed a practice of taking soil from a grave to the homestead where rituals can be performed (see James 2009).

However, the practice is open to exploitation and fraud. A grievance of the manner in which the Sekuruwe graves were relocated was that the undertaker buried coffins containing sterile soil, which suggested false claims for 'compensation from the mine (which was paid per grave)' (Saccaggi 2012: 48). I observed comparable 'reburials' of possibly sterile soil by Funeral Services. Sand was placed in coffins from excavated 'graves' people 'knew about' in three sites on Portion 246 but which appeared not to be grave pits.

Those sites at the time of the archaeological survey were considered unconvincing graves (Loots 2012: 1-4: 23 and personal communication 2004; Coetzee personal communication, 2004). Nevertheless, from the spiritual aspect, Jabulani made offerings before the 'graves' were excavated at two of the sites. He said if the excavated sites were not the actual graves, his offerings would suffice to invite any ancestral spirits to go with the coffins to the new cemetery, leaving the land clear of spirits for redevelopment. I did not observe any insincerity on his part, and the explanation seemed plausible.

The third site comprised screed stones. The archaeologist thought they could be either dislodged gravestones as suggested by a nearby aloe, which is a plant associated with gravesites, or a collapsed homestead (Loots personal communication, 2004). Jabulani did not make any offerings at this site, and I asked the diggers about the genuineness of the 'graves'. One gravedigger thought they might be digging for the first time. A representative of the developer was present, and the next day the excavations were discontinued. An archaeologist and two representatives of the developers were present on the first day of the River Glen relocations as were Undertaker and his secretary, the latter in attendance each day recording the process in a journal. Other than on the first day, and on the last when local media again were present, I saw only Jabulani, his brother Themba and nephew Njabulu, and Mondli and Tshepo, who were associated with the homesteads, witnessing the relocations.

Often, visible signs of interment occurred three-quarters of a metre into the grave pit, this was a 'hole' resulting from subsidence following decomposition of the coffin and/or body. Further digging revealed discoloured soil, decomposed coffin wood, corroded metal nails, handles and decorations, pieces of plastic shroud or coffin lining, and skeletal remains, mainly bits of skull, jaw and leg bones. Before these finds were made, if one of the 'unqualified' diggers was in the grave at the time, he called out 'plastic' and 'undertaker'. The latter referred to one of the experienced men who put on mask and gloves and climbed into the grave pit to free the human remains from their earthy bed.

Mask and gloves were not really necessary, according to Undertaker, because the graves were older than ten years and any still decomposing human remains presented no serious health risk. Although digging with picks appeared rather

rough, the diggers also used builder's trowels to work more carefully around human remains so that they could be lifted from the soil. In some of the graves the plastic shroud was sufficiently intact for the diggers to lift the human remains as a bundle and place it in a coffin. On average the entire process took about two and a half hours of vigorous work to reach vestiges of remains and not more than another hour and a half to have the remains out of the ground, into its coffin and the hole filled in.

The conditions of adjacent graves varied considerably and the degree of decomposition was not an indication of the age of the graves. Variations in dry and wet spells caused differences in the extent of the decomposition of organic material (Loots personal communication, 2004). For instance, in one grave an entire skeleton covered with patches of leathery skin was found and its neighbouring grave contained only discoloured soil. Furthermore, the rows of graves did not necessarily reflect the order or date of the burials. People often buried in family groups as I observed in other graveyards. Synthetic materials, such as plastic shrouds, hospital tags (one dated 1979), plastic or composite coffin handles were found in some of the graves in variable degrees of decomposition.

Van Vollenhoven explains that 'even though some graves do not contain human remains, grave associations such as coffin wood, coffin lining, nails and grave goods are sometimes found indicating that it indeed is a grave.' Furthermore, people may identify a gravesite with no human remains or grave goods, because of various factors influencing the preservation of skeletal and other material, such as soil and environmental condition and 'the age of the individual concerned'. The report by Van Vollenhoven (2013: 11) notes that the graves he

exhumed did not contain human remains, and he reasons it was because the graves may have been those of infants, as suggested by the small size of the grave dressing. He adds that 'skeletal remains of infants do not last very long in the soil'.

Of the graves that I saw opened and where there were sufficient skeletal remains to make a deduction, the body was positioned lying on its back with the arms fully extended and straight by the sides, in keeping with western or Christian burials. The graves were rectangular and surrounded by stones with a primary grave pit into which a body wrapped in a plastic shroud and in a coffin had been placed. I observed that the stones around a few graves did not correspond to the positioning of the buried coffin. One grave had a long 'hole', the length of the grave. It formed a ledge that had been dug into the side of the grave pit, and it was there that the corpse was found.

According to Undertaker, some relatives were scared of grave robbing. By positioning the body off the grave's central axis, it was hoped to deceive any witches looking for body parts for *muti* (medicines). Ngubane mentions the use of body parts in witchcraft (1977: 38), and Hammond-Tooke (1993:171) observes that witches are believed to dig up corpses and use them as 'zombies' to work in the fields. An archaeological explanation is that the practice prevents 'coffin-collapse' as the soil in the grave subsides (Goldstein Anyon 2012: 187).

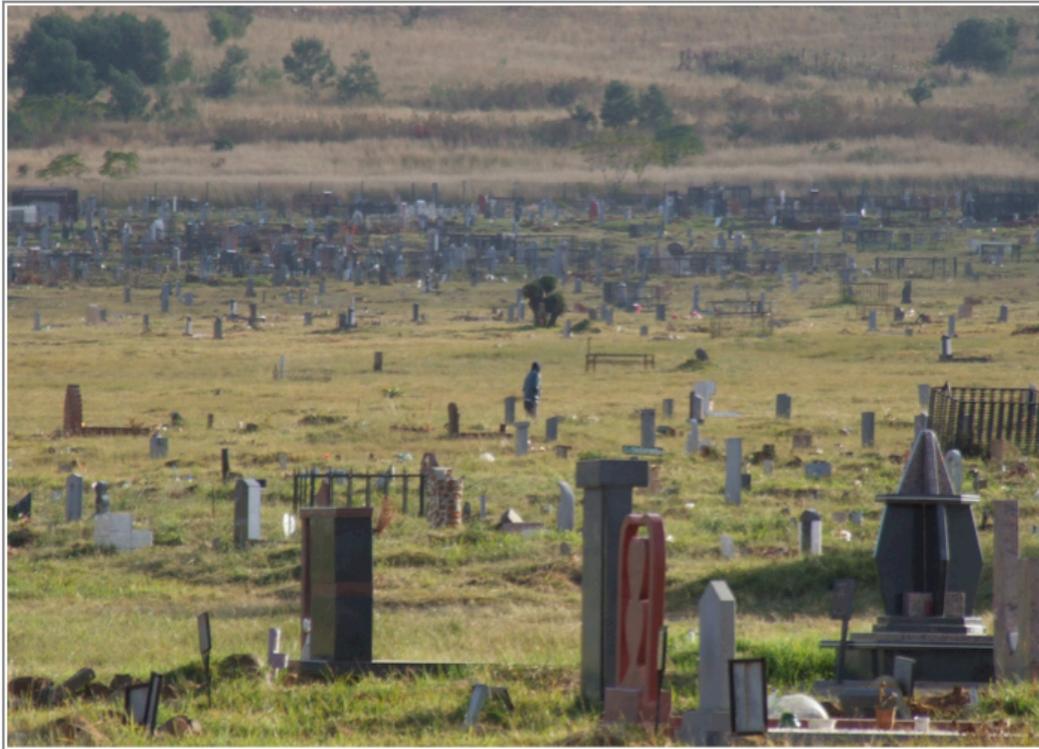
The inclusion of grave goods in a few of the graves, such as a blanket in one, child's toy in another, and a bag of divining bones in another, which Undertaker said, indicated the corpse of an *isangoma*, more specifically referenced ancestor religion and a belief in the continuation of some form of existence after death.

Reflecting sociocultural change in the peri-urban environment according to Undertaker there was unlikely to be any truly ethnic-style burials in the graveyard because of the influence of Christianity among black farm workers. He also said that most of the graves, other than the grave of the *isangoma*, of a 'Malawian' because the head had been mummified, and the third of an Asian identifiable by his name (Loonat) on its headstone, were culturally indistinct.

Undertaker claimed that ethnic and individual mortuary practice occasionally included interring more than one body in a grave if a family was poor. An infant might be buried with its mother, or a husband and wife as a combined burial. Such relationships might also be found in instances where the grave was reopened for the second burial. According to him he found three such graves on days when I was not present to observe exhumations. Yet, when speaking about mass graves, he said it was not customary to bury more than one person per grave. I obtained no further data from Undertaker post Mamelodi. He may have made a distinction between original burials and mass interments. There is no literature on multiple burials, so it is also possible the claims were fraudulent.

6.4.2 Mass graves and cultural values

Mamelodi Cemetery sprawls across a valley in northeast Pretoria, in a former black township. Some graves have headstones, others have more elaborate tombstones and there are others that resemble farm graves. The graves are in irregular rows and the cemetery looks disorganised and unkempt. Irregular shaped sections of densely situated graves are separated by open spaces with scattered graves. The open spaces, a cemetery informant said, might include the sites of the unmarked graves of victims of apartheid state-organised killings.



Photograph 6.39 Empty spaces in Mamelodi Cemetery possibly sites of mass or pauper graves, 2006

Three categories of graves are found in the cemetery. There are family burials, the unmarked graves of paupers and unclaimed hospital patients, apartheid victims whose bodies relatives were not allowed to claim, and mass graves. Nowadays, mass and pauper burials are found situated among family graves and less obvious as such. Every burial, the cemetery informant said, had a gravesite number and was recorded in the cemetery's register and on a cemetery map.



Photograph 6.40 a) & b) Locating and marking graves for exhumation, Mamelodi Cemetery, 2006

Funeral Services exhumed two graves per day. Although there were eight mass graves identified as those of Zevenfontein/Dainfern re-interments, Undertaker did not know how many deceased individuals were reburied in each grave. Graves J246, J250, J251, J1617, J1618, J1619, J1283, J1284 were opened, not in that order, from May 8 to 16, 2006. A ninth grave, J252, was opened because cemetery officials stated they had identified an incorrect grave (Moshimane 2006). I had noticed tiny pieces of coffin visible in the wall of adjacent grave J251 when it was opened that suggested that the two grave pits were connected.

As at River Glen, all digging was done by two men with pick and spade, while the other diggers stood by waiting for their turn. Despite the dryness of the surface of the first grave, shortly after the diggers were into the pit recent heavy rain had caused flooding, which was troublesome, hampering the digging and the search for human remains.



Photograph 6.41 a) Opening and excavating a grave with pick and shovel; b) Reporter sits surrounded by spectators as excavation goes deeper, 2006

Compared with the low profile and privacy of the River Glen relocation, although on one day local news media were present and reported on the event, Mamelodi was a very public affair. There were a number of people attending the

exhumations, including former farm workers, ANC representatives and news reporters and cameramen invited by Undertaker. Funeral Services also had their own professional photographer.

The same laws and by-laws as River Glen applied. A Douglasdale, Fourways, police officer attended the exhumations at the start and the end of the project. Local police and health authorities representatives documented the findings prior to the transportation of coffins to Fourways Memorial Park. Waiting for the officials to arrive meant sometimes the display of mortal remains and awaiting coffins lay out in the sun for almost an hour.



Photograph 6.42 a) & b) Waterlogged condition of grave, 2006

Finding water in the grave caused distress to the watching farm workers and dwellers. Undertaker perceived the state of the grave as further sign of apartheid disrespect for blacks by providing ill-situated cemeteries. Furthermore, there was an indication that a backhoe was used to dig the grave. After some time a water pump was brought and the water level lowered sufficiently for one of the undertaker-diggers to continue searching for human remains. The grave pit was found to be empty and Funeral Services displayed the empty coffins in a reprise of the empty coffins at the gates of Dainfern.



Photograph 6.43 a) Spectators peer into grave pit found empty; b) Empty coffins signify emptiness of two mass graves on first day, Mamelodi Cemetery, 2006

A second grave pit was found to be empty for which the cemetery had no explanation. Since the graves were dug during the apartheid era, he said, there could be any number of explanations. Mass graves were not documented in the same way as ordinary graves. He was not knowledgeable on the matter, he said, as he was employed at the cemetery only after 1994.



Photograph 6.44 a) Excavation of a drier grave; b) Digging reveals the characteristic 'hole' of a burial, Mamelodi Cemetery, 2006

In digging grave J1617 the diggers came across large boulders, which were evidence of the use of a backhoe to scrape mounds of earth into the grave pit following reinterment. Saccaggi (2012: 67) records similar use by the undertakers at Sekuruwe to fill in exhumed graves. Again Undertaker and the farm workers and dwellers perceived contempt for black owners' graves.



Photograph 6.45 a) Rocks found in grave indicating use of mechanical backhoe loader to fill in grave; b) Spadeful of bone fragments retrieved from grave, 2006



Photograph 6.46 a) Diggers retrieve mortal remains wrapped in plastic shroud; b) Bundle of bones found in the plastic shroud, Mamelodi Cemetery, 2006

On finding grave contents black bags were spread around the grave upon which an undertaker-digger deposited spade loads of soil and decomposed organic material and bits of coffin ornaments. Undertaker and a forensic archaeological technician, employed by one of the universities and whose family were also former Zevenfontein farm workers/dwellers, sorted through the material on

each bag, cleaning mud off pieces of human bone and coffin fragments.

Undertaker exclaimed that the reburied bones had been wrapped as 'refuse bags', and it was another sign of the contempt shown to deceased farm workers.

The bone fragments were predominantly pieces of skull, jaws, long arm and leg bones and pelvic bone, and each spadeful of bones was identified as the remains of one person. Smaller bones from fingers and spine were not found intact.

From my observation and knowledge of anatomy I could not concur that every assemblage of mortal remains indicated separate individuals. Although the bags and the bones were also placed in the coffins, none of the earth from the grave pit was included as was done at River Glen. When I asked Undertaker why he was not taking any earth from the grave pit and why the bones were more or less cleaned, he suggested that because it was a second burial and because exhumers had to determine the number of individuals interred the earth around the bones had to be removed. One farm worker openly stated he did not think the graves were mass graves. He interpreted the plastic bags as shrouds and because a hospital tag (name and date no longer visible) was found in the grave he suggested they were actually paupers' graves or unclaimed hospital patients.



Photograph 6.47 a) Bones and bone fragments sorted on black bags before being placed in coffins; b) Bones are carefully laid out in skeletal formation in coffins, 2006

Undertaker agreed some mortal remains suggested hospital deaths. That being so would not have excluded them from being among those exhumed from Dainfern and reburied among others in Mamelodi. However, in the case of a pauper-grave it would have contained only three people. Furthermore, the degree of decomposition would not have made it impossible to have also found coffin hardware. The Mamelodi cemetery informant said, when I asked him whether he could confirm that the graves contained re-interments from Dainfern, that as far as he knew the interments were made in the 1980s, and that the graves were unmarked mass graves similar to paupers' graves.



Photograph 6.48 a) Cemetery official and news cameraman document process watched by spectators; b) Row of mortal remains and coffins, surrounded by farm workers, dwellers and spectators, await police inspection, 2006

Based on my study of human anatomy at one time, I suggested skull fragments being sorted beside one of the graves were from one skull, but Undertaker pointed out similarities in the bones. The similarity indicated, by their multiplicity, that the remains were from more than one skull, he said. My querying and documenting bones was a contentious issue for Undertaker and ultimately they caused my having to withdraw from the field. Interestingly, the forensic technician, said in 2010, that in retrospect she was not convinced that all the assemblages of bones constituted multiple individuals. The separation of

assemblages into individual mortal remains for reburials was difficult to assess. My observation was that in some instances a grave appeared to contain no more than three individuals, whereas other graves, based on retrievals, appeared to contain quite a number more. Exactly how many, from my superficial appraisal, was indeterminable.

The interaction of earth and corpse as a numinous entity found in retrievals from original burials was absent from those from mass interments. It appeared to be a sentiment of the farm workers who said they were not sure that the reburials were symbolically effective. The decomposed mortal remains from a mass grave where bones of various individuals were 'all mixed up' as Mmusi and Gosego said, could not equate to the original burials in Dainfern. They could not exude the same supernatural power as those from the original grave.

6.4.3 Ceremonies of reburial

The manner in which reburials were conducted was functional to any continuing relations between descendants and their interaction with their ancestral spirits on the special occasions when they might need to visit the place where the ancestor/s was/were buried. In concluding the cultural requirements of relocating mortal remains, attention was paid to how the reburial process was conducted. In form and protocol the reburials from the mass graves followed the ceremonial structure of an original burial. I observed far less ceremony at the reburial of the River Glen graves. Essentially the prayers and rituals at River Glen were to instruct the spirits to go with their mortal remains to the new graveyard. In respect of ancestral beliefs the spirits of the Dainfern dead were not with their remains in the mass graves, but still in Dainfern. Rituals and

prayers at Mamelodi were encompassing of all ancestral spirits and were intended to inform them of the relocation to Fourways Memorial Park.



