

**“A Narrative Self-study: How do I  
demonstrate my multi-cultural origins in my  
art of fashion?”**

**Thandiwe Elsie Madubela**

**Submitted in partial fulfillment for the  
MTech Fashion  
at the Durban University of Technology**

**Supervisor: Ms Lee Scott**

**Co-supervisor: Professor Joan Conolly**

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## **Declaration**

I, Thandiwe Elsie Madubela, declare that this research project for the Degree of Masters of Technology Fashion, has not been submitted previously for a degree at the Durban University of Technology, or any other Institution or University, and that it is my own work in execution, and all the material contained herein is acknowledged.

Signed Date

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Approved for final submission:

Supervisor: Ms Lee Scott

Signed Date

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Co-Supervisor: Associate-Professor Joan Conolly

Signed Date

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## **Dedication**

I dedicate this work to  
Almighty God for His Guidance in my life

My son, Themba J. T. Machabe,  
who has been encouraging me to further my studies  
while growing up alone without a mother

My late mother, Kelebone Lydia Madubela,  
the Most Dear Person in my life  
who passed away on 16 October 2011

My clan father, Siwatu Geelbooi Gubhula,  
who introduced me to my ancestral kraal in 2011  
and passed away in 2012.

You have done your duty.

Thank you.

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## **Abstract**

My study is a qualitative research self-study. The aim of the study is to demonstrate how my multi-cultural origins have created in me my unique South African-ness and how this uniqueness has manifested in my art of fashion design.

As a critically reflective practitioner-researcher trying to improve my professional practice, I have used multiple methodologies to answer the question in the title of my introspective study, "A Narrative Self-Study: How do I demonstrate my multi-cultural origins in my art of fashion?"

I have used critical reflection, action research, narrative enquiry, and auto-ethnography to account for how my discovery of my amaXhosa and amaMpondo roots has interacted with my Bosotho-ness, and my Born-again Christian awareness. I have thus transformed my understanding of myself, my values, my beliefs about myself and the world around me.

I collected the data in a number of different ways: I reflected on the lived experiences of my childhood; I observed and participated in cultural rituals, and reflected on these lived experiences; I used unstructured interviews to talk to many people who provided information which I recorded using a digital camera and took notes.

These experiences and reflections enabled me to develop a Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion design range of outfits. My Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion design range incorporates a number of elements which identify with all of my cultural origins. I believe that my Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion range demonstrates my South African-ness in my art of fashion design. It represents and expresses, symbolizes and celebrates the transition of my beliefs and understanding of my journey of self-discovery involving my five personas. I have used visual methodologies to analyse my designs and employed visual analysis to discuss my findings.

I believe that Africans are increasingly proudly wearing and accepting their traditional attire as high fashion. I believe that the design of my Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion range is suitable for the Southern African market, and demonstrates that I have effectively used my multi-cultural origins to improve my art of fashion.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

I think the TRC<sup>1</sup> was also about making the private public.

I think that only if we attempt this pouring out  
of personal feeling and thinking into the public domain,  
will the new public become possible.

We cannot tell what kind of public it will be,  
but we do need to release more and more personal detail  
into our public home to bring about a more real human environment:  
more real because it is more honest,  
more trusting, and more expressive.

Professor Njabulo Ndebele<sup>2</sup> ,  
Honorary Doctorate, Durban University of Technology, 2012

In my dissertation, I intend to make my “private” story “public” so that it can form part of the story of the “new public” of South Africa (Ndebele 2012). I hope that the “personal detail” of my story will contribute to a “more real human

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<sup>1</sup>The South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was set up by the Government of National Unity to help deal with what happened under apartheid. The conflict during this period resulted in violence and human rights abuses from all sides. No section of society escaped these abuses.  
<http://www.justice.gov.za/trc/>

<sup>2</sup>Retired Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cape Town, and currently the Chairman of the Rhodes-Mandela Foundation. Professor Ndebele has an MA in English Literature (Cambridge University, UK), PhD in American Literature and Creative Writing (University of Denver, USA)], holder of many distinguished positions and achievements, which include seven highly regarded books, and awards which include ten honorary doctorates from universities in the Netherlands, Japan, South Africa, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

environment: more real because it is more honest, more trusting, and more expressive” (Ndebele 2012).