Photograph 6.49 a) & b) Ceremonial carrying and interring of the coffins; c) Sprinkling sand into graves in the manner of formal burial, Fourways Memorial Park, 2006

The appropriateness of the form of reburial dealt with the physical dimension of ancestor beliefs. It was necessary for the symbolising of the new grave and for the logical conclusion to the demonstration. It also returned dignity to the deceased, whose spirits were guided to the new burial site through ritual actions so as to continue their relationship with the living. In a way the communicative

and ritualised performance of the reburial ceremony was an attempt at redressing the wrong of having ancestral graveyards removed and desecrated. Thus, the reburial performance was intended to be transformative for the community of farm workers and for individuals in the community (Kapchan 1995 cited by Lamberth n.d: 1).

At Mamelodi the exhumed remains, prior to being laid out in skeletal order in their coffins, were placed on grass mats, which the older and some of the younger women brought each day to the exhumations. They were everyday, rather than ritual mats, and they represented the blankets that are commonly folded and laid on top of the coffin in the grave. For instance, at River Glen the contents of the grave of the *isangoma* included personal objects, a mat and a blanket. The personal objects were placed in the coffin, the mat was placed at the base of the grave and the blanket folded and placed on top of the coffin in an effort to replicate as closely as possible the original burial. The laying of remains on mats did not occur at River Glen because of the different circumstances. At Mamelodi governmental authorities had to document what was found in the mass graves. At River Glen the remains were taken in their entirety and placed immediately into the coffins, as there was no requirement for police inspection of the contents of the grave.

The funeral ceremonies had begun each day at 05h30 not far from Witkoppen School where the farm workers assembled for the journey to Pretoria. The journey to Mamelodi Cemetery was conducted as a convoy of vehicles with hazard lights flickering and a fairly briskly moving procession through rush hour traffic. It was a procession similar to those from house to cemetery I participated in at the funerals of deceased research participants. The Mamelodi

morning cavalcade appeared to be a sociocultural adaptation of the customary funeral procession.

In contrast the journey from Mamelodi to Fourways Memorial Park did not strictly follow the normal ceremony of a funeral. As with a procession following a hearse the truck bearing the coffins departed first, and was followed by vehicles carrying 'mourners'. There was, however, no convoy, the vehicles travelled at their own speeds and via their own routes to Johannesburg. This was similar to the journey from River Glen to Fourways Memorial Park, and the aim was to get the coffins into the graves as quickly as possible. It was characteristic of a performance that accommodates referential pragmatics and does not in itself have any symbolic meaning.

At the cemetery six pallbearers per coffin proceeded with dignity and solemnity to the gravesites. The coffins with their rolled up mats resting on the lids were placed on the grass and the elders and the *isangoma*, made further rituals with snuff and burned incense. The coffins were then taken to their respective graves ready for interment. This phase in the burial ceremony was comparable to normal Christianised forms I had attended. The coffins were placed in the graves and the rolled up mats placed on top as if a blanket. Similar to a funeral the priest or spiritual leader uttered prayers before the coffins were interred.

At the funerals I attended the ritualising of the interment phase was exclusive to the immediate family. In the absence of a specific family at the reburials the male elders acted as proxies and stood in a line at the foot of each grave. The rest of the crowd of spectators/mourners sat on the grass and watched. Usually, as soon as a coffin was in its grave, traditionally men attending the funeral took

turns covering it with earth. In my observation at the funerals I attended the chief mourners, generally female, were offered a spade on which there was a small heap of earth and from which they were expected to take a handful and throw it into the grave. Sprinkling sand appeared to be innovative, as the older men appeared to have no previous experience of the practice. Nevertheless, it was a ritualising element that symbolised the usual covering of the coffin with earth by male mourners. At Fourways Memorial Park that was a task the cemetery staff performed. The reburial ceremony concluded with hand washing to cleanse the mourners of the contamination of burial, followed by the funeral meal.



Photograph 6.50 Queuing for the meal served after reburial, Fourways Memorial Park, 2006

6.5 CONCLUSION

The chapter explored three sociocultural contexts pertaining to the relocation of Zevenfontein graves. The discussion of the demonstration indicated the power relations between the landowners/developers and the farm workers/dwellers in a mass protest performance that alluded in political sloganeering to the

demonstrators' dislocated sense of place and graveyards. The purpose of the demonstration was to make Dainfern listen to their demands, which at the end of the day was presented in the form of an articulated memorandum requesting a meeting.

The rituals and ceremonies that the farm workers and dwellers enacted prior to and following exhumations and reburial were deconstructed in order to understand their form and content. In discussing them I demonstrated how these observations of and communication with the ancestors were integral parts of the relocation process in order to preserve and/or restore relations between ancestral spirits and descendants. The purpose of which was not only achieved in the forms of communication, but also in their performance they were evidence for both family members and the people paying for the project that they were necessary and complete.

The discussion on the processes of exhumation and reburial according to cultural requirements not only elucidated the rationale of cultural exhumation and reburial but also the various stages of the projects. Attention was drawn to the handling of the remains and the inclusion of the contents of the original grave being reburied at the new cemetery. This included the practice of taking soil from the original grave, which I indicated could be open to exploitation.

The underlying message of this chapter pointed to the sociopolitical statement made in the demonstration, the religious statement on exhuming graves, and the economic relations accruing from the project. Since the interactions between Dainfern and farm workers, and descendants and ancestral spirits, and even among the farm workers and dwellers themselves, are essential to the study I

also scrutinised the three scenarios for ritualised communication, taking into consideration Turner's (1987: 8, 9) ideas of 'ambiguity' and 'manipulability' of form in respect of time, situation and improvised interactions.

The relevance of the ethnographic studies to sociocultural disjunctions caused by relocating graves is its demonstration of rhetoric used in the conception of ancestral graveyards and the removal of graveyards. The demonstration encapsulated anger for what was experienced when ancestral graveyards were destroyed, the rituals symbolised the everyday reality of ancestral spirits, and the processes of exhumation, and in particular reburial, exposed the expectation that graves could be successfully relocated without adverse effects and lost graves and graveyards could be reformulated. The farm workers and dwellers' assessment of the pragmatics of negotiating and relocating graves as well as my own interpretation are discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 7: GRAVE CAUSES OF DISJUNCTION

7.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 6 I ethnographically explored three scenarios that were the outcomes of the decisions made by the farm workers and dwellers regarding the relocation of their graves. It might have been expected that the demonstration that brought Dainfern to the negotiating table, ritual communications and ceremonies to appease ancestral spirits before and after exhumation and reburial, and the culturally appropriate relocation of River Glen graveyard, and more significantly the re-exhumation of mortal remains of the Dainfern graves, would be conclusive. Research showed, however, that the relocations of River Glen and Mamelodi mass graves were more complex, leading to further issues between groups and within the group, as well as with the very idea of relocating an ancestral graveyard. The assessment of the success or failure of the relocations in respect of dynamics linked to dislocations from sense of burial and dwelling place, supernatural relations and sociopolitical and economic relations, are discussed in this chapter.

In Section 7.2 I unpack the sociopolitical and economic power relations of dispute and negotiation between farm workers/dwellers and landowners/developers, both of Dainfern and River Glen. I first deal with the sociopolitical and economic dynamics as well as the concepts of ownership of sense of burial and dwelling place, and indicate the problematic of relocating not only graves, but people from a peri-urban situated sense of place. I then discuss the processes of disputing and negotiating with Dainfern, indicating the various aspects of argument and agreement regarding the re-exhumation of the

Dainfern/mass graves and how they exemplified inter-societal attitudes and power relations with respect to relocating graves.

Section 7.3 deals with the religious dynamics and the cultural construction of relocated ancestral graveyards with reference to the farm workers and dwellers' assessment in 2008 of the fulfilment of the Mamelodi and River Glen projects. The discussion considers the creating of a new ancestral graveyard following the reburial of mortal remains, and considers whether the required rituals and ceremonies performed to take ancestral spirits together with their mortal remains from one gravesite to a new one sufficed to restore order to the living's relations with the supernatural.

Finally, Section 7.4 discusses how, as a result of dissatisfaction with the relocation projects, the decision-making group was restructured for the meetings held from 2008 to 2012/2013. And, it reflects on individualist perspectives within the community that had bearing on the sociopolitical and economic dimensions of commonality as a negotiating collective that operated from 2004 to 2006.

7.2 LANDOWNERS VERSUS GRAVE AND HOMESTEAD OWNERS

Disputes about relocating the Zevenfontein farm graves were grounded in the contrasting spatiotemporal realities of Fourways' peri-urban interface. The modernising urban development of walled residential estates was one facet and an enduring conception of rural tradition of homesteads and graveyards was the other. This section focuses on the frames of reference in the disputing and negotiating between landowners/developers and farm workers/dwellers. The

matter of the Dainfern graves and intangibles of dwelling are discussed with reference to the Dainfern landowners/developers, and the matter of graves, homesteads and shacks is dealt with reference to the River Glen landowners/developers.

7.2.1 Graves, homesteads and sense of ownership

The liminality of the cultural construction of the peri-urban interface betwixt and between countryside and city, and the disruptive changes in land use that replaced a rural sense of place with an urban sense of place was an interaction of protagonists with differing senses of the landscape. In essence, as far as sociopolitical and economic relations went between the disputants, the relocation of ancestral graveyards and homesteads from the sense of place of the less powerful stratum in order to make way for the creation of the sense of place of the more powerful stratum, as well as the urban bias only added to the arguments. The former rural land was evident in the material constructs of homesteads and graves, and the meaning of the intangible typologies of families and ancestry and the rural lifeway were linked to those homesteads and graveyards.

I have already shown how the religious association between dwelling place and burial place was intrinsic to the cultural construction of the farm workers and dwellers' sense of place. The issues in negotiating with landowners and developers were principally the relocation of graves. However, there was also the concomitant and tangible issue of the Portion 246 homesteads and Losmacherrie settlement. And, because of eviction notices and forced removals,

there were also the associative intangibles of dwelling on the former holdings of Gert and Frans of Dainfern, as well as the implications of a traumatic past.

In conceiving the construct of a contested landscape, there was on one hand the development of an elitist landscape where boundaries defined spaces of those 'insiders who belonged to the place' and outsiders who did not (Rose 1995: 99). And, on the other hand, there existed the nostalgia of an earlier and historical dwelling place of homesteads and graves that dialectically indicated an alternative group of those who belonged and those who did not. De Jongh (2008: 6-7) notes how land claim applicants substantiated their claims with reference to graves. He quotes members of the Kutama community as wanting to return to their former dwelling place because their forefathers' graves were there. The close association between burial and dwelling place was indicated in their argument that the land was 'given' to them 'by their ancestors', and that the place was their 'natural property' because it was the burial place of 'elders, forefathers and ancestors'.

A significant aspect of relocating Zevenfontein graves that had bearing on the interaction between farm workers and dwellers whose family members were buried on the land and the landowners/developers who relocated graves was the concept of *grave ownership*. The relationship between farm dwelling and graves was conceived with due respect for its religious constructs of ancestral burials and ancestral graves as something owned, signifying an interactive belonging between dwellers and land. In the intangible and tangible evidence of historical cultural practices and beliefs, graves were demarcated plots of land, the permanent resting place of the deceased forebears and ancestral spirits. A grave was, thus, a cultural artefact to which family members held a cultural right.

Additionally, grave ownership embodied the economic dynamic of property as something bought as indicated in references to paying for the burial site. Mmusi Dladla said his father paid the landowner thirty-three rand for his grandfather's grave plot and he paid a similar sum for the grave plot of his father. When the graves were 'lost', because they were 'illegally' removed or houses were constructed on top of them, Mmusi quantified the value of the grave plots as a sum of one hundred thousand rand per grave (Hill 2001: 77).

A further conception of ownership extended beyond the grave to include the land round about the grave which was conceived in terms of the land having belonged originally to the black people before the whites taking and registering it for themselves. When speaking of themselves as 'grave owners', the farm workers and dwellers implied both cultural right and economic right, for the loss of which they felt they were entitled to commensurate compensation, as indicated by Mmusi. In order to understand the farm workers and dwellers' claims to ownership for compensation for what they viewed as having lost, one has to consider, as De Jongh (2008: 7) points out, that when ownership refers to land, the understanding is different in African worldview from the legalities of the holding of title deed to land.

De Jongh (2008: 6) proposes: 'Places are politicised, socioculturally relative, historically specific, local and multiple constructions. Place ... features prominently in shaping identity, and the assertion of locality can be a manner of political activism.' And, in commenting on the activism of the Buys community of Limpopo Province, De Jongh states that the model of space is land. Locality is based upon a perception of reality and sense of entitlement (De Jongh 2007: 27-

38). In earlier writings De Jongh had argued that the politics of identity is 'rooted in claims of autochthony and ancestral lands' (De Jongh 2006: 79).

Beyond cultural ownership there was a new sociocultural awareness of the economic implication of a grave plot, especially in the context of relocating graves. As yet there is no legislation on graves and homesteads in terms of an economic claim to property as conceived by peri-urban grave owners. Legislation on the relocation of ancestral graveyards focuses only on archaeological assessment of cultural heritage to the nation and consideration of ancestors and forebears to kin groups. It does not include an economic value as a measure for compensation. When negotiating the costs of relocating Zevenfontein graves the grave owners wanted not only money for the rituals and ceremonies, but also for the loss of the grave itself, and in their view new gravesites for lost graveyards was not *quid pro quo*.

The same attitude of the farm dwellers pertained to the relocation of the remaining dwellers or occupants of Portion 246. Gugulethu had lived in her homestead she said since her marriage in 1951, and she was the public face of the desperate situation of the homestead farm dwellers in local and international media reports. Towards the end of the research period there were only two homesteads and their households left on Portion 246, because Tshepo's homestead burned down and the dwellers of Losmacherrie informal settlement had been relocated. The homestead families and Losmacherrie dwellers were issued with eviction orders, after the purchase of the land in 1994, however, as Tshepo mentioned, the occupants of Portion 246 obtained legal advice in 1996 to stay where they were.

The homestead dwellers refused to vacate, because in their reading of history they were the original occupants of the land. Thus, one reads in a news article of Gugulethu being quoted as claiming she was '*not consulted* [my emphasis] about the land sale' and simply 'told the land was sold' in 1994 to Company B (Van Schie 2010: 1). Gugulethu's saying that she was not consulted about the sale of the land indicated that according to her understanding in African worldview of land tenure, as well as history, it was her land. That meant negotiating with her about relocating or vacating. In terms of land rights, the homestead dwellers claimed that they were provided for under the *ESTA 1997*. But, according to Representative RGA the refusal to leave the farm entailed a number of court cases commencing in 1996 all of which, the homestead dwellers lost (Van Schie 2010: 1). Gugulethu's liminal status as a peri-urban land dweller was suggested by her indicating that on one hand she owned the land in terms of first person status, and on the other the contradictory notion that she had a legal right to occupancy of registered land in respect of *ESTA 1997*. In either reading of the situation she considered she was due some sort of compensation for abandoning her homestead commensurate with the current value of the land, and she wanted a house and some land.

When disputing and negotiating with Dainfern on the relocation of graves the topic included culturally acceptable relocation, underlying aspects of land claim and an economic value to which the farm workers and dwellers felt they were also entitled. This was conceived in respect of the 'millions' the developers of the farm were making, whereas the farm workers/dwellers/grave owners, the economically marginalised, got nothing. From their perspective they lost their graveyards and their homes, for which they were offered, as they saw it, a mere three thousand rand. At meetings held after 2008 and more so after 2010 when

a land claim on Zevenfontein was articulated, the development of Portion 246 and the referents of the River Glen graveyards and homesteads were included in expectations of rightful economic compensation for their loss.

James (2009: 247) argues that 'the symbolic and economic claims on land can be hard to reconcile.' It can have a symbolic 'restitutive justice' and 'ameliorative effect on unemployment and rural poverty'. James adds that 'land reform is expected to resolve racial tensions which it has itself partly created' (2009: 247). Whereas in the remote rural areas the aim to create African farmers may be a possibility, the influence in the peri-urban context on financial compensation cannot ignore the extremes of wealth of the Dainfern residents and the poverty of the former farm dwellers as cause for conflict, nor the fact that the land could not be restored to them. There could only be financial compensation for the Dainfern graves and for land and housing re River Glen.

In estimating the value placed on the wrongful relocation of the Dainfern graves in the 1980s and the lost graves still on Dainfern, Undertaker suggested that calculations take into consideration the property values of the Dainfern development. I was, even, asked to confirm estimated house prices, a topic on which I had no knowledge. As James (2009: 247) has observed in hankering for land claims former occupants do not exclude 'what was done with their land in the interim' and that claims were not only conceived in 'purely historical terms'. Thus, the compensation the Zevenfontein farm workers and dwellers expected was not unusual to South African land reform.

As a result of the loss of ancestral gravesites and eviction from land conceived as their own the farm workers when interacting with the Dainfern landowners

and River Glen developers confronted what they saw as the 'perceived threat' to their landscape and their imaginings of how the place was and should be (Tilley 2006: 13). Such sentiments were expressed in the protest slogans that impelled Dainfern to negotiate. However, in negotiating with the farm workers/dwellers and offering a donation, Dainfern representatives, as they emphatically stated, expressed only sympathy for the nostalgia of the farm workers/dwellers' lost past (Tilley 2006: 14), and they committed Dainfern only to funding the re-exhumation of the mass graves.

Tilley (2006: 15) explains that the politics of identity is closely linked to the identity of place contained in intangible typologies such as religion, and in the context of the farm workers, their relations with their ancestors. The peri-urban interface is a borderland between the sociopolitical and economic relations of local and the global social groups. Thus, in arguing the value of 'their land' the farm workers took into consideration the urbanizing of the area and its increasingly global economic identity. However, in terms of claims to space, the heritage landscape of the farm workers' past was contested against Dainfern's scenic interpretation of the landscape, and one was no less authentic in its construction than the other.

Zevenfontein's construct of an 'ancestral graveyard' was a trope for claim to land. It was an emotive image presented for public sensation as evident from media coverage, and it was the argument for compensation when it came to dealing with land development and developers. The entitlement to financial compensation included any dislocation or relocation of their graves commensurate with the value of the farm in terms of the various development projects. Large sums of money wanted from developers were mentioned at

meetings that would provide the former farm dwellers with sums comparable to Mmusi's one hundred thousand rand for the loss of his Dainfern graves (Hill 2001: 77).

A particular aspect of land claim or rights to tenure of the peri-urban context is not only the matter of land, but also urban demographics and the problem of housing. The critical shortage of housing caused a proliferation of informal settlements in peri-urban Johannesburg during apartheid (Durand 1994; Hill 2001; Brett 2006: 27-30, 32). The post-apartheid informal settlements and the construction of RDP housing continued a politically incepted 'racial marginalisation' with housing that 'fails to instil pride' in their owners according to Brett (2006: 42). Tabo and Lucas, certainly, pointed out the inadequate foundations and un-ceilinged roofs of both the local government-built housing and those sponsored by a local radio station. Nevertheless, my own research in Zevenfontein informal settlement (Hill 2001) and in this study found that the majority of recipients were less concerned about inadequate size and construction. What was important to them was the acquisition of title deeds and an irrefutable right to their own dwelling place, be it RDP house or farmland. One reason was that those who had sufficient funds could enlarge their RDP houses as Jabulani, Themba, Mmusi and one of Bongani's daughters did.

Brett's observations on 'environmentalist consciousness' draws attention to the disparity in the development of Zevenfontein, and many of the farms in the research area, between extremes of wealth and poverty in housing (2006: 47). The urbanisation of Zevenfontein in the forms of the Dainfern estates and Company C's multimillion-rand township development of Portion 246 were sublime illustrations. Brett generalises on the disruption to neighbourhood

networks resulting from informal settlement relocations (2006: 143-144), implying a loss of sense of place. My own research indicated that not to be the case with relocations to Cosmo City from Zevenfontein informal settlement, because people were relocated in neighbourhood blocks from the settlement. It was, however, Gugulethu's experience. Her relocation to Cosmo City left her deprived of her social and familial network. Instead of living among her children and grandchildren she lived alone, but for one granddaughter, in her RDP house, isolated among people she did not know. Furthermore, an RDP house was far less than she expected from the developers for loss of graves and sense of place.

Compensation in lieu of dislocation from land was not made directly from the landowners because the farm workers or rather their leaders Undertaker and the Committee negotiated on the basis of registered ownership rather than first person ownership. Nothing that I heard or saw over the years suggested anything other than the relevance of holding title deed to the land, and a landowner's obligation to farm workers/grave owners extending only to legal requirements and the costs of a grave relocations project. In respect of the latter, for instance, Nienaber and Steyn (2002: 7-9) indicate that grave owners 'requested' 'time' to perform ceremonies, 'financial assistance to "feed their relatives" on the day of the burial' and 'a memorial stone at the graves indicating the date of reinterment.' They received eight hundred rand toward reburial expenses, and the project manager negotiated the cheapest reburial site, when Fourways Memorial Park proved to be too expensive (Nienaber and Steyn 2002: 47).

Nevertheless, the value of the farmland after development was the context within which the farm workers valued their graves, and any moneys they

received was conceived of as compensation to be divided equally among families. It was difficult to assess whether the sums mentioned were individual farm workers' independent thought, because, unlike Mmusi, as far as the relocation of the graves were concerned the farm workers attending meetings were unanimous in acting as a collective. They listened to what was going to be done or paid and articulated no individual financial demands. And, although possibly instigated initially by certain individuals, there was a hope that the Zevenfontein graves would provide some economic benefit to all the former farm workers and dwellers — not just their own graves, all the graves.

As far as the homesteads went, Company B was quoted (Van Schie 2010: 1) as saying that they had looked for 'alternative accommodation' in Diepsloot and Honeydew for everyone living on Portion 246, and finally arranged for '4,500 RDP houses in Cosmo City,' presumably mainly for Losmacherrie. I had not included obtaining data on the number of registered Losmacherrie shacks, but my observation was that the homesteads were not registered in accordance with the criterion for the allocation of RDP houses (Hill 2001). The news article also mentioned that 'Resident (sic) [Undertaker] had personally represented the community in meetings to find alternative accommodation', and that he had 'encouraged people to sign up for RDP houses.' Ironically, Undertaker was not resident on the farm, or in Diepsloot or in Cosmo City, but in the 'suburbs'.

One of the homestead dwellers was happy to receive an RDP house because 'I have a title deed' (Van Schie 2010:1). And, according to Representative RGA the people of Diepsloot 'welcom[ed] the development and the jobs it will bring.' These factors indicated the differing perspectives in the peri-urban interface and the accommodation and the business enterprises that development and

urbanisation offered. In other words the differing senses of place prevailed according to the terms of the dominant and urbanising social stratum, whether it was in Diepsloot or Dainfern. Tilley (2006: 14) notes that contesting a landscape and the nostalgia of a lost past contain elements of uncertainty about the present. However, in South Africa the land tenure issues are intrinsic to disputing the landscape even in the peri-urban environment, where housing is a principal factor. When I visited Gugulethu after she received and moved to Cosmo City in 2012, she was disappointed in, but resigned to, her tiny RDP house situated as it was among rows of identical houses, with small sandy grounds compared to her semi-traditional type of dwelling on the farm.

Over the six years of the second phase of my research Gugulethu's imminent eviction was ongoing, albeit as a low-key matter rarely discussed in any depth at meetings. The reason given was that her family and the other homestead dwellers were in private negotiation with the developer. Nevertheless, as I have already mentioned, Representative RGA suggested alternative land or a bond house in Cosmo City, neither of which was carried out. By chance in February 2010 I happened on the scene of Gugulethu's forced removal by the Red Ants. She had been 'dumped on the side of the road' about an hour or so earlier, 'her television was broken' and some items 'were missing', and Undertaker's security company assisted, I was told. Although, I was also told, her belongings remained on the side of the road guarded by a younger male member of her family.

Gugulethu was given shelter by relatives, first in Diepsloot and later in Olievenhoutbosch a township situated to the northeast of the research area.

Van Schie (2010: 1) in an *Independent Online* article titled *Gogo evicted from home of 62 years* describes Gugulethu sorting through her scattered belongings,

including upturned chairs and broken photograph frames, 'discarded at the side of the road'. She and sixty-four other River Glen homestead dwellers were ordered in January 2010 to vacate the farm by the Johannesburg High Court. After a fourteen-year battle against an eviction order issued in 1996, she was finally evicted in February 2010 by the sheriff of the court. My own observation on the day of eviction suggested that the other homestead dwellers complied with the eviction order, because only Gugulethu's belongings were on the side of the road. One of the other homestead dwellers was quoted as drawing attention to Gugulethu's age and vulnerability, and asking where she was supposed to go.

Van Schie (2010: 1) quotes Undertaker as saying, somewhat ambiguously: 'One way or another, we had to come up with a manageable solution because the land did not belong to us.' The article also states that he said that Company B had offered to help the community 'but this eviction is the final one, they can't wait any more.' Harber (2011: 186-187) ironically notes that Undertaker, also in the business of relocating evictees, was involved in overseeing the eviction of the homestead dwellers (actually carried out by the Red Ants). He was accused of 'betrayal' in his liaising with Company B, and encouraging the dwellers to sign up for RDP housing in Cosmo City after he and the developer had promised to find them alternative dwelling space. These reports on the situation indicated a complete reversal of Undertaker's original role, earlier claimed, as 'spokesman' of the families living on Portion 246 (Christoforou & Grobler 2004a: 1).

None of the homestead dwellers personally applied for RDP houses. The farm workers could only speculate as to whether they would have qualified to do so as they were not resident in an informal settlement as such, on the farm Zevenfontein. That is, they lived in neither the established Zevenfontein

informal settlement that relocated to the farm Rietvallei in the 1990s (see Hill 2001), nor Losmacherrie.

Research in Zevenfontein informal settlement (Hill 2001) revealed that an individual had to own a shack in the settlement and be allocated a number that was painted on the door of the shack and stamped in the owner's identity document. After the initial introduction of the registration programme, dwellers in Zevenfontein informal settlement had to reapply and confirm their shack dwelling. To obtain an RDP house took years for the people living in Zevenfontein informal settlement, and applicants had to make sure they were currently registered, as old registrations became no longer valid.

It was apparent from the homesteaders' point of view that there was unfairness, a failure to maintain promises and victimisation due to inequality in power relations. Research demonstrated that global realities were not as significant to the farm workers/dwellers/grave owners as their own perceptions. Perceptions and subjectivism were intrinsic to how the farm workers would assess the acceptability of the relocation of their graves, and their right to the farm as their dwelling place.

7.2.2 Disputing and negotiating the Dainfern graves

Tilley (2006: 7) argues 'landscapes are contested, worked and re-worked by people according to particular individual, social and political circumstances.' His observation well fits the processual peri-urban interface of the Fourways urban node and the interactions between its individuals and social groups. He suggests that social relations impact upon the landscape, and the interpretation of the

landscape is shaped by social and political agendas, social memories and biographies (2006: 8). He also draws attention to other aspects, such as were characteristic of Fourways and the farm Zevenfontein, namely globalization, the development of the multicultural urban society, economic growth and the displacement of people.

More specifically on the tangible content of disputes Caplan (1995: 2-3) observes that they are about material goods, social relations and decision-making, and that they can be 'interpreted on many levels'. This was apparent when as a consequence of the demonstration held in December 2004, Dainfern representatives attended a meeting in 2005 and conveyed the willingness of Dainfern to finance the exhumation of the Mamelodi mass graves. In reflecting on the disputing and negotiating, one observes that the microcosm of the disputing parties was framed by the wider and historical social context and process of the state and power relations (Caplan 1995: 5-6). In present-day South Africa the micro issues and disputes of graves relocations cut across the macro implication of the broader societal conflict of rural land reform involving both white landownership and black land-occupancy, economic impoverishment and social disempowerment.

The dispute between landowners and grave owners escalated in intensity leading to 'dramatic and rhetorical display' in December 2004 in an attempt 'to gain support and undermine the opposition' (Colson 1995: 67). Demonstration was an alternative to resolving matters through legal steps, which were not a real option for the impoverished farm workers and dwellers, and anyway, as Colson argues: 'Moots and courts cannot create a harmony that lasts outside their context any more than rituals ... can overcome more than momentarily ... anger,

greed, humiliation and fears ...' and they do not necessarily lead to settlement (1995: 6). In January 2005 the farm workers were informed that Dainfern had agreed to the exhumation of the mass graves, and a tender would be advertised for an undertaker. Prior to any confirmed agreement, representatives of Dainfern met with the farm workers and dwellers in March 2005 and were informed that the farm workers and dwellers wanted to hear what Dainfern had to say.

Since the representatives already knew what was at issue from meetings with community leaders, they first expressed sympathy with the grievances of the farm workers and dwellers and conveyed that Dainfern was 'touched' and 'concerned' about the graves problem. Dainfern, the representatives said, wanted to know how both groups could 'resolve the problem'. There had been, they said, several meetings with the Committee on ways to resolve the problem of the 'spirits at Dainfern and Mamelodi' and how 'to bring ancestors back to Fourways'.

They indicated their original scepticism about the graves and the spirits by Representative DC saying that there had been 'a time', when 'Dainfern thought' that Undertaker 'was after money', but since holding talks with the farm workers and the families' Committee, they 'realised there was a genuine problem'. In other words, Dainfern had originally dismissed the claims for redress for the lost Dainfern graves as exploitative. The dismissal of Undertaker's approach reflected Dainfern's original response that Dainfern had 'no records' of any graves on or exhumed from the estate (Mahlangu 2004a: 6). At the community meeting Dainfern acknowledged there was a 'sincere' problem.

Power relations between Dainfern and the farm workers were also revealed by Representative DC's comments. There had been discussions between Undertaker and Dainfern, discussions between the Committee and Dainfern and now an interlocution with the farm workers and dwellers. Undertaker as single authoritative individual was dismissed as exploitative. The collective of farm workers and a demonstration were needed to substantiate his claims and convince Dainfern of the reality of the graveyards. Massed protest voices were not unusual in campaigns against peri-urban development (see Rose 1995), and the demonstration conveyed that although the Dainfern elite held absolute power, the farm workers held mass power, since it was the result of mass power that Dainfern agreed to negotiate with the farm workers and dwellers.

Representative DC continued by explaining that he and his committee had tried to bring Company A, Dainfern Golf Estate and Dainfern Valley management and residents and Funerals Limited together with grave owners, and had personally spoken to all parties. Indicating the dimensions of a re-exhumation project, he said he understood the 'need for ceremonies' before 'exhuming the spirits' at Mamelodi and relocating them to Fourways Memorial Park, as well as a memorial wall naming the deceased. Such a project was comparable to the relocations of graves from Dainfern Estate in 2002 (Nienaber & Steyn 2002).

He said that Dainfern Estate would comply with any agreement, Dainfern Valley would consider making a 'donation', Company A said they had 'done the work properly and had no legal obligation' to do anything, but would see where the process led. However, Representative DC indicated there was also disagreement among the estates and the developer based on reluctance of involvement and ultimate responsibility. Disagreement between the two Dainferns was based, he

thought, on Dainfern Valley's lawyers 'misleading' Dainfern Valley by suggesting that the farm workers were intent on legal disputation and litigation. Dainfern's sense of the situation was to limit responsibility according to any legal obligations. The grave owners, on the other hand, wanted accountability for the removal of the graves in the 1980s as well as funding of an exhumation and reburial of the mass graves. However, in the absence of pertinent legislation in the 1980s or later legislation encompassing the farm workers and dwellers' perspective, they were reliant on Dainfern demonstrating goodwill.

His committee agreed, Representative DC said, to 'help financially' with the exhumations and reburials and rituals. He also understood that the families wanted an acknowledgement from the developers that they had not done the original exhumations properly. Representative DC added that Dainfern Estate residents would try to organise a fund and suggested that a board of trustees should manage the funds. He went on to suggest that the families' Committee could decide how to use the money. His own idea was university training for a person on traditional graves issues. The farm workers/dwellers inferred from his statement that moneys raised by Dainfern over and above costs of the project were to benefit the farm workers in some way. And, a reference to an acknowledgement from the developers of wrongdoing insinuated compensation.

Although it was not openly articulated, the idea of donation rather than compensation was resented, because it acknowledged sense of cultural right to graves but not ownership. Furthermore, the demand, expressed only at 'closed' meetings, was for more than a small sum of money to cover the costs of rituals and ceremonies. The farm workers and dwellers wanted recompense for the loss of the tangibles and intangibles of sense of place as well. In this regard, as far as

whose sense of place held rights over the other, social inequality was demonstrated by the imbalance in social and economic power relations.

The farm workers asked that the project be carried out soon. One farm worker was worried that the old people might die before the matter was resolved. She acknowledged that some white people did understand, but people were tired of it taking so long. She said the estate residents had no need to be frightened of them, but to come together with the farm workers and negotiate. Another resorted to rhetoric exclaiming they were tired of 'running with coffins', of performing 'sacrifices and drumming outside Dainfern bedrooms.' Someone said that 'Dainfern would suffer' because of the spirits in the graves underneath the houses. Someone else said she did not believe any of the graves were removed and that Dainfern was 'pushing' them to 'ceremonies outside bedrooms'. The inference of the outbursts of rhetoric was to the threat of holding another demonstration.

Some of the farm workers took a confrontational approach and demanded that Dainfern deal with the issues of the removal of graves, and failure to remove others, during the 1980s. One vociferous speaker protested at the protracted settling of the Dainfern graves, saying 'it is going on too long'. He quoted one of the slogans at the demonstration that Dainfern Estate was private property, but Dainfern had his private property, his grave. 'People are hurt and the next *itoyitoyi* (demonstration) will not be nice.' The families were spending money for legal fees and meetings and whether there was money or not was not the issue, he said. Dainfern Valley would be 'sorted out by the people'. 'How do people see us?' he asked, 'As stupid beings or does Dainfern Estate see us as human

beings?' We,' he continued, 'are cadres of the ANC'. 'They [ANC] are people who are interested in addressing issues.'

In the context of the microenvironment of a small and localised and marginalised group of individuals with very specific issues against a background of a macro historical and national context of a more powerful group, the farm workers and dwellers took a precapitalist approach (Snyder 1981: 16). Their failure to be supported by substantial criminal or legal argument meant the families resorted to threats and to seeking their own perceptions of justice by further demonstration and protest, and threats of ghost activity from beneath the houses.

Vociferous speaker continued with his demands that Dainfern 'start at once'. Dainfern was making the Zevenfontein former farm workers and dwellers out to be 'idiots, just a bunch of black people'. Using the tropes of the marginalised in South Africa, 'We can,' he stated, 'make Dainfern Valley a shack area ... people must address our problem ... we can make your place ungovernable ... we did it in 1976 and we, today, can do it. The women were raising those whites when they were children ... we want in seven days a clear answer ... if not, we will make that place ungovernable, police will come, but we will destroy and we will be arrested.'