### **What was the background and purpose of my narrative self-study?**

My study is a retrospective narrative self-study account of how my multi-cultural origins have interacted with my training as a fashion designer to make me who I am. I account for how my discovery of my amaXhosa, and amaMpondo roots have interacted with my Bosotho-ness, and my Born-Again Christian awareness, to transform my understanding of myself, my values, my beliefs about myself and the world around me.

Davis (1994:4) points out that

people communicate their personal and collective level in society through fashion and clothing localising them symbolically in some structured universe of status claims and life-style attachment.

Kaizer (1998) echoes Davis’ statement and note that the way one adorns and dresses, expresses one’s cultural background, the way one creates her/his identity, values, beliefs as well as one’s status in society. Svendsen (2006:15) describes fashion as something that “functions in a socially distinctive way, which systematically replaces the previous one quickly with something new”. So I believe fashion designers tell stories which are always changing, reflecting what is changing in the world.

### **What was the aim of my narrative self-study?**

The aim of my study is to demonstrate how and why my multi-cultural origins have created in me my unique South African-ness, and how this uniqueness manifests in my fashion design.

In this study, my intention was to produce a Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion range that I believe is suitable for the Southern African market. I have applied

my art of fashion in the country that I believe will appreciate the value of what I have produced. I believe my product connects with the inner being of people, and shows their African-ness. I am also aware that the political change which led to the 1994 democratic elections, also changed fashion, and South Africans' appreciation of their origins. Consequently, South Africans are increasingly proudly wearing and accepting their traditional attire as high fashion.

My Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion outfits are designed to accommodate current fashionable dressing, appropriate for use on cultural occasions.

### **What started my narrative self-study?**

When I started my research, I was confused and almost giving up and letting go of my study. However, deep down inside something always reminded me that I had a purpose and I had to fulfil it. I realized that if things happened the way they did, the problem must be within me or around me.

My self-assessment was provoked by being part of the 'Mentoring Practitioner-Researcher' (MPR) group. MPR are a group of Durban University of Technology (DUT) Practitioner-Researchers, who meet weekly to empower each other to improve their professional practice, whether it is educational, social, spiritual, economics and commerce, scientific, or whatever - as long as it is about their professional practice. My professional practice is fashion design.

A colleague, friend and MPR member, Sibongile Madi was assisting me with my writing. One day, she asked "Why don't you do a critical reflective self-study, Thandi?" That question marked the beginning of this study.

From then on, I shaped my research through discussions at MPR. MPR influenced me to look at furthering my study not looking at how fashion is improving, but looking at how I could improve myself and my practice in fashion design, and by influencing others and by contributing to their learning about

fashion. MPR assisted me to open up for discussion, which was one of my breakthroughs: I learned to interact with other people, to open up and discuss what my concerns were.

This process provoked my mind and I finally settled on “A narrative self-study: How do I demonstrate my multi-cultural origins in my art of fashion design?”

When I tried to channel the flow of my study I could not establish the connection of how my amaXhosa and amaMpondo cultural backgrounds influenced my art of fashion. But MPR asked me how I could know the connection when I had never experienced the way amaXhosa and amaMpondo actually lived.

In one session with Sibongile, I realized that the literature on multi-culturalism was not enough to tell me about my origins. It seemed like it was full of theory that was not very clear and comprehensive. This probing led me to realise that my study required me to travel to the Eastern Cape. I therefore decided that I had to go and find out about my origins from people who practice the cultures in order to understand my cultures.

When my co-supervisor gave me the go ahead, I went to the Eastern Cape without knowing what lay ahead of me, but I was determined to do it. I wanted to have my own “lived experience” (Whitehead 2009:173) which I hoped would reconcile the different multi-cultural aspects of my life. I do not regret that decision.

### **What were my research questions?**

My chief research question was “How do I demonstrate my multi-cultural origins in my art of fashion?” To address this question, I asked the following questions:

1. How did my multi-cultural origins confuse me?
2. How did I discover my missing cultural origins?

3. What did I learn about myself through the discovery of my missing cultural origins?
4. How has my upbringing influenced my fashion design practice?

Each of the four minor questions prompted a number of action research questions adapted from the Action Research Framework (Whitehead and McNiff 2006)<sup>3</sup>.

The responses to all these questions informed my response to my chief research question : “How do I demonstrate my multi-cultural origins in my art of fashion?”