Playing the 'good cop' of the proverbial duo, Undertaker took the stance of a mediator in reaction to the diatribe and responded with, 'Give it a month, man.' In doing so he presented himself as a calming voice and rational thinker to the Dainfern representatives, someone with whom they could negotiate. At the same time he did not say anything to alienate the farm workers and dwellers in a

cause they sought to see justice prevail regarding sacred places of Zevenfontein. His argument for justice was evident in his keeping the topic of Dainfern and the Zevenfontein graves publicised in the local, national and international media. The rebuttal by the vociferous speaker was to allow 'two weeks' for Dainfern to meet their demands. Quite reasonably Undertaker said 'there are holidays coming up' and to allow more time. Although the vociferous speaker remained hostile, the other farm workers and dwellers agreed to wait for a month, until the end of April 2005 for a decision from Dainfern.

Representative DC responded to it all by saying that the two representatives understood the problems, and that ninety-nine percent of Dainfern Estates and Dainfern Valley wanted the issue resolved. Another speaker asked Representative DC whom it was the farm workers and dwellers were 'fighting'. Was it, he wanted to know, Dainfern or the developers? Representative DC said he could hear the families' frustration loud and clear and that the Dainfern residents should work together with the families against the developers, Company A. The 'fight' he said should be 'channelled at the right people'. With Dainfern unable to create a negotiating group comprising the Dainfern residents and the Dainfern developers, the blame, not only for creating the problem, but also for obstinacy in finding a solution, was laid at the door of Company A, who had been responsible for the 1980s relocations.

My research had shown that once a peri-urban area had been developed and any graves had been 'lost', it was difficult, if not impossible, to seek any compensation from the developers. For instance, I had tried to help Gosego and his niece Lesidi find her parents' graves on Witkopp. I contacted the estate agents selling the cluster houses built on Nel and asked for the name and

contact details of the developer. They gave me the name of the developer and a cellular phone number, which was not answered. Undertaker, Lesidi said, had also tried to find out about the graves with the same result. She, too, had tried to contact the developer without success. When I asked the estate agent if they had other ways of contacting the developer, I was told all the houses were sold and the developer had gone to Cape Town. The estate agent thought he was not in business anymore and she had no other contact details (Fourways estate agent personal communication, 2005).

After the Dainfern representatives left the meeting, more of the farm workers and dwellers expressed anger at what they thought of the Dainfern suggestions. Although they had listened politely while the representatives were speaking, as soon as they had departed the farm workers/dwellers expressed their true feelings. They were not impressed by the university idea, saying they did not need to be educated on their own culture. The topic of the university was a graphic example of either how the Dainfern residents could not see the Zevenfontein grave owners' point of view about the graves, or they tried to outwit them by not being drawn into any responsibility and, thus, paying compensation for destroyed graveyards. Conversely the farm workers/dwellers grave owners either failed to see the goodwill in sponsorship, or were too fly to be fobbed off by a platitude.

Undertaker and the Committee had 'let them walk'. Undertaker should have 'fought with them'. The vociferous speaker said that Representative DC did not make him 'feel good', to which Undertaker responded by saying 'they always want a scapegoat' in reference to the blame being placed on Company A and Dainfern Valley dragging its feet. Again in his manipulative double-stance

Undertaker went on to say that the families wanted to be 'compensated', but Dainfern only wants 'to deal with costs, they don't want to deal with compensation' for the destruction of the ancestral graveyards.

Undertaker elaborated saying, 'we don't want donations; we want requirements met.' He named two members of the ANC's national executive and government cabinet ministers as owning houses in Dainfern. He added that the people of Dainfern understand, but the families should be 'very cautious about donations' as it could be only 'ten Rand'. 'We must shout united. We can't shoot the messenger, but we must get what we require. We need to be careful of donations', he said. Undertaker's double stance, made him appear very much less the mediator as the manipulator of both the farm workers and dwellers and the landowners.

In April 2005 Undertaker said that the final agreement had been signed by Dainfern for the exhumation of the Mamelodi mass graves to go ahead, and that 'one and a half million rand' was to be raised by Dainfern residents for the exhumation and reburial, the ceremonies and transport. The burial site and a memorial wall inscribed with the names of the deceased on Gert and Frans in Fourways Memorial Park would cost four hundred and fifty thousand rand, he said. At the first meeting of 2006 the families were informed that the Mamelodi target date would be the end of April. The exhumations of eight mass graves would take ten days and that everybody was to attend the first two days of the project.

The families did not want group ceremonies, but to do ceremonies according to the family customs, for these they were to receive three thousand rand.

According to Undertaker there were 'about two hundred' families. That information was followed by a discussion on what to do with the money. Wearing his Dainfern hat, the money, which, Undertaker said, was in a trust account, was not to be considered as compensation. The families wanted greater clarity on the moneys and suggested that less money should be spent on the exhumation and more distributed to the families. Tebello, who was involved in politics in Alexandra, wanted further exhumation of any black graves to be stopped through a 'court interdict'. The articulated suggestions on what to do with the money raised by Dainfern included more than just the re-exhuming the Dainfern graves. The discussions indicated that such money could be distributed to impoverished farm workers or spent on stopping the relocating of farm graves, nationally. Undertaker did not respond to these suggestions.

On the day people were paid the money for rituals and ceremonies a cameraman filmed the meeting for a 'documentary', he said, for which Undertaker would 'write the script'. He asked to interview me, but I declined. The former farm workers and dwellers sat outside the classroom, and one by one, family groups were called in and the family elder received cash or cheque. At a meeting in 2010 I was told the cameraman's role was to film people signing for their cheques. The sum of money paid out that day was not disclosed, but at the last meeting of the year in December 2006, Treasurer told the farm workers that Dainfern had not paid the entire pledged sum. She mentioned a shortfall of four hundred thousand rand. For that reason, she said, the project could not be finished, and the memorial wall could not be completed. 'What can we do if they don't pay,' she asked. 'People pledge money but that doesn't mean they will actually pay' she said.

The shortfall was discussed by the farm workers at a meeting in November 2007 after months without meetings. According to the Committee of the period leading up to the exhumation of the Mamelodi mass graves, the outstanding amount was three hundred thousand rand. The discrepancy between that sum and the sum mentioned by the Treasurer in 2006 signified a lack of information on the part of the Committee on the actual sums of money involved. Njubulu explained that the donated moneys were held in the trust account of Dainfern's lawyer, who paid Funeral Services directly without consulting or advising the other Committee members.

In order to understand the financial implications the farm workers wanted to see the payments made by Dainfern residents into the trust account, and the sums paid out by the lawyer to Funeral Services. But, Dainfern did not respond, other than to say in 2011 that the legal requirement to keep documentation was for only five years. One argument Dainfern offered was that the estate's new committee had no knowledge of the donations and the previous representatives no longer lived in Dainfern. In effect it was a political power play on the part of Dainfern, and it caused a great deal of resentment among the Zevenfontein farm workers and dwellers. Letters addressed to the relevant Dainfern estates were emailed without response. Another demonstration was suggested, but did not take place, and communication with Dainfern eventually came to an end.

Although the Zevenfontein grave owners had been asking Dainfern representatives to respond as early as 2008, two years after the exhumations of the mass graves, Dainfern appeared not to be interested in any discussion. Undertaker would not discuss the matter either. As far as Dainfern was concerned, it appeared that the matter was closed. Mass graves identified by

Undertaker had been relocated, Dainfern residents had financed the project, their obligation was fulfilled.

As this discussion has shown the former Zevenfontein farm workers and dwellers linked the graves to dwelling place as an overriding concern. In their minds dwelling place and burial place, even the River Glen and Dainfern graves were not apprehended as two separate issues. The injustices of the evictions from Zevenfontein were uppermost in their thinking and the Dainfern graves in particular symbolised that injustice.

7.3 RELATIONS BETWEEN ANCESTORS AND DESCENDANTS

7.3.1 **Creating new ancestral graveyards**

The intangibles and tangibles of relocated ancestral graves and the continuance or restoration of the relations between descendants and ancestral spirits depended on rituals and culturally appropriate processes of relocating human remains. In May 2006 Undertaker reburied one hundred and thirty human remains from seven Mamelodi mass graves in separate graves at Fourways Memorial Park, and he had by January 2008 erected a memorial wall. The memorial wall, situated west of rows of numbered gravesites, bore an inscription 'Mamelodi Mass Graves'. It comprised four recesses each bearing two granite panels. Seven panels were inscribed with thirty-two names each, and an eighth panel with twenty-four — two hundred and forty-eight names — representing 'all the people buried on Dainfern,' according to Undertaker.

In February 2006 a small group of farm workers and dwellers viewed the wall and the new ancestral gravesites and expressed their disappointment. One end of the wall was unfinished — there was no granite panel and the brickwork had not been plastered. As symbolic signifiers to individual deceased family ancestors and the conceptual representation of the deceased's mortality, the lists of names were problematic. The arrangement of names should have been comparable to the grouping of family graves. Each family *isibongo* should have had its own separate panel, the families said. As it stood, different *izibongo* and unrelated people were listed one after another. With respect to their own listed family names, the farm workers/dwellers claimed that they did not know some of the individuals, and they believed them to be fictitious, and they wondered where Undertaker had found the names. What they found more distressing was that the names of some of their kin, who they had buried on Gert and Frans, were not listed.

Six of the names bore the same *isibongo* as Undertaker. Gosego was adamant Undertaker had no graves on Gert or Frans. I asked him why then did Undertaker's mother make ritual offerings at Mamelodi. Because, he said, Undertaker had asked her to make a showing of graveside rituals. Undertaker's family he said were buried on Mason. Zenzile concurred, because she also had had a grave on Mason. All the farm workers' graves from Mason were relocated to Fourways Memorial Park and interred under the name of their white 'employer' because burials of blacks were not allowed at that time. However, Undertaker identified a grave in River Glen as a distant relation and not a lineage member. It was possible he had other distant relatives buried on Gert and/or Frans.

The families also questioned the number of retrievals from Mamelodi and thought there should have been fewer than one hundred and thirty graves on Dainfern. Previously they had not questioned the number of graves Undertaker claimed as having been situated on Dainfern. However, it had been suggested that less moneys be spent on relocations and more distributed among the farm workers. Since they had been seeking compensation for the 'lost' graves, they may have ignored any inflating of the number of graves in the hopes of getting extra funding. False claims to graves were a possibility as an economic resource among both grave owners and undertakers. For instance, the undertaker hired to remove the graveyard in Limpopo was suspected of fraudulent reburials (Saccaggi 2012: 48). At Sekuruwe, however, individual grave owners claimed that more coffins were reinterred than they anticipated, similar names were inscribed on more than one tombstone, and other names were missing (Saccaggi 2012:48).

As far as actual Mamelodi reburials went, although human remains from the mass graves had been sorted into individual assemblages and placed in coffins, there was no identification of a specific individual. The reasoning of the families was that as the tangible evidence of reconstructed sacred gravesites of ancestors or forbears or other family members, the reassembled human remains were no improvement upon the mixed-up human remains deposited in mass graves. For that reason they took no interest in the reburial gravesites, other than in pointing out that the temporary metal number tags identifying the position of each grave had not been replaced by the cemetery with permanent concrete markers. They demonstrated respect and concern, therefore, for the reburial site in general and for the reburial of the deceased individuals retrieved from the obscenity of mass graves, who ever they might be, but not on a personal level.

As a portal to the *abaphansi*, *amadlozi*, *badimo* and *abezima* or ancestors a mass grave was problematic. A descendant who wished to communicate with his or her ancestor at the place where the bones rested could not do so, because the identity of the individual, as well as the site of the remains, was lost. When the exhumation of graves at Sekuruwe resulted in dispersal of bones across the graveyard and reburials were made without identifying individuals, Saccaggi's (2012: 60-62) reports that the relocated graves were re-exhumed and a forensic archaeologist reassembled skeletons. Similarly, in the normal process of identifying exhumed remains from Dainfern in 2002 the remains were analysed at University of Pretoria laboratories in Pretoria where the exhumation team were based (Nienaber & Steyn 2002: 10).

In the case of re-interments into mass graves, continuing decomposition would result in greater confusion of bones, because ten to thirty caskets could be placed inside a normal coffin, depending on the size of the bone fragments, and then three coffins would be buried in a single grave (Johannesburg Parks and Recreation Mr Buff personal communication, 2006). Sorting reburied bones from the mass graves would have been difficult and require genetic analysis of all the bone fragments and all the farm workers/dwellers to correctly identify individuals. Undertaker had stated that examination and genetic testing were required to verify and identify the mortal remains, and, as he expressed it, to confirm the mass burials he would want to 'count skulls'. One reason for not doing genetic analysis was the families could not afford it.

The reconstructed graveyard at Fourways Memorial Park was a symbol in so far as the achieving of the exhumation of the mass graves and proper reburials, and as such it held meaning. As representative of their own family member's mortal

remains, neither the individual graves nor the reconstructed graveyard conclusively resolved the loss of their own personal family grave. Giving no indication that the relocated graves held any ancestral meaning, they viewed the sward over the graves from a distance. They walked upon it and speculated on the location of some unused gravesites, which they were told about by Fourways Memorial Park. Although I have seen people step on the graves of non-family members, I have not seen it done to their own family graves. I have not, however, seen any superstition about stepping on graves. In essence there was no acknowledgeable family ancestral graveyard anymore, and Gosego, said he would not visit Fourways Memorial Park to communicate with his ancestral spirits. He would communicate with them only within his own homestead.

River Glen was regarded as no better and it had a comparable absence of authenticity as an ancestral graveyard. Although all the gravesites were indicated with concrete markers, the memorial wall was completely bare. My research during the exhumations at River Glen indicated that not more than ten graves were personally identified by any of the research participants. Even though there was no name on a memorial plaque, a family member should have been able to recognise which of the reburial sites in Fourways Memorial Park was his or hers, because the graves were numbered before exhuming. Names where known were entered next to the grave number in the record kept of the exhumations. Gosego was distressed because although his wife had graves in River Glen, he was not able to identify which sites at Fourways Memorial Park were his wife's family, because he had not recorded the numbers. Tshepo had a comparable problem, in that he knew one of the River Glen graves was a family grave and that it had been captured in the record, but he could not remember the number. The River Glen reburials of deceased farm workers and dwellers

had sufficient presence, despite the absence of the memorial of names, to have been regarded as an authentic resting place. Its problem lay in the fact that family were not provided with clarity on the number of each one's grave so that they could find the exact grave of their deceased family member.

In contrast to River Glen the relocated graves from Rooivaal each had a concrete number that corresponded with a numbered name on the granite panels, such, that I was able to show Bheka which of the graves was his mother's. At Rooivaal Archaeological Grave Relocations exhumed the graves, Funeral Services were responsible for the reburials, and a more complete record was kept of grave positions and grave numbers. When his mother's grave was identified Bheka, Gosego and Lesidi, knelt and offered snuff and prayer, clapped their hands and said amen. In that simple gesture and offering Bheka informed his ancestor of the new gravesite and provided a sort of 'unveiling' of the grave.

In researching the Mason graves Zenzile and I visited Fourways Memorial Park a few weeks later. The Mason reburials were in one small area surrounded by a low wall. There were a number of reburial graves each one covered by a large slab of concrete paving. Although the graves were unmarked, they were numbered and listed in the cemetery records. Zenzile pointed out her brother's gravesite. She was concerned because a corner of the concrete paving over the grave was slipping into the subsiding soil. Within the paved private reburial space there were two tombstones bearing the names of Undertaker's *isibongo*.

In 2014 when I revisited the cemetery, a year or so after Zenzile's death, I saw more tombstones bearing Undertaker's *isibongo*. Included within the private graveyard, referred to by a cemetery worker, as the 'Undertaker's graves', was

the grave of his recently deceased mother. It resembled a farm grave — an earth mound surrounded by stones. The paved area was diminishing and I could not identify the site of Zenzile's brother's grave. In comparison to the reburials of Mamelodi and River Glen graves, 'Undertaker's graves' constituted an authentic ancestral or family graveyard. Musa had mentioned his own desire that all his family graves were together in Cosmo City Nature Park as an ancestral burial place.

Undertaker had demonstrated the culturally acceptable process of exhuming graves at River Glen. The digging by men and not by machinery, the retrieval of all the human remains — bones, bone fragments, even decomposition in the soil. However, in considering the reburials in Fourways Memorial Park the Rooivaal reburials reflected a possibility of being functional new ancestral gravesites. The sites of the River Glen and the Mamelodi mass graves could not. Furthermore, only Undertaker's family gravesite provided for future burials. On which point, James (2009: 97) suggests that the factor of the importance of burial sites in South Africa is motivated 'by the wishes of disrupted people to secure their own future burial, and hence their place in the genealogical line.'

7.3.2 Rethinking ancestral communication

In order for the relocated graves to have some religious relevance the farm workers and dwellers needed to find innovative means of communication that would substitute for the unidentifiable graves. The graves were positioned with heads to the East, and the farm workers knelt facing toward the West in a line behind the heads of the first row of graves situated closest to the memorial wall. Simultaneously, they uttered their own individual prayers aloud. Some farm

workers sprinkled snuff and one farm worker poured sorghum beer along the heads of the first row of graves. Having said ‘amen’ a ceremony for all the graves and reburied individuals was concluded. It was similar to Bheka’s ceremony at his mother’s grave. In essence the families offered prayers to the ancestors whose graves were lost as a result of the relocations from, and, as they believed, remained on, Dainfern. With regard ‘unveilings’ Ngubane (1977) and Pauw (1975) indicate a sociocultural change by suggesting that unveilings may substitute for a more traditional slaughtering of a beast in the urban environment. As well as the observing of an unveiling ceremony, the farm workers and dwellers also, although unhappy with the memorial wall, accepted it as it was a done deed. They knelt in front of the name of their family member and offered prayer and snuff. If they wanted to communicate with or make an offering to one of their ‘lost’ ancestors listed on the wall, they said, they would do as they had done that day, by kneeling in front of his or her name.



Photograph 7.1 Communicating with ancestors at the memorial wall, Fourways, Memorial Park, 2008

The intention had been to go to Dainfern a few days after the relocation to collect the spirits, as Undertaker suggested. It remained an unresolved problem with the fulfilment of the relocation project, because it did not occur. On that point Mpho explained that the former farm workers and dwellers needed to invite the spirits resting in the original graves on Dainfern to re-associate with mortal remains in their new graves. The bodies went to Mamelodi, she said, but there had been no one present at the relocation in the 1980s to tell the spirits in Dainfern to go to Mamelodi. So the spirits remained in Dainfern. When performing ceremonies and rituals at Mamelodi the elders called on all their ancestors telling them about the relocation to Fourways. Individual spirits in Dainfern also needed to be told 'you have been moved now to Fourways where you are going to rest forever'. Nobody, Mpho said, had spoken with Dainfern to ask for permission. She felt that perhaps when 'the fighting' among Dainfern, the farm workers and Undertaker ceased, they could work together to get the permission they needed. By going to Dainfern and performing ceremonies all the spirits could be asked to go to Fourways Memorial Park. So, people, Mpho suggested, were not happy about that, they still wanted to visit Dainfern and perform rituals asking the spirits to rejoin their bodies in Fourways.

Each time a body was moved the spirit had to be informed that it too had to relocate. For instance, at a normal funeral the body of a deceased individual had to be taken back to its home to collect the spirit before going to the cemetery. As explanation Mpho said that if a person died on the street, 'you have to go and get the spirit from the street and put it in the grave' with the corpse, 'then there won't be a hassle.' Not everybody, she said, 'does *ukubuyisa* to take the spirits to the house'. Saccaggi's (2012: 64, 67) research participants made similar statements that bones had been taken to the new reburial site, but not the

spirits, and ancestral spirits could not rest without some un-reburied bones. His research participants also confirmed that the form of ceremony was a family decision (ibid: 85-86).

Mpho suggested a solution to the Dainfern spirits would be if people could go to Dainfern and each person pluck a leaf from a tree in Dainfern and to ask a spirit to ride on the leaf. Similarly, Gosego had said that he was picking up a stone from Mamelodi Cemetery and asking the spirit to go to his home in Klipgat riding on the stone. All the leaves, Mpho suggested, could be put on the graves. In that way they would symbolically represent individual spirits. That, she said, is really what the families are fighting for, the bodies have been moved now all the families want is to be allowed to go and ask the spirits to go with them to their new gravesites. They do not need to slaughter an ox in Dainfern, she insisted, nor at the cemetery, but they do need to be able to do it in a place where and when everyone can be together.

The opportunity to perform ceremonies prior to the exhumations of River Glen and the mass graves informing the *abaphansi* about the exhumations and reburials satisfied the farm workers and dwellers. And these ceremonies included a blood offering as Gosego had performed. Undertaker went so far as to claim that nine or ten head of cattle were ritually slaughtered on site prior to the exhumations at River Glen graveyard. My exploration of the area found no evidence of slaughtering, and one of the Mnguni family members living in the homesteads confirmed that no cattle had been killed. In fact, the cattle that Undertaker said were bought for the slaughter, as suggested to me by one of the Company B representatives, were still grazing on the veld around the graveyard.

Ritual slaughters were made at homesteads informing ancestral spirits (*amadlozi, badimong*) that the mass graves containing remains from Gert and Frans (Dainfern) were going to be exhumed and reburied at Fourways Memorial Park. According to Gosego it was not customary to slaughter at gravesides, but as farm workers and dwellers made very clear, all ritual practices varied according to family customs. Although ethnographic literature does speak of sacrificing at gravesites, adjustments to burial and grave rituals on peri-urban farms suggest that such rituals, perhaps, were no longer practised.

The public slaughtering of cattle was a politicised cultural argument used by Undertaker in respect of the developers desecrating Zevenfontein ancestral graveyards. Ritual slaughter emphasised the relationship between ancestral graveyards as traditional places of sacrifice and sense of ancestral place. However, since no animals were sacrificed, rather more was to be gained from the developers as expenditure on cattle. In reality the grazing cattle I saw had not been bought for ceremonies, they belonged to JM, a former research participant, who lived in Zevenfontein informal settlement. Comaroff and Comaroff' (2009 cited by Saccaggi 2012: 16, 152) consider some overt cultural expressions were forms of precapitalism with cultural practices as an economic resource.

Interestingly, Colson (1995: 69) also has the following to say on the efficacy of rituals in public ritual displays as well as those of private individuals that are applicable to the relocation of ancestors' bones. 'Anthropologists [are advised] not to attribute a greater healing power to rituals than would their own participants, who are well aware that rituals that purport to cleanse individuals

and communities are “perpetually vulnerable to everyday battery of reality” (Colson 1995: 69).

I asked Musa, what the situation with the ancestral spirits would be if remains reburied at Fourways Memorial Park were not the real Dainfern bones. He replied, ‘you just have to make a plan and believe that they are. You can’t know if they are the right or the wrong bones, but as long as they are all together in Fourways Memorial Park your ancestor’s bones are a part of them.’ His explanation emphasised the symbolism of the gravesite in ancestral beliefs. He thought the Zevenfontein grave owners needed to believe that their family members’ remains were part of the bones and to believe in the symbolism of finding and exhuming the mass graves. He suggested that if someone needed to communicate with an ancestor from Dainfern/Mamelodi they could go to Fourways Memorial Park, kneel among the graves and pray so all the spirits of all of the reinterred deceased people could hear. He said since you do not know which one is yours you have to pray among all of them. You call the name of your own ancestor. ‘He is going to answer you because he knows you and will accept you,’ he said.

Individuality in relationships between ancestors and descendants was apparent. Bheka said, although he could visit his mother’s grave because he knew where it was situated, he could not do the same for his father’s remains. He did not know which of the gravesites was his father’s, and he was not sure that the bones were not ‘still all mixed up’. And, Gosego said he was not sure what to think about his brothers’ spirits, because they were exhumed from their original graves and deposited in mass graves without rituals. Despite the original ‘*ukubuyisa*’ he said he performed to invite the spirits to Klipgat, he would want to perform

another following the re-burial. Since there had been no rituals to tell them to go to Mamelodi, he needed to tell the *abaphansi* to go to his homestead. Such rituals, he conveyed, he would perform at his homestead.

Differing ideas about the relocated spirits and the continuing identification with ancestors explained the individual in the conception of ancestors and personal relationship. Sociocultural changes and the adjustments expressed by the farm workers and dwellers indicated the complexity of the dimensions in which ancestral spirits are conceived to exist. They also demonstrated the personal conceptions about the ancestors and the relevance of relocated graves from River Glen and Dainfern. Musa's idea that people could kneel among all the graves and call upon their own ancestors who would hear them because they would know them, suggested that perhaps it was not a vain effort. 'It is just talking to it, each person needs to do it, because the ancestors only hear the voices of their own kin' he said.

Regarding the religious significance of graves, De Jongh (2008: 7) argued that the soil of ancestral burial is an important cosmological link between descendants and ancestors. The grave was instrumentally significant through visits, 'rituals and sacrificial goods' as more than just the site of interred mortal remains. It symbolises the 'passage to the supernatural world'. It is for this reason that Mmusi, Gosego and Bheka, using their own constructs of expression, implied the disjuncture in that supernatural passage and disruption to the sleeping place of the ancestors by identifying the personal problems they encountered through the loss of graves. The cosmological concepts conveyed by the grave owners to the landowners and developers with whom they had to negotiate did not, as De Jongh (*ibid*) has argued of such situations, 'present their

perceptions and conceptions [in] the “language” and understandings’ of those who had to assess it.

Mmusi demonstrated an understanding of the reality of relocated and lost graves. He did not attend the exhumation of the mass graves, he said, because he could not see how anyone would know which bones were whose. Whenever I asked him about his father’s and grandfather’s graves, Mmusi would be tearful and resentful. In 2012, while he was busy making extensions to his RDP house in Cosmo City by adding extra rooms for his large family, a shop and a lavatory for his customers, I again asked him about the graves. He showed me the architectural drawings, which he had drawn himself, of the finished house, and said he was no longer focusing on the ancestors, because there was nothing he could do about changing the situation. He was concentrating on what he could provide and leave for his descendants.

The house he was extending, he said with pride, was not ‘Thandanos’. This was a reference to a house of bricks and mortar he built in Zevenfontein informal settlement in the shape of a dragon called Thandanos, a mythical monster that stole people’s money. Since he knew he would have to abandon the house, he ironically built one in the shape of a dragon symbolising his economic loss when he relocated to Cosmo City (Hill 2001: 82). His new house in Cosmo City, he said, was an investment in his descendants.

7.4 COMMONALITY AND INDIVIDUAL AGENDAS

A significant factor of relocating graves was the collective decision-making group. And, as far as the Dainfern graves were concerned, the group approach

and an informed leader had been vital to having the mass graves exhumed. Communality as experienced by the Zevenfontein farm workers/dwellers and grave owners was ephemeral, specific to and dependent on a particular context with its own particular activities. In essence the Zevenfontein community was a consociation (Amit 2002: 5) of individuals who met now and then at meetings to discuss the relocation of graves. As I have shown, acting as a group was required for the River Glen relocations, but it was the Dainfern graves that were the emotive core of the meetings. In this section I reflect on how the families restructured their power relations as a decision-making group because of problems they encountered with the former structure. And, I explore the group in terms of issues perceived in social and economic relations in the flow of goods among individuals within the community.

7.4.1 Rethinking group structure and agenda

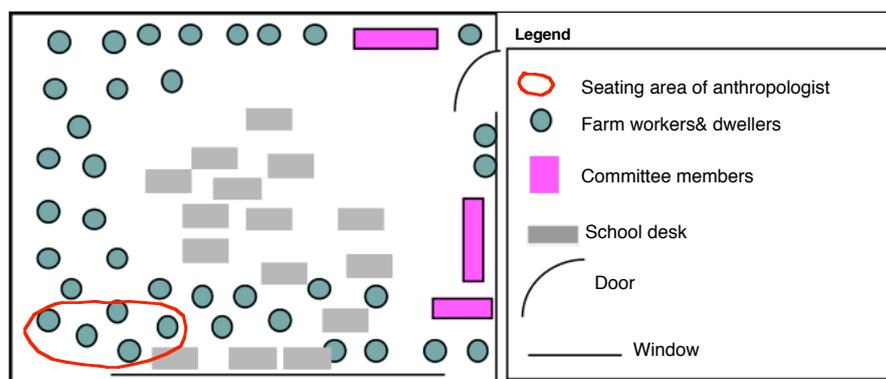


Figure 7.2 Seating arrangements for meetings held from 2008 to 2013

Leadership of the group up until the end of 2006 was to a great extent vested in the authority of an individual, namely Undertaker. Undertaker was leader and a dominant mover and shaker, based on his knowledge about the location of the mass graves and the processes of relocating graveyards. Whereas the farm workers needed Undertaker to negotiate with Dainfern and to manage the

project, he needed them to demonstrate collectivity in identifying issues and motivation for the exhumation of the mass graves.

At meetings prior to Mamelodi, Undertaker was seated authoritatively, flanked by the Committee, facing his fellow farm workers, from where he informed the group. Reflecting discernment about the influence of individuals on the group, and equality in internal power relations, the seating arrangement at meetings post-Mamelodi reflected a commonality among farm workers and dwellers, with everyone seated more or less in a circle. Tabo called the meeting a *lekgotla*²⁴. Family elders facilitated decision-making, Jabulani provided spiritual leadership, and a secretary drew up an agenda and kept minutes, but there was no authoritarian chairman. Njabulu accepted the role of secretary and in his absence someone else was asked to do so, including Lucas on two occasions.

When representatives of the group were needed family elders and younger members were elected from the assembled farm workers/dwellers. They were generally elected because they spoke up at meetings and demonstrated a contribution they could make. There was limited legal knowledge among the older farm workers and dwellers, so younger family members, because they had had more educational opportunities, generally provided advice to the older members. From among the farm workers and dwellers it was possible to find a person in someone's extended family, who might not be immediately associated with Zevenfontein, but who could advise on police and legal and even political matters.

²⁴ From Sotho and Tswana the term translates as courtyard or holding court and has its roots in village assemblies, court cases and meetings of village elders. In contemporary contexts the term includes conference or business meetings (Wikipedia: 2015b).

Much emphasis was placed on transparency and the disclosure of anything done or said by representatives when speaking outside the group. Although there had been no overt criticism of Undertaker's leadership, and Bailey (1988: iv, 2, 4) suggests that 'deception' is a factor of leadership, the regrouped farm workers and dwellers avoided any opportunity for deception. Transparency in decision-making and equality of authoritative power relations suggested an effort by the farm workers to pre-empt the past 'uncritical acceptance' of Undertaker's leadership.

Prior to Mamelodi, Tshepo said, Tebello, a municipal councillor, had questioned Undertaker at every meeting, and had warned the other farm workers that there would be trouble resulting from some of the decisions. In the new community structure all dissenting voices were heard before any decisions were made, and the dissenter was invited to join a representative delegation tasked with addressing a particular problem. The extent of inclusivity was demonstrated when Undertaker and Dainfern lawyers failed to respond to the farm workers/dwellers' requests for information. A group of eight representatives elected at the preceding meeting, including myself as witness, went to the Law Society to ask for advice. Emphasis on transparency was because in the past people 'working for Funeral Services' kept the minutes of community meetings and of meetings held with Dainfern representatives. And, according to Tabo, if people started querying how things were being done, Funeral Services employed them, and that, he said, was how Undertaker dealt with 'troublemakers'.

An important element of each meeting was the attendance record, which also reflected any money donated by a farm worker for hiring a lawyer. It was agreed that everyone would contribute one hundred rand to a kitty to pay for a lawyer

as the need arose. Later the amount escalated to six hundred rand from each former farm worker or family group. The costs for a lawyer were high and there was a call for a 'second round'. A careful record was kept of exactly how much each individual contributed, and when people queued up to hand over money they said whether they were donating for the first or second or subsequent time. Money was a sensitive topic. The failure to keep records open to scrutiny was another weakness of the former structure, because in the end Dainfern and Undertaker did not disclose what funds were raised by Dainfern residents. The topic of the Dainfern funds was the first and regular item on the agenda.

There was no pressure on anyone to contribute to the kitty, and it was obvious the old pensioners could barely do so. At the end of each meeting a tally was taken of money collected. Any expenditure on lawyers or for cellular telephone calls or transporting a delegation to a meeting was calculated and the balance of moneys in hand was declared and the name of the person holding the money was recorded. At one stage the kitty held five thousand rand. Pensioners or unemployed former farm workers and dwellers unable to afford to contribute, had, Njabulu said, identified themselves. When they could do so, they would. 'Nobody would be chased away', he said, because they could not afford to pay. The meticulous detail of payments to the kitty was in complete contrast to the earlier manner of donating to a fund with no questions asked. A factor of the listing of contributors was also that in the event of further funds being received by the farm workers/dwellers, distribution would depend on contributions.

Although only a few Ndebele and Tswana families were the core of the earlier meetings, over the years, as settlement of the disputes with Funeral Services seemed imminent and the emphasis changed to a Zevenfontein land claim, more

former farm workers and dwellers attended. From the sixteen or so farm workers meeting in 2007, I counted fifty-three at a meeting in 2009. Throughout those years it was suspected that there was a 'spy', whose identity was never discovered, and who 'reported to Undertaker'. Armed with such information Undertaker was able to 'keep ahead' of, and anticipate any legal action the farm workers might think of pursuing, they said.

Issues with Undertaker began in November 2006 when he reported that Dainfern had not paid all the money as promised, with the result that he could not complete the project as planned. He even went so far as to say he had been using his own money on some parts of the project. The following month at a meeting, which Undertaker did not attend, the Treasurer stated there was nothing Funeral Services could do if Dainfern did not raise and disburse the moneys it said it would. The families did not know the actual sum held in trust by Dainfern's lawyers. They had no records of the sums Dainfern's lawyers paid over to Funeral Services to cover the costs of the project. These grievances were compounded when it was discovered that Undertaker and Dainfern held meetings in the absence of the group's Committee. The only moneys they could verify among themselves were the sums paid per grave to the head of an *isibongo* family for 'ceremonies' prior to exhumation, and the four hundred and fifty thousand rand for the purchase of a burial site confirmed by Fourways Memorial Park.

The actual amounts of money received by individual farm workers for their Dainfern and/or River Glen graves were cause of much unhappiness. Undertaker told the farm workers they would receive three thousand rand per grave, for both those on Portion 246 and on Dainfern, (the sources of payment, of course,

being separate) with the payment being made only to the head of the family or senior relative. That was not a problem, as it had been well explained by Undertaker that the restriction was to avoid paying various individuals claiming some or other relationship to a single grave. Quite a number of individuals could claim to be related to a buried person in the extensive Ndebele families of Ngidi and Mnguni by virtue of more remote common patriarchs/matriarchs.