My dissertation is structured around the action research framework questions.

### **What Methodology and Methods have I used?**

This is a qualitative study. I am the human at the centre of this study so I am both the subject and the object of the study. I have used critical reflection (Schon 1983), action research (Whitehead 1989; Whitehead and McNiff 2006; Whitehead 2008; Whitehead 2009), self-study (Palmer 1998; LaBoskey 2004; Hamilton, Smith, and Worthington 2008; Pinnegar and Hamilton 2009; Whitehead 2009), auto-ethnography (Ellis 2004; Hamilton, Smith, and Pinnegar 2009), and narrative enquiry (Creswell 2007; Hamilton, Smith, and Worthington 2008; Hamilton, Smith, and Pinnegar 2009), to write about my five personas, (see page 6), and how each of these personas has influenced my art of fashion design. I have adapted the questions in the Action Research Framework (Whitehead and McNiff 2006) to structure my enquiry logically. I have used my understanding of visual methodologies (Ponzetti 2003; Mitchell and Weber 2005; Lassonde, Galman and Kosnik 2009; Spencer 2011; Gaimster 2011) to analyse my fusion fashion design in terms of my five personas. For data

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<sup>3</sup> Appendix D: Action Research Framework (Whitehead and McNiff 2006)

presentation, I have used photographs of my fashion garments to tell the story of my Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion design journey. I have used visual methodology/methods as a way to express my evidence (Ponzetti 2003; Mitchell and Weber 2005; Lassonde, Galman and Kosnik 2009; Spencer 2011; Gaimster 2011) in my dissertation.

### **How did I collect the data?**

I used the action research questions which I adapted from the Action Research Framework (Whitehead and McNiff, 2006) throughout my study, in respect of my childhood, the cultural rituals I performed, and the Fusion Fashion designs which I created, and then mixed and matched. In each case, I reflected on my “lived experiences” (Whitehead 2009:173). I used unstructured interviews to talk to the many people who provided information. I used a digital camera to record the conversations, and took notes. I “mined the data” (Timm 2013:31) for evidence.

### **How did I select and find the people who provided much of the data which I collected?**

The participants were selected based on their suitability for the study. This selection method is called “snowballing” (Liamputtong 2010:69; Atkinson and Flint 2001; Browne 2005). (see Chapter 2)

### **What is included in my evidence?**

I have included a critical reflective account of my background and my origins, and the rites of passage I have been through while connecting with my cultural history. I also give a detailed account of my Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion design range, which represents and expresses, symbolizes and celebrates the transition of my beliefs and understanding of my Christianity and journey of self-discovery. I have incorporated the use of beads, braiding, jewelry and other elements from my cultural origins in my designs. I have used fabrics normally

used among the Basotho, amaXhosa and amaMondo, including seshweshwe fabrics (known as German prints among the amaXhosa and the amaMpondo), wool, and blankets. I have used my training as a fashion designer to mix these traditional forms of adornment and attire with my adopted culture - that of a Born-Again-Christian. After creating my Fusion Fashion designs, I analysed the designs, informed by the critical reflections of my lived experiences. In so doing I identified that I had five personas which had informed my designs. I talk about these connections in the following paragraph.

**What did I include in my Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion Exhibition at the Durban University of Technology Art Gallery from 3-26 April, 2014?**

Previously, my extremely conservative beliefs created in me a phobia about wearing jewelry. In this Fusion Fashion Mix-and-Match range, I have used beaded jewelry to express how I came to terms with part of who I am – an amaMpondo/amaXhosa woman. In this process I have realized that my limited knowledge about my cultures has been detrimental for me. So I have hand-printed padlocks and chains on fabric as a metaphor of how my limited knowledge of my amaXhosa and amaMpondo background/family history imprisoned me. Because of my obedience to my Christian beliefs, I did not research the truth about my origins for a long time and figuratively I locked myself in a little corner, thereby underestimating my gifts and my talents. I have also hand-printed the beaded loveletter safety pins on fabric to symbolize my appreciation of the beauty in my multi-cultural backgrounds and attire.

*My five cultural personas inform my Mix-and-match Fusion Fashion design.*

*My amaMpondo and amaXhosa Personas*

I speak of these two personas together because they are the product of my single journey of awareness which began with traumatising prophetic dreams



from childhood which were explained when I undertook a three week pilgrimage to the land of my parents' clans in 2011.