The senior family member of each *isibongo*, or lineage, should have received payment for his or her various ancestral graves. The Ngidi family received the sum of twenty thousand rand, which they thought was for their graves. But, on consultation with Undertaker were informed it was for the hire of their taxis to transport farm workers and dwellers to Mamelodi Cemetery. Gosego, who claimed the graves of two brothers and his wife's two sisters, expected to receive twelve thousand rand, but received only fifteen hundred rand for one brother. Gugulethu and Mondli received six thousand rand for the graves of Mondli's father and father's mother in River Glen. Busisiwe said she received six thousand rand for her two graves. Bheka and Xolani's father received nothing for their graves. Mpho, who was not aware that she had affinal family buried on the farm when she joined the meetings, did not apply for and did not receive any money for her aunt's husband's grave. According to Bheka, although he received three thousand rand for his mother's grave on Rooivaal when it was relocated in 2005, he was not paid for his father's Dainfern grave. When he asked Undertaker on the whereabouts of the money for his father's grave, Bheka said, he was told to 'wait for a telephone call' telling him when he could collect his money.

There was much confusion over the exact amount that should have been paid out for each grave and hearsay that some people signed for sums of money they did not receive. Years after the exhumations a list was made comprising the names of people who should have received money for graves both on Dainfern and in River Glen. At one of the meetings people were asked whether or not they received payment, and the sum received. The list reflected how payments of fifteen hundred or three thousand rand were made to some grave owners and how others received nothing. It seemed that who received money and how much was well known, because although Gosego was not at the meeting, those who were, correctly stated what he told me he had received. Sociopolitical power relations were evident. Those farm workers and dwellers who received the correct sum, such as Busisiwe, were not easy people to bully, whereas Bheka and Gosego were old men devoid of social or political or even economic power.

There was misapprehension of actual facts or what was done in the past. For instance, the farm workers and dwellers wrongfully believed that affidavits they completed were submitted for a land claim and that Undertaker took the restitution money for himself. It was not the case, and the farm workers' enquiries, in 2009, showed that no land claim was opened in 2004. As I have already mentioned the affidavits made prior to the relocation of River Glen, like the affidavits completed prior to the relocation of the mass graves, were for Funeral Service's costing for the relocation projects. Mpho suggested that the reason Undertaker added the fictitious names, was because as 'dead people' there was no means of checking their identities. 'He was,' Mpho surmised, 'adding money'. In order to justify the 'cost for River Glen and Mamelodi, he had to make up names.' And, the reason he did not inscribe all the names of real

deceased farm workers and dwellers was also 'because of the money.' 'He would not have had to pay those family members,' she said.

As in all disputes, whether with the developers of River Glen or with Dainfern representatives when they made suggestions at meetings, or as a formally articulated message for Dainfern at the demonstration, no questions were directed on these grievances to Undertaker. Although questions about names were voiced at meetings, and lists of who had and had not received money for graves were made, the direct connection between false names and missing names were not publically stated in connection with Undertaker. Lucas suggested the reason for not articulating actual accusations was because the families suspected there was a 'spy', and thus nothing that could be construed as slander was openly expressed. If there were a 'spy' he/she acted as a conduit of issues in general, without any specific complaints being uttered. Undertaker was simply requested to attend a meeting and explain the accounts.

It was clear there was much ignorance on the part of the farm workers and dwellers. In discussing leaders Bailey (1988: ix) has this to say: '...No leader anywhere — that is, no successful leader — can ever be immaculate ... [or] ... survive as a leader without deceiving others (followers no less than opponents);' and that: 'Leadership is a form of cultivating ignorance, or stopping doubts and stifling questions' (Bailey 1988: 2). Furthermore: 'A significant part of the audience that looks on leaders is not at all critical and is ready to believe anything ...' (1988: 4).

7.4.2 Individual and communal perspectives

James (2007: 157) suggests that the idealization of so-called 'African communality' is a 'partial misunderstanding— perhaps derived from a dichotomy between private/individual and communal ownership which prevailed in nineteenth-century Western thought,' which extrapolates to the 'collective element in traditional land tenure systems' (James 2007: 157). And, De Jongh (2008: 6) argues that a community may be identified according to 'conventional criteria or definitions' or be 'self-identified or self-constructed or even fabricated'. The collective of farm workers/dwellers and grave owners as I have shown were not a 'conventional' group or community. They were in De Jongh's differentiation 'self-identified/self-constructed' group, and as such there was no internal structure that could hold its individual members or its leaders to account.

The cohesion of the group depended to a great extent on common interest in dwelling and burial place and the material dynamics of relocated graves. However, Schlee (2004: 137) argues that the notion that cohesion within a group depends on the supposition of collective aims and collective action to achieve them is a simplification. He argues that on closer consideration the actions of the individual do not necessarily have the collective as point of departure. From the collective perspective it would appear that disunity between individuals and the community rested upon the competition for resources (Schlee 2004: 135), which in the context of the study that meant moneys resulting from the processes of the relocation of graves.

Thus, although there was unity when disputing and negotiating with Dainfern, it endured only up to a point, that is, until Dainfern accepted the tender by Funeral Services. Therein lay a problem, because, whereas the community conceived of moneys donated by Dainfern as a communal shared resource (Schlee 2004: 138), Undertaker conceived of the money as payment for his costs in carrying out the project. What he charged Dainfern was his business. His identity as a former farm dweller and his 'social knowledge and social intelligence' of the former rural lifeway provided him with an opportunity of 'integration' and 'manipulation' of the group for his own benefit (Schlee 2004: 148).

With regard to the relationship between leader and followers Bailey notes that leadership is 'the art of controlling others' (Bailey 1988: 5). It has a quality of 'audacity' (Bailey 1988: 7). Followers 'expect to be rewarded or to avoid being penalised' in the scenarios of 'instrumental leadership' (Bailey 1988: 8) and where the leader is an 'expert', as occurs with leadership of 'domination'. The reason is that followers 'respect' knowledge and expertise (Bailey 1988: 9); they can be 'incentivised' to follow (Bailey 1988: 72-78); and that given a 'highly focused issue' that arouses 'sufficient emotion' they can 'block reason and compromise' (Bailey 1988: 55). The latter is exactly what Gosego suggested when I asked him why everyone allowed Undertaker so much control. It can also be construed as a form of clientelism, such that, that the proceeds of the project could filter down from Undertaker to the farm worker/dwellers.

Undertaker's position within the group was a cross between his being a 'big man' and his holding a patron/client relation with farm workers/dwellers by showing them benevolence. However, the flow of goods principally favoured him

as patron. The community was in one respect a collective of equals who were stratified by Undertaker's authority and subsequent power because of his knowledge and experience in relocating graves. The other dynamic was the economic expectations in the form of incentivised support for their leader. In essence there was an incentivised patron/client/clientelist relation because all moneys had to be directed through Undertaker, as he was the individual providing the service/tender to relocate the graves.

An adjunct to the patron/client relations between Undertaker and the community of farm workers/dwellers was his economic power to offer favours or quieten dissenters by favouritism by placing individuals on his pay role, as suggested by Tabo. Thus, in the voluntary socio-economic relationship within the group the farm workers/dwellers were completely dependent upon Undertaker. Seymour-Smith (1986: 40, 219) notes the dyadic and individualising tie between patron and client, the purpose of which includes economic and political elements, as well as manipulation and domination in social relations. Such a theoretical construct allows for the fact that among the subordinate stratum (community of farm workers/dwellers/grave owners) there can be individual aspiration for favourable relations, which can be divisive.

Another aspect of how leaders gain their position was apparent from research in Zevenfontein informal settlement. A research participant explained that she was 'called forward' to be block leader because, although people did not know her name, they had seen her 'clearing her site, carrying construction material on her head and starting to build her shack'. It was her active involvement in achieving something for herself as well as her willingness to speak-up on behalf others or help in resolving problems and conflict among settlers (Hill 2001: 45). A similar

characteristic was apparent in Busisiwe as a block leader in the settlement in ensuring that dwellers relocated to their rightful registered RDP houses. In other words it was the assertiveness of individuals that got them elected among individuals of a marginalised and less-powerful stratum.

People, because of their marginalisation and victimisation during the apartheid era and colonialism, relied on outspoken and assertive people. Within such a stratum there is large degree of dependency on leadership and group affiliation. For instance, the same research participant (Hill 2001) said one reason she joined a football club was because the club would support her if she needed help. The *quid pro quo* of support for a leader or affiliation to a group indicated clientelism or benign incentive. That does not, however, fully explain accepting or following leadership, but it is nevertheless a factor. Undertaker was prepared to find out about the graves and do something about them, which none of the others were prepared to do, not even Mmusi. He was in a position that may have led to exploitation, but the *quid pro quo* in the relationship was also a factor. It also explains how family elders/leaders such as Musa, in his own right a successful businessman, could not be manipulated by Undertaker because they were equally assertive. The only way such individuals could be manipulated was through economic incentive as suggested by Gosego, or as Tabo suggested, Undertaker employing them in one of his business ventures.

Undertaker was the leader, because the farm workers and dwellers were his followers. His influence was based on his authority on the mass graves and relocating graveyards. Furthermore his charisma and persuasiveness (Bailey 1988: 119) were also indispensable to his gaining leadership. Lederman (2001: 162-165) notes characteristics that anthropologists have observed in studies of

'big men'. Some of these characteristics were discernable in Undertaker's style of leadership, namely his was 'achieved leadership'. He was given to 'informal persuasion'. He had the ability to 'access resources within and outside his community' and he made use of 'local social networks'. Undertaker operated within a group that had 'no institutionalised structures'. Nevertheless, James (2007: 14) notes that in the poorer rural communities people seeking land claims tended to follow the 'African pattern' of aligning with 'big men' because they lacked a sense of sufficient empowerment to 'establish entitlement' on their own.

Harber (2011: 182-189) also throws some light on leadership and on Undertaker²⁵ and his business ventures in a discussion on the developing economy of Diepsloot's entrepreneurial activities. One problematic of being entrepreneur in Diepsloot, some of whose urbanites were former Zevenfontein farm dwellers, was finding social capital through contact and networks to develop businesses. Another was the different political aligning of its two chambers of commerce. The ANC aligned chamber, Chamber A, held the dominant position and its members were the bigger formal businesses. Their ambition was to excel beyond 'stomach politics' to 'becoming millionaires', and to becoming part of the mainstream business world and the growing urban economies of Fourways and other upmarket urban nodes. The bottom line of entrepreneurialism among Chamber A members was for everyone to 'make money' (Harber 2011: 182-183).

²⁵ Harber (2011) did not personally interview Undertaker. He asked to do so, and he was told that Undertaker's lawyer would contact him, but the lawyer did not do so (Harber 2011: 184). An ANC Youth Leader, who had interviewed Undertaker, provided his own insights and opinions (Harber 2011: 184).

Undertaker with his 'archetypal informal settlement success story' was the president of Chamber A. He owned a number of diverse businesses and made 'his first million in Diepsloot' (Harber 2011: 184). Many of his enterprises entailed provincial and municipal contracts. The forcefulness of his personality was evident in his leading ANC protests against, for instance, taxi violence in Diepsloot and challenging Tokyo Sexwale to spend a night in Diepsloot (Harber 2011: 186-187).

According to Harber, Undertaker was a 'contributor and sponsor of the local ANC', and one of his methods was to put an individual 'on the payroll for a few months'. Another method was to give large sums of money and even cars. Harber (2011: 187-188) refers to the relationship as 'mutual patronage', exemplified in Undertaker winning tenders and contracts and then dispensing subcontracts to Diepsloot entrepreneurs with political connections. Harber reflects on whether such methodology was 'corruption' or 'clientelism and political patronage', which he states is commonly seen in 'local government across the world' (ibid: 187-188). Harber's profile on Undertaker concludes in the suggestion that Undertaker's possible rhetoric of black empowerment of a marginalised stratum could be that it was of:

Greater benefit to the people of Diepsloot if the contract goes to someone like him [Undertaker] with close links to the place and its people, who spends as much of the money there as he can and employs as many locals as possible (Harber 2011: 187-188).

The portrait suggests that a significant dynamic of Undertaker's business success was characterised by a sense of *ubuntu*²⁶ aided by his ANC connections and his matrilineal ANC credentials.

This approach to economic empowerment was discernible in his approach to grave relocations. A leader can invoke trust among his or her followers through 'familial style' when he or she and the rest of the group identify common roots.

Bailey argues that:

Leaders who seek consensus and, so to speak, lead from behind present themselves as the first among equals, as serving the will of the people and knowing what they want because they are themselves of the people (Bailey 1988: 85-86).

Bailey also identifies various characteristics of followers, which suggest that within the group with common cause followers 'mature' and 'have confidence in themselves, in their fellows, in the social system that coordinates their actions, and the values and beliefs that make the social system...' and their commitment to the leader and the cause based on participation (1988: 251). Among such a group and such followers dissention may occur if the norms of the culture or group are violated (1988: 251). This was evident in restricted community meetings and decision making.

Undertaker used the group for accreditation in dealing with landowners and developers. He suggested to the grave owners, and put the argument to the

²⁶ An Nguni term roughly translated as 'human kindness' or literally 'humanness' with other translations including humanity, virtue, goodness and kindness. In a more philosophical sense, the term means 'belief in a universal bond of sharing that connects all humanity' (Wikipedia: 2015c).

developers, that only a black undertaker should relocate the River Glen graves, because he would understand the ancestral requirements. In the case of Dainfern, Undertaker needed an action and protest group to demonstrate in order to force Dainfern to cooperate. When Dainfern indicated they would call for tenders to exhume the mass graves, the farm workers deflected an open tender by stating that Dainfern should not dictate to them. They agreed that they wanted Undertaker to carry out the exhumations. If Dainfern was trying to drive a wedge between the farm workers and Undertaker, they did not succeed. The reaction was for them to close ranks, particularly in the face of an incentive that the group would benefit economically from the project in the forms of supplying taxis, and catering, for instance.

From the perspective of the group at the root of their discontent was the lack of documented information of exactly what moneys were paid to Funeral Services and the nature of the funds. The farm workers, including family elders and committee members from 2008, appeared to conceive of these moneys as being received by Funeral Services on their behalf. As their leader and the project manager they conceived of payments for the project and for rituals as being channelled through Funeral Services for the benefit of all of them. As discerning followers they sought to hold their leader to task for his failure to deliver on his promises. They wanted Undertaker and the Treasurer to show them the financial statements of what money Dainfern donated and payments made to Funeral Services, as they felt that any outstanding balance of the funds was owed to them. Like Undertaker, Treasurer was not accused of anything other than the fact that 'she works for Undertaker', and Undertaker had been principal spokesman, negotiator and publicist of the Dainfern graves. Although dissenters, such as younger members of the Ngidi and Mnguni families, made

their opinions known, in respect of social relations power remained Undertaker's. They expected him to provide explanations, but they could not force him to do so.

In the uncertainty of how to deal with the problem, Njabulu asked me to suggest a way forward. The farm workers could, I said, ask the Dainfern lawyer what moneys were held in trust and what moneys were paid out to Funeral Services. Njabulu responded by saying: 'We don't want to be back stabbing,' and the families agreed they did not want to approach the Dainfern lawyer behind Undertaker's back. Their response was in keeping with the spirit of *ubuntu*, and its philosophy of shared goodwill among people was a stance they maintained through 2012. The maintaining of goodwill within the group was evident again in response to Mpho who suggested they call white-collar crime police. The other farm workers vehemently rejected the suggestion as inappropriate. The importance of goodwill and spirit of *ubuntu* and the structure of *lekgotla* for resolving internal conflict was articulated after the meeting when Njabulu's mother Noxolo thanked me for my suggestion, but advised me they preferred to do things their way. Settlement of the dispute by communal arbitration meant that each party had to be given the opportunity to come forward and state without accusation their perspective (see Hill 2001: 45).

Undertaker, they said, should 'come forward' and show them the bookkeeping, and various approaches were used to invite him to a meeting. The families should not have 'to chase him for it'. Thus, although as individuals Undertaker and Treasurer were mandated to perform tasks and/or act on behalf of the families and might be perceived by outsiders of the group that they had not played their roles properly, within the group the inclination was to maintain

coherence. Three of the older women, Noxolo, Mpho, and one other, were elected from amongst the farm workers and dwellers to ask Undertaker for the relevant information. When the women reported back, it was only to tell the community that Undertaker would not speak with them. They called him but cellular phone calls 'went to voicemail' and were not returned. Tebello wrote a letter to Undertaker, which, so as to show him they were all concerned, was signed by all the farm workers/dwellers. They wanted Undertaker to see, as Tabo expressed it, that it was not just 'the amaNdebele making a fuss'. As with telephone calls the letter had no effect, and Undertaker did not respond to or engage with the farm workers.

Over the following years Njabulu, Jabulani and Dumisani among other older farm workers and dwellers said they tried to invite Undertaker to meetings but were unable to contact him. On one occasion three committee members went to his office, but they reported back to the farm workers that they were informed Undertaker was unavailable. On a few occasions when they did manage to speak with him he agreed to attend a meeting but for the duration of the meetings I attended he never appeared. I asked my research assistant Lucas if he thought my being at the meetings was a problem, but he said no, the problem lay with Undertaker, who, he said, did not want to explain how money was used.

The acceptance of economic clientelism was evident when the farm workers unpacked their own, Undertaker's and Dainfern socio-economic relations and concurred that it was quite proper for Undertaker to negotiate directly with Dainfern as a Committee member and to own the funeral company hired to conduct the exhumations. Taking into his consideration the urbanisation of Fourways, Njabulu said, that economic opportunities such as employment

should benefit the local people and not outsiders. Harber (2011: 188) in his profile on Undertaker had inferred the same rationale that by keeping business opportunities within the locality and among its dwellers, economic power was extended throughout the various social strata. Service providers for the Mamelodi project — the exhumation and reburial, the provision of refreshments, the catering and transport — should have been appointed from among the members of the families, such as Themba and Jabulani opportunity in providing the taxi service to Mamelodi.

Undertaker had stepped out of line by not enacting true patronage by not allowing catering opportunities at Mamelodi and Fourways Memorial Park to go to others, but had kept them to himself. In essence other than the outsourcing of the taxi service, Undertaker created his own businesses as needed to render the various other services. Creating a business was not in itself conceived by the families as a problem, but what was, was that Undertaker did not 'share'. There was, they agreed, a disregard for *ubuntu* in Undertaker's behaviour to his fellow former farm workers in his denying them a share in the financial opportunities created by the relocation of the Mamelodi mass graves.

In 2010, it was well known among the farm workers that Undertaker was very sick and possibly 'dying in hospital' and could not attend any meetings. In keeping with traditionalist health care beliefs and practices, Jabulani and Themba Ngidi and Dumisani Mnguni and his cousin turned to spiritual power by visiting an *isangoma* to enquire about Undertaker's health and the group's way forward. At the following meeting they had a strange tale to tell. They were told by the *isangoma* that Undertaker's ancestors were making him sick because they were displeased with his conduct. They had sat in a circle with the *isangoma* as

she entered her trance and collectively they had a vision of four boys painted white walking towards them. The boys entered a pool of water where they were engulfed by a large bubble that rose out of the water and disappeared. Each man contributed to the tale and stated that they had all experienced the same vision. The *isangoma's* interpretation was that the ancestors were dealing with the problem and the farm workers should be patient in awaiting a response from Undertaker.

At a meeting at the end of 2011 the younger family members said they thought there was no point in furthering their efforts to seek financial information from Dainfern or Undertaker. It was just the older farm workers, they said, who did not want to give up. At a meeting in 2013 Njabulu reported that Undertaker was 'seventy-five percent' recovered and when completely well he would speak with them. The farm workers/dwellers concurred, that they would 'give Undertaker a chance', and wait until he fully recovered. At the time of writing Undertaker had not come to the fore with any explanations for the farm workers and dwellers. In this respect one might assess that the farm workers were losers on every front. However, the effort by Undertaker to in some way redress the loss of the Dainfern graves and the effort to recreate an ancestral graveyard for the farm workers at Fourways Memorial Park as he had for himself cannot be denied, however unsuccessful their ancestral graveyard was compared to his own.

7.5 CONCLUSION

I have argued three facets of sociocultural disjunction in this chapter. There was a clear indication of the unequal power relations of interaction between the farm workers/dwellers and the landowner/developers in the context of the economics

of relocating graves and the underlying issues of land and housing. The efficacy and relevance of the rituals performed at River Glen and Mamelodi showed that a culturally correct relocation process of mortal remains remained unsatisfactory to a continuing and harmonious relationship between ancestral spirits and descendants at the new gravesites. And, I indicated how unequal power relations and sociopolitical manipulation among individuals within the group impacted on the sense of commonality and a common cause that failed to bring economic equity to the former Zevenfontein farm workers and dwellers.

This chapter has shown that the relocation of graves was not simply a matter of observing religious or cultural dynamics as suggested by undertakers and forensic archaeologists. The disputes over the Dainfern graves had shown that the social processes of death, the cultural values placed on the graves and sense of grave ownership, as well as sociopolitical and economic power relations, rights to land, even the ethical and moral values of both disputing parties (Caplan 1995: 3-4) made the process far more complex. In essence the unequal sociopolitical, economic power relations and the religious implications of both River Glen and Dainfern graves were impacted upon by a global demographic.

Although not all was lost in the process of the relocation of either the River Glen or the mass graves solutions, they were not entirely satisfactory. According to a news article (Independent Online 2006 no page number), Undertaker is quoted as saying that in the process of the dispute Dainfern had 'realised a greater understanding of both of our cultural heritage and customs.' And reported in the same news article negotiating the Dainfern graves had from Representative DC point of view 'taken a lot of trust, faith and belief in each other' for them to reach an agreement and they were 'extremely proud' of doing so. Representative

DC felt that the disputing groups had 'learnt a great deal about each other through this process and can honestly say that some great friendships have been formed as a result of all that we have all been through and resolved,' he is reported as saying.

A political expedient for arguing with Dainfern and River Glen was the undertone of a land claim, although not openly articulated as was evident in protest slogans. When a land claim was eventually instituted, financial restitution in the minds of the former farm workers and dwellers had to take into consideration the sociocultural change to the landscape and its current value.

Some but not all of the farm workers/dwellers gained from the projects. For instance, the projects were economically worthwhile for Undertaker who carried them out, but less so for the farm worker/dweller grave owners. Some people gained RDP houses and a foothold on registered property ownership. For others an RDP was not *quid pro quo* for a farm and a sense of place conceived as irreplaceable. Many of the younger farm dwellers had moved on from the grave relocation target and were concentrating on instituting a land claim. But, for the older farm workers the nostalgia of the lost landscape remained unresolved.

CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSION

This anthropological study was instigated by my reading about disputes over the removal of some farm workers/dwellers' graves from the western half of the farm Zevenfontein, located in northern Johannesburg. As the study progressed over the eleven years of data collection, research exposed a range of sociocultural dynamics that characterised the removing or relocating of the graves.

The study commenced in 2004 and ended 2012/2013, and data collection entailed a number of research sites. Sluka and Robben (2007: 19) suggest that narrative ethnography is a 'creative intermingling of lived experiences, field data, methodological reflections, and cultural analysis' entailing 'extensive direct quotations'. That was very much my experience in researching the topic, and in view of the diachronic and multi-sited character of the study I applied an open-ended methodology. Research included participant observation, the interviewing and collecting of the genealogies of research participants, the use of note making and audio and visual documentation, supported by an eclectic reading relevant to the various contexts of the fieldwork and the data. The broad scope of reading needed in order to make anthropological sense of the data was cursory on some topics such as dispute, performance, community structuring and leadership, and broader on issues of land claim, sense of place and ethnographic studies of ritual.

The locality of the farm was a peri-urban interface that revealed sociocultural changes leading to two senses of place of a contested landscape. One sense of place was the construct of the farm workers and dwellers' heritage and past way

of life, whose tangible reality rested in a number of graves, three homesteads and some shacks. Other dwellings had been demolished and other graves had either been relocated or destroyed. The opposing sense of place of the same landscape was a consequence of urban bias. It was a scenic enclave created by developers for an elite social stratum. The intentions and actions of registered landowners and developers in removing graves (and homesteads) from the former farm workers and dwellers' sense of place led to disputes that were exacerbated by an imbalance in sociopolitical and economic power relations. One scenario of dispute focused on the intention to relocate the River Glen graveyard and dwellings from Portion 246, and the other was the 'lost' Gert and Frans graves and mortal remains from the graves that were destroyed by the developers of Dainfern.

My intention as the general theme of the dissertation was to explore the relocation of the two Zevenfontein graveyards in the context of the peri-urban interface, and the sociocultural dynamics that resulted from the loss of and/or disturbance to the original burial sites. This I achieved by critically examining the religious, political and economic facets of relocating the graves and the concomitant disputes over the relocations. The focus was on custom and tradition regarding graves, the significance of graves in the construction of sense of place attachment, farm workers/dwellers' attitudes to and decisions on the removal of their graves, the pragmatics of negotiation and decision making regarding relocating graves, and finally, the farm workers/dwellers' and my own assessment of grave relocations. And, as I indicate in my conclusions on the relocating of the graves, I suggest that the relocation of 'ancestral' graveyards can be socioculturally disjunctive for farm workers and dwellers. This chapter demonstrates that I have conducted research and analysed data that met the

obligations I set for the study, and that I fulfilled the study's aims and objectives.

The first aim of the study focused on custom and tradition in the farm workers and dwellers' emic perspective on their history of dwelling, burying and their creation of the farm's graveyards. This was fulfilled by my capturing the farm workers and dwellers' individual oral histories of living and working on two peri-urban farms of northern Johannesburg — Zevenfontein and Zandspruit. I collected as many oral histories from the former farm workers and dwellers as I could, so that I had a body of documented testimony. The participants recalled the intangibles of sense of place in their marriages, raising families, their experiences of eviction from the farms, and their being forced to desert their family graves, followed by their rare opportunities to visit them until they appeared to have been destroyed. Based on their oral histories of sense of place and cultural heritage, and a collective memory of pre-colonial occupation of land that was characteristic of land claims, and evident in the tangibility of graves, the Zevenfontein farm workers and dwellers formulated issues with the relocating of the graves from the landscape. The content of this aim formed a preamble to the anthropological interpretation in subsequent chapters, and indicated the geographical and historical background to the broad research area.

Interpreting the oral histories within anthropological discourses on sense of place and place attachment, as well as within current discourses pertaining to labour-tenant land claims was my next intention. In this respect I deconstructed the content of the oral histories in terms of sense of place and land claim discourses, as well as legislation pertaining to farm occupation and eviction during the apartheid era. I acknowledged the importance of farm graves to land

claims, and argued that the circumstances of peri-urban farms, where the land is undergoing sociocultural change through physical reconstruction by urban development, was different from land claims in remote rural areas. The objective of the deconstruction was not only to establish the fundamental premise of the farm as conceptualised by former farm workers and dwellers, but also to understand the principles of argumentation formulated as issues and problems the former farm occupants conceived with having or having had their graves relocated. A significant aspect was the religious implication in the association between dwelling place and burial place, since that would be the underlying premise of relocating graves in a culturally acceptable way. I also offset the rural sense of place against the urban sense place and explored the sociopolitical and economic power relations between two very different social strata to whom place attachment was equally important and authentic.

Attitudes to the removal of the graves and decision making regarding the fundamental issues the farm workers and dwellers identified with one developer's intention to remove an existing graveyard in 2004, as well as the issues described in the media about graves that were removed in the 1980s constituted the third aim of the dissertation. This was fulfilled with an in-depth study of the fundamental issues the farm workers and dwellers had with the relocation of their graves, and of how they organised themselves as a decision-making group to deal with their issues. The structuring of individuals into leaders and followers was scrutinised, and I argued that the individual who would do the undertaking gained his position of leadership based on his authoritative knowledge about relocating graves and his information on the graves that had already been relocated or destroyed. I discussed how as individuals, because of marginalisation, the farm workers/dwellers were unable

to deal with the loss of their graves outside of the group. I demonstrated that the farm workers' perception of the abuse of their cultural rights and their sense of place and burial place was the premise of their argument with the landowners and developers. I also indicated that their financial estimate of compensation was based on the increased value of the land as a result of its urban development. In contextualising the situation with the Zevenfontein graves I differentiated between the circumstances pertaining to the River Glen graveyard and the Dainfern graves.

The fourth aim comprised three dynamics in the pragmatics of the relocating of farm graves. The first scenario was concerned with the dynamic of negotiation and decision-making. Fulfilment of this aim was achieved in my showing how the profile of the dispute was raised by a public demonstration. I deconstructed a protest march against Dainfern as a manifestation of mass action aimed to level the sociopolitical dispute power relations and demand negotiations. At the same time I stressed the overall goodwill of the demonstrators/protestors that in the end achieved a corresponding goodwill from Dainfern residents. The second dynamic concerned the religious dimension of relocating graves and this aim was fulfilled in my scrutinising the rituals and ceremonies that were involved. The significance of burial and gravesites was ethnographically explored in a study of relations between ancestors, their mortal remains and the living through the symbols of ritual and ceremony enacted so that the ancestral spirits could be translocated together with physical remains to a new cemetery. The in-depth reflection on the religious dimensions of relocating graves in the form of the public and private rituals/ceremonies drew attention to the collective and individual conceptions of the meaning of the relationship between ancestral spirits and their mortal remains. The third dynamic was the actual

relocation process itself. In order to fulfil this aim I made an in-depth study of the exhumation and reburial processes from both the archaeological and anthropological perspectives. The processes involved in disinterring ancestors' mortal remains and relocating them to another burial place was examined for its cultural construction by scrutinising the entire process of relocating a grave, from the opening of the grave and exhuming the mortal remains to their reburial in a new cemetery.

The core objective of this aim was significant to my principal argument that the relocation of graves was intrinsically problematic and sociocultural disruptive. The data that were collected and analysed demonstrated the pragmatics of relocating graves, from the responsibility of landowners and developers to the actual process of relocating the spirits and the mortal remains. The farm workers/dwellers' demand to retrieve their ancestors' lost mortal remains, the manner in which they communicated with them, and the cultural manner of relocating and transforming retrieved remains in tangible and intangible constructs of a new ancestral graveyard, was fundamental to the meaning of the study. In this regard I would argue that an anthropological perspective clarified and contributed much to a better understanding of these constructs.

The final aim of the dissertation was to assess the success of graves relocation. This was achieved by my examining the relations between landowners and farm workers in terms of graves and dwellings, the success of relocating ancestral graves and the relations within the group as operative in having graves relocated. The success of the relocations was assessed in respect of inter-societal relations and interlocution, the recreation of ancestral graveyards, and communality among individuals as agents in the relocating of the graves. In

fulfilling this final aim the dissertation focussed on community meetings and explored the interaction between farm workers and dwellers and landowners/developers with reference to the costing and funding of relocation projects, and to the demands for compensation for the loss of the original graveyards. The discussion also considered the interrogation among the farm workers and dwellers themselves of their being a community with a common interest, which with the conclusion of its function should have been disbanded. The community was, in fact, reconstructed to assess the fulfilment of all the communal requirements and intentions of the projects. The farm workers and dwellers conceived of grave relocations as accruing economic benefits that in the ambiguity of the spirit of *ubuntu* and sharing should have trickled down from Undertaker, namely the undertaker involved in the relocation and a fellow former farm dweller, to them. And, in answering the questions, in view of so much dispute and emotion, as to whether the relocations were done to the satisfaction of all parties involved, I suggested problems remained, and, in fact, new ones were created.

As a consequence of the sociocultural change to the farm, the existing River Glen graveyard had to be removed, and two other graveyards, Gert and Frans, referred to as the Dainfern graves, had been removed some twenty years prior to the study without the knowledge or permission of the grave owners, resulting in what they considered as the destruction and 'desecration' of ancestral graveyards. Generally, farm workers and dwellers lived not far from their graves, and history showed that it was the social and cultural disruption of apartheid farm evictions that caused them to be dislocated from their graveyards possibly giving the perception to land developers that graveyards were 'very old' or 'abandoned' or that there were 'no family'.

The effectiveness of the relocated ancestral cemetery articulated in the views of the farm workers on the restoration of harmonious relationship with ancestors indicated there were conceptual problems. The finding and reburial of ancestral mortal remains were shown to be not wholly effective in restoring the relationship between farm workers and the supernatural. The intra-community relationships and its collectivity formulated by the farm workers and dwellers in order to achieve their expectations, endorsed group solidarity to some extent. Nevertheless, internal disputes dissembled collectivity into individualism, and the study found that their common aim as the motivating force in collectivity could not survive individual agendas. All in all, the problematic complexities of relocating graves and graveyards caused sociocultural disjunction rather than providing solutions benefitting everybody.

Individualist emotionality and subjectivity had a bearing on how the farm workers/dwellers apprehended the landowners and developers with whom they were to negotiate, and whom they considered responsible for the destruction of their graves. The body of oral histories conceptualised the meaning of the graves and the farm workers/dwellers' marginalisation and powerlessness in the social structure of National Party politics at the time when they occupied the farms. As Tilley (2006: 25) has argued, oral history was not only a matter of the past and a temporal phenomenon, but the landscape and its human relations and interactions were also anchored in, for instance, graves and homesteads.

The farm workers/dwellers' perspective was multifocal and influenced by nostalgia and sentiment for lost graves, homesteads and a rural lifeway, as well as claims to land tenure by the remaining occupants of the Portion 246 homesteads. Using graves as the dominant tangible symbol they clung to rural

sense of place and to first person occupation of the land in the history of a changing peri-urban interface. There was also the Losmacherrie dwellers in their flimsy shacks, who, no less concerned about the graves, and subsequently involving themselves in a communal labour tenant land claim, reflected the urbanising demographic of peri-urban Fourways in their expectation of formal housing. In a location where restitution of land was impossible and the nature of the economic relations of the periurban interface was markedly imbalanced, land tenure and anything pertaining to the land or sense of place was extrapolated to mean a right to demand financial compensation. Thus, the conceptual association of dwelling place and burial place and the cultural construction of the farm workers and dwellers' sense of place, compensation for lost land tenure and lost dwelling and burial place were linked.

The intangibles of the former farm workers and dwellers worldview were intrinsic to their arguments against the perceptions of reality held by landowners and developers. De Jongh (2015: no page numbers) draws attention to a significant dynamic in disputations where the pragmatics of one argument, in this case the registered title deed holders, namely, landowners, faces off against the intangible reality of former dwellers and adherents to an old way of life held only in memory. De Jongh (ibid) suggests that such intangibles are not 'imaginary' but products of the imagination, the fountainhead of ideas and perceptions of reality.