In my childhood dreams, I frequently saw a Khoisan man who told me when I was about to make a wrong decision and take a wrong path, but who never revealed his identity to me. I also often saw a lady dressed in a flowing veil-like white dress. When I was a teenager, the lady in white told me that she was MaSeroro Khaukhau, my great-grandmother on my mother's side.

When I was 48 years old, I decided that I had to find out all I could about my dreams. Because both my parents originated in the south eastern provinces of South Africa - the land of the amaXhosa and the amaMpondo - this became my spiritual destination.

In April, 2011, I visited the home villages and homesteads of my parents' families where I underwent ritual initiation and I was accepted into both families.

Both the Khoisan man and MaSeroto continue to visit me in my dreams with help and guide me.

### *My Mosotho Persona*

My Mosotho Persona is informed by my early childhood, which was characterised by an absent father from the age of three years, resulting in relocation to my Mosotho grandmother's home village in Lesotho, Qoaling ha Seoli, which I found to be a very strange and unfriendly environment. Consequently, I experienced difficulties with language and communication educationally and socially. From the age of four years, I also experienced frequent prophetic dreams which I found deeply upsetting. To make matters worse, my mother considered my dreams to be the work of demons, even though they were always accurate.

I attended pre-primary and primary schools at the Roman Catholic mission at Loretto nearby my village, Qoaling ha Seoli. For my secondary education I attended a Roman Catholic boarding school at Ts'oeneng, about two hours from home.

I left Lesotho to make my home in South Africa when I was 27 years old in 1989.

### *My Born-Again Christian Persona*

I was introduced to the Christian Religion when I was five years old. My first experience of Christianity was in the Roman Catholic Mission at Loretto close to my home village, Qoaling ha Seoli, in Lesotho, where I attended pre-primary and primary school, and where I attended church services on Sundays. At the same time, I also attended Assemblies of God Sunday School and Youth Club. Consequently, Sundays were very busy. My Sunday started at seven with Roman Catholic Youth Club, after which I went to Assemblies of God Sunday School from nine o'clock to eleven o'clock. At two o'clock in the afternoon, I went to Assemblies of God church service.

When I was about nine years old, I joined the Assemblies of God formally, and became a Born-Again Christian, which informed my spiritual awareness almost exclusively for the next 38 years.

### *My Fashion Designer Persona*

In Lesotho, among women, there is a highly developed culture of needlework. I was still a very small child when I watched my mother making dresses for me and blankets for our family. Before I attended pre-school, I was already proficient with a pair of scissors, and was able to cut fabric accurately. When I was four years old, I was sewing with a needle under the supervision of my mother.

At primary school, I was top of the class in needlework. I think that this was because this was part of my daily practice at home.

When I was a teenager, I was called Dorcas by my pastor because I sewed for the needy and destitute in the church community.

When I was 34 years old, I came to Durban and registered at M L Sultan Technikon for a National Diploma in Fashion. I completed the diploma in 1999, and completed my B Tech degree in 2009.

Between 1999 and 2002, I earned my living designing, making and altering garments for an adult clientele – both male and female. In 2003, I set up my fashion design business formally.

My Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion range entails aspects of my five personas such as: dreams, the appreciation of nature, traditional practices and beliefs, music, dance, the love of my country and understanding of the importance of admiring my culture and that of others. It has been my dream since I did my diploma, to see fashion through the ‘eye’ of understanding of my ‘African-ness’.

### **What have I included in the dissertation about my narrative self-study?**

In this dissertation I discuss the methodology I have employed in this study in Chapter 2.

In Chapter 3 of the dissertation I include some, but not all, of my “lived experience” (Whitehead 2009:273) of my early and confusing childhood.

In Chapter 4, I describe 86 individual fashion items, and show how they can be mixed and matched in 13 of the Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion outfits which were exhibited at the Durban University of Technology Art Gallery from 3-16 April, 2013.

In Chapter 5, I include what I have learnt about my art of fashion design from my Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion exhibition.

In Chapter 6, I give my concluding reflections about my narrative self-study.