De Jongh (2015: no page numbers) defines a reality about land as based on the *experience of life* as the essence of a place. In other words for the landowners and developers of the farm Zevenfontein, the land was a *space* to which they held title deed and could do with it what they wanted. To the former farm

workers it was a *place* where they lived, worked, raised families, buried their deceased family members, practiced the elements of their traditional and customary way of life. Such a conceived place with all its inherent intangibles cannot be readily dispelled. If the old life could not be revived by the restitution of the land to the farm workers/dwellers, then some sort of tangible return was owed to them in the form of financial recompense. But, importantly, such recompense they believed should be measured in terms of the current value of the development of the land.

In the case of the Zevenfontein graves the first person claims were publicised in newspaper reports. The media reports mentioned a graveyard that extended over a wide expanse of the farm, namely, from River Glen to the Gert and Frans graves. I argued, with reference to the archaeological survey of the area and there being no evidence of the graves, as well as the absence in ethnographic literature of references to or descriptions of such burial sites in the landscape from the late nineteenth to early twentieth century, that the graveyard was very likely spurious. In essence, earlier black burials were not made in expansive cemeteries as described in media reports. Nevertheless, the media reports encapsulated the emotive perceptions about the farm and its original occupation by blacks and the farm workers and dwellers' ownership of the gravesites as sacred plots of land. Such perceptions of the farm and its graves and original black inhabitants informed the issues, decision-making and disputation on the relocation of the graveyards. The description of an extensive graveyard was used as signifier to claims of first person settlement on the land. The argument was shown to be intrinsic to disputing against registered landownership.

Argumentation between disputants held much emotionalism, subjectivity and reactivity. De Jongh (2008: 7) observes that it is the intangible and ‘discrepant perceptions’ of place as recalled by dwellers that encapsulate sense of place. He notes the communal worldview of black land claimants that informs place attachment with its symbolic and emotional value. My own observation of sense of place attachment to a peri-urban farm such as Zevenfontein (in a study focusing specifically on relocating graves) was not quite the same. Despite the African worldview, the emotionalism and symbolic value was personal. However, as De Jongh (*ibid*) argues the different perceptions of what constitute boundaries and landownership between black farm dwellers and those who hold title deed to the land, was very apparent. These aspects are related to identity and one needs to take into consideration that identities change as Tilley observes. ‘Identities must of necessity be improvised and changing, rather than fixed and rule-bound, intimately related to experience and context. They are both in the mind and of the world, embodied and objectified through action and material practice’ (Tilley 2006: 17).’

On the matter of disputation, the dissertation provided the emic perspective that informed the farm workers and dwellers’ argumentation over, and conceptualisation of, ancestral graveyards. Apart from the argument of rights to Zevenfontein as land, relocating an ancestral graveyard signified infringement on collective African cultural values, and in individualist beliefs in rituals and ceremonies that should be performed at gravesites. I argued that such emic perspectives gave substance to any thoughts and actions in disputing the removal of ancestral graves. In this regard ethnographic literature had shown that the spirits of the dead were collectively conceived as ancestral spirits, and that individual graves of mother, father, children, husband and wife — lineal

and lateral kin — were collectively conceived, especially where a number of family members were buried in one area, as ‘ancestral graveyards’. The removal of any black farm worker/dweller’s grave from farmland, thus, posed problems for individuals in terms of their belief in the ancestral spirits, and the collective of farm workers/dwellers of constructs of ancestral graveyards.

Rodman (2003: 205, 207) perceives ‘places produce meaning’ and ‘meaning can be grounded in place,’ and that places are ‘politicised, culturally relative, historically specific, local and multiple constructions’. This perception was evident in how dispute between farm workers and landowners was linked to the meaning they gave to the farm Zevenfontein. Peri-urban relocation of graves is contained within the general anthropological discourse on farm occupation, farm burial, farm evictions and land claims. In discussing the associations between graves and land rights the study has shown how the micro context of the farm’s graves and the politicisation of issues and demands expressed in terms of cultural and human rights evoked the tone and temper of the macro social context of contemporary South Africa.

The demands were publicised in protest and political rhetoric, outside the boundary of Dainfern, on the abuse of cultural rights, of symbolised resentment, outrage and hostility. It was a public demonstration used as a strategic medium of ‘communication by marginalised citizens’ (Björkman 2015: 144). The purpose of the demonstration was to intimidate and evoke a sense of responsibility in the minds of Dainfern residents, enough for them to negotiate on paying for the exhumations of the Mamelodi mass graves. The demonstration slogans were tropes of demands and expectations, rhetorically presented as destruction of the graves, loss of cultural rights and the concepts of land rights. The significance

of the performance in communicating a message was its implied meaning of the social relations in the everyday interaction between deceased and living family members. The protest placards sloganeered anger over the destruction of ancestral graveyards, but were, surprisingly, carried aloft in a spirit of camaraderie and enthusiasm. Without Undertaker's authoritative and charismatic leadership of the group, whose experience of public demonstration, his ANC connections and his possible economic patronage, none of the events would have been initiated or articulated by the farm workers/dwellers themselves.

Dispute continued with the landowners/developers of both Portion 246 where the River Glen graveyard was situated, and Dainfern where graves were destroyed. These problems continued principally because the issue of land rights persisted. The farm workers wanted compensation for loss of the original graveyards, more explicitly in terms of the dwelling place, and as I showed, neither of the landowners/developers met the expectation. I, in respect of farm workers/dwellers' expectations, argued that a particular aspect of the peri-urban environment as farm occupation went, entailed housing. I showed how a number of former farm workers, who managed to avoid the evictions of the 1980s, continued to occupy the farm despite subsequent eviction orders by the new landowner. I argued that the essence of their refusal to leave the farm was not only claims to the land, but also a demand for housing, a demand characteristic of the informal settlement dwellers of the area.

The common objectives and motivating force for collectivity in the structuring of a communal decision-making group did not survive in its original form, when inherent individual agendas were discovered. The collective demands for

funding for rituals and financial compensation as a result of the relocation of graves did not signify that even though working as a group against outside agents everyone in the group was satisfied. Dissatisfaction with the practical and financial processes of graves relocation provoked disagreement within the group as members felt that the financial compensation was not equitably distributed to all, and nor had economic opportunity from the relocation project been shared.

Notwithstanding their expectations in the microenvironment, the relocation of graves was a dynamic of the macro environment, the undertaking of which was governed by the dominant stratum in social interaction. Undertaker' business was relocating graves and as such he tendered for the projects, not, however, based only on his professional experience, but also as a result of accreditation afforded him by the farm workers. Therein lay a problematical dynamic. His accreditation depended on incentivised support for which the farm workers/dwellers expected through economic trickle down to be afforded the opportunity to provide associated ventures such as taxis, refreshments, catering. Furthermore, the idea existed that money raised by Dainfern should be given to the farm workers/dwellers for them to collectively decide on how it should be distributed and utilised. The reason being that they considered it compensation.

However, Dainfern had stipulated that it was not compensation, but funding toward the costs of exhuming and reburying of a number of remains found in the mass graves and ceremonies per family *isibongo*. Although Undertaker was well versed in patronage/clientelist sociopolitical and economic relations as suggested by Harber (2011), he had not shown equanimity to all farm workers and dwellers. The discussion and decisions regarding Undertaker suggested that

the patron-client relation did not entirely translate as *ubuntu*, which was the construct of sharing conceived by the farm workers and dwellers. Nevertheless, although dissatisfied with the projects, in the spirit of the collective *lekgotla* or meeting individuals were not confronted accusatorially, but were provided with a platform to come forward and state their point of view.

It had been Undertaker's personal quest to find out what had happened to the Dainfern graves, and his sole determination in having them re-exhumed and properly buried. He provoked Dainfern into responding to the farm workers' demands, and although solidarity with his cause may well have been incentivised, it did at least draw attention to and conceptually redressed an intangible wrong, if not in reality. He might, too, have done it for his own ends, one of which was to retrieve any of his own family graves and the other to establish his own family graveyard. At the same time, the re-exhumation of the Dainfern graves drove both an economic and political point about sociopolitical and economic power relations between elite and marginalised strata. Through an incentivising client-patron relationship he gained their mass support needed to influence the imbalance in economic power relations with the landowners and developers.

The question of whether the relocated graves in Fourways Memorial Park constituted new ancestral graveyards drew a negative conclusion, since neither the relocation of the River Glen graves nor the mass graves were wholly effective in restoring the relationship between farm workers and the supernatural. The study showed that problems remained in part because of shortcomings in the documenting of individual graves from River Glen and the failure to distinguish individuals from mass graves. As far as the farm workers were concerned

human remains from different graves and collectively interred in mass graves, were not convincingly separated into individuals, as a result the human remains in the one hundred and thirty graves had no meaning for family members. In that respect I showed how the farm workers made innovative suggestions on how they could give the graves and its memorial some personal relevance. The symbolic references rested on the inscribed name of the deceased relative on the memorial wall. At the foot of the wall and facing the name of the deceased, a living relative communicated with his or her ancestor.

The relevance of the beliefs in the ancestral spirits and the first person occupation of the land were the fundamentals of the disputation about not only the River Glen graveyard but also the Dainfern (Gert and Frans) graves. Sometimes the genuine perceptions of dwelling place and burial place, of eviction from dwelling place and desertion of burial place, were embellished with exaggerated and distorted memories for the purpose of disputing and negotiating the relocation of graves. The economic incentive might also have eventually overridden (though not unjustified in principle) the 'genuine perceptions' and sociocultural values.

Once negotiations had finally been concluded, the observance of religious aspects of disturbing the mortal remains of ancestors was the farm workers and dwellers' core activity. Many of them held firm belief in the continuation of life after death, both in the realm of the ancestor spirits attainable at the homestead and at the grave, and I foregrounded the farm workers' argument that disturbance to the mortal remains interfered with the proper relationship between descendants and ancestors. In performing collective ritualised communication 'an especially dramatic attempt to bring some particular part of

life firmly and definitely into orderly control' (Moore & Meyerhof 1977: 3 & 7, cited by Turner 1987: 28) was demonstrated. Similarly, private homestead rituals and the choreographed group observance, both of persons and cultural elements of ritual, symbolised the everyday reality and interaction between descendants and ancestral spirits.

The appropriate rituals and processes of exhumation and in particular reburial were shown to be instrumental to the farm workers and dwellers' expectation that graves could be successfully relocated without adverse effect on the relationship between ancestors and descendants. But, with respect to the exhumation of the Mamelodi mass graves, lost graves and destroyed graveyards were shown to be more difficult to resurrect as new ancestral graveyards. Delving into this aspect of relocating graves exposed the archaeological approach in comparison with the undertaker approach. An adjunct to the construct of cultural correctness was the fact that relocating graves was an economic business activity for both undertakers and archaeologists. In exploring that aspect I indicated the ambiguity of what was understood as culturally correct. I contrasted the process used at River Glen and the process used at Mamelodi, and indicated the reconceptualising of what was described as cultural considerations.

In discussing the reburial process I was able to indicate more discernible traditional cultural elements, and pointed out some of the sociocultural innovations that ritualised the performance of reburial to afford African cultural relevance to human remains from mass graves. The contemporary relevance of ancestral graves *per se*, and the influence of ancestors upon the daily lives and notions of misfortune and/or wellbeing of their descendants were

fundamentally contained in the reburial process. A gesture had been made to reconcile the farm workers with their ancestors. The belief in the power of appropriate rituals was not confined to graves, but was in a spiritual domain, accessible from anywhere. From the religious aspect of general communication with ancestors the relocation of the graves had not caused problems. Problems rested upon sociocultural adaptation to meet the new format of an ancestral grave, where a memorial wall and an inscribed family member was the authentic symbol rather than a grave.

Perhaps the gestures made in relocating the Zevenfontein graves had sufficed, and people had a gravesite in Fourways Memorial Park where they could offer prayers and snuff if they wanted to communicate with ancestors. However in terms of my own assessment I have shown that the process of relocating the graves, both in its the tangible and the intangible dimensions, was socioculturally disjunctive. Nevertheless, as the younger farm workers concluded they had done and achieved all that they could, it was, perhaps, time to move on.

The dissertation has shown that after the graves were relocated the problems and issues were not entirely resolved. There were layers of meaning to relocating the Zevenfontein graves of which performance and perceptions influenced the activities. The farm workers and dwellers and their leaders as well as the landowners and developers, all had their perspectives on the realities of the Zevenfontein graves. Based on those perspectives, they played their roles in the interactive and integrated processes of the overarching sociocultural field — relocation of Zevenfontein graves. I, as the anthropologist had my own perceptions and role to play in a study that led me to conclude that relocating

ancestral farm graves caused a certain sociocultural disjunction. The study of the disputes and negotiations, the rituals and process of relocating the graves was characterised by much of its content being based on, and influenced by, the subjective perspectives of the farm workers/dwellers and the intangibles of place attachment.

The farm workers/dwellers' perspective was influenced by nostalgia and sentiment for lost graves and a rural lifeway, whereas the remaining occupants of the Portion 246 homesteads clung to the rural sense of place and of first person occupation of the land in a changing peri-urban interface. In contrast the Losmacherrie shack dwellers, although concerned about the graves, and subsequently involved themselves in a communal labour tenant land claim, reflected the urbanising demographic of peri-urban Fourways in their expectation of formal housing. The element of land claims in a location where restitution of land was impossible was by the economic relations of an urbanising node as financial compensation. In the conceptual association of dwelling place and burial place in the cultural construction of the farm workers and dwellers' sense of place, compensation for lost land tenure and lost dwelling and burial place were interlinked.

I explained in discussing the fieldwork strategy that there was a certain anthropological reflexivity in pursuing the study, which I indicated specifically as a need on my part, because of the topic of dispute, to show solidarity with and partisanship to the farm workers and dwellers. The problem of partisanship meant excluding role players such as the landowners/developers because of the sensitivity of negotiation and arguments, and cemetery officials on the veracity of the mass graves identified as the Dainfern remains.

Scheper-Hughes (1995: 411) explains how she was given an ultimatum that the continuation of her research would be on her research participants' terms. That meant she was expected to 'accompany' them in their struggle and not objectively observe. Like Scheper-Hughes's research participants, anthropology held no meaning for mine. Scheper-Hughes (1995:419) argues that a witnessing stance is active and 'it positions the anthropologist inside human events as a responsive, reflexive, and morally committed being, one who will "take sides" and make judgments'. Bearing that in mind, on the matter of interviewing Dainfern management I query the purpose in such thorough investigation if, perchance, I were to discover the Mamelodi graves were not the Dainfern graves. Individuals had already indicated their own scepticism and how they viewed the reburials in respect of their relations with the supernatural. The Dainfern residents believed they had made a difference to the lives of the farm workers and dwellers as indicated in the media report. Letting sleeping ancestors lie was circumspect since anything else would serve no beneficial purpose.

By not including all roles players leaves questions such as whether I should have pursued enquiry into whether the bones found in the eight Mamelodi graves were the actual remains from the Dainfern graves. The question I had to ask myself was, what if they were not the correct mass graves, what would be the purpose in exposing the fact. Would the former farm workers benefit from this exposure? I doubt it very much. I could have made enquiries into how housing was allocated to the homestead dwellers, but if the result was manipulation of power structures what purpose would that serve? These are perhaps topics for further research by an anthropologist not so closely associated with these research participants. The terms and conditions, set by research participants, of my research were to present their history of the graves, that is, their side of the

story according to my role as anthropological witness. In adopting a partisan witnessing approach I have interrogated a few of the ethical mores regarding responsibility to research participants first and foremost, not conducting clandestine research, and the very notion of objective scientific observation.

Despite the circumstances of the relocations of both sites of Zevenfontein graveyards being in their own way atypical, I have argued that the relocation of the graves was complex and problematic. The study of relocating graves was an end in itself. Nevertheless, as discourses indicated, references to graves and to the relocation of graves of black farm workers were adjuncts to social resettlement. Social settlement and resettlement had particular significance in a peri-urban environment undergoing township development where the restoration of the land was not possible, albeit claims to first-persons occupation pertained.

In essence this study has shown the religious power relations of ancestral spirits and their living farm worker descendants and their nostalgic sense of place were no match for the dominating role of sociopolitical and economic power, urban bias and the investment in the development of walled estates for an urban elite. Fourways and the land where the graves were situated were characterised by the 'local-global dialectic where local forces in a variety of forms and levels negotiate with the global' (Adell 1999: 19). On all levels the farm workers and dwellers' egalitarian ideological and chronological relation to the landscape was at a disadvantage in an interface with the global realities of development and an expanding urban sense of place. The only plane of argument they possessed was the religious aspects and a hopeful economic plane in the form of incentivised clientelism within the local community and an anachronistic sense of sharing in

the spirit of *ubuntu* in a socioculturally changing locale whose modern face was urban entrepreneurialism.

This anthropological dissertation has been about relocating farm graves that were the cultural heritage of a marginalised sociopolitical and economic stratum from the peri-urban interface. The intention of the study was not an evaluation of the merits or demerits of arguments about graves but to bring to the fore the peri-urban farm dwellers' perspective. I have argued that the problems of relocating graves are in terms of sense of place, religious aspects and sociopolitical (and economic) power relations, and have drawn the conclusion that relocation can be problematic to all involved. The links between graves and sense of place may be intangible, nebulous, and ephemeral, but nevertheless, real, for the people who conceive them and also I trust for the readers of the study.

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