**What have I excluded from the dissertation about my narrative self-study?**

I have excluded a great deal of detail about my childhood and schooling. I have not included interpretations of my ancestral and prophetic dreams. My travels to the Eastern Cape were loaded with various intriguing experiences, interesting people, and transport and accommodation challenges, whose details I have also excluded. Furthermore the rituals I underwent in the Eastern Cape were very detailed and informative, but I had to focus equally on the design factors of the study.

**How have I used literature in my dissertation about my narrative self-study?**

I have included the literature relevant to each chapter in the chapter concerned.

**How is my dissertation about my narrative self-study organised and structured, and what do I discuss in each of the chapters?**

Because the questions in the action research framework (Whitehead and McNiff 2006) are an important part of my study, I use questions to structure and direct my whole dissertation.

My dissertation about my narrative self-study is organised and structured as follows:

Chapter 1 introduces the dissertation.

Chapter 2 describes the methodologies and methods have I used in my dissertation and the justification for their use.

Chapter 3 narrates why and how have I addressed my concerns about my multi-cultural origins, using action research (Whitehead and McNiff 2006), narrative enquiry (Creswell 2007) and auto-ethnography (Ellis 2004; Hamilton, Smith, and Pinnegar 2009).

Chapter 4 describes how I have used my multi-cultural origins to inform my art of fashion design. I used the action research framework (Whitehead and McNiff 2006) to address my concerns, and then I used my multi-cultural origins to inform my Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion range. I express my “lived experience” (Whitehead 2009:273) of my confused childhood and my journey of awareness to the Eastern Cape by designing a range of mix-and-match fusion fashion ‘items’ that were influenced by my five personas: amaMpondo, amaXhosa, Basotho, Born-Again Christian and Fashion Designer. I found that there were three metaphors in my Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion range: Padlocks and Chains, Mirrors, and Beaded Loveletters.

I have also used visual methodologies (Ponzetti 2003; Mitchell and Weber 2005; Lassonde, Galman and Kosnik 2009; Spencer 2011; Gaimster 2011) to analyze my Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion designs. I have also employed visual analysis to discuss my findings, reflection about exhibition, using description and photography.

In Chapter 5, I analyse and reflect on the comments made by visitors to the exhibition of my Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion range at the Durban University of Technology Art Gallery from 3-16 April, 2014.

In Chapter 6 I reflect critically on my research journey: “What have I learnt about myself from this study? What have I learnt about fashion design from this study? What have I learnt about myself as a fashion designer from this study? What have I learnt about research from this study?”

## CHAPTER 2

### **What methodologies and methods have I used in my dissertation and why?**

And the day came  
when the risk it took to remain tight inside the bud  
was more painful  
than the risk it took to blossom.  
Anais Nin

For me to take this journey of awareness was a painful risk I had to take to let myself healed so that I could grow and blossom from my innermost being.

I chose to use qualitative research methodologies in my research because my study involves human feelings and life. These aspects are difficult to calculate or measure and explain using numbers, therefore qualitative research methodologies are appropriate. In addition, I have used qualitative research because it is versatile in nature. According to Creswell (2007:36)

qualitative research begins with assumptions, a worldview, the possible use of a theoretical lens, and the study of research problems inquiring into the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem.

### **Which qualitative research methodologies did I use, and how did I use them?**

In my study, I use a number of qualitative research methodologies some of which are “emerging qualitative approach[es] to enquiry” (Creswell 2007:37). These include critical reflection (Schon 1983), practitioner-research (McAteer 2013), narrative enquiry (Creswell 2007; Hamilton, Smith, and Worthington 2008; Hamilton, Smith, and Pinnegar 2009), self-study (Palmer 1998; Hamilton, Smith, and Worthington 2008; Whitehead 2009), action research (Whitehead and McNiff 2006), auto-ethnography (Ellis 2004; Hamilton, Smith, and Pinnegar

2009), and visual methodologies (Ponzetti 2003; Mitchell and Weber 2005; Lassonde, Galman and Kosnik 2009; Spencer 2011; Gaimster 2011).

Schon (1983) identifies that “knowing-in-action” (1983:50) and “reflection-on-action” (1998:50) contribute to critical reflection.

Knowing-in-action is this entire process of reflection-in-action which is central to the “art” by which practitioners sometimes deal well with situations of uncertainty, instability, uniqueness, and value conflict (Schön 1998:50) (...) Reflecting on knowing-in-action is the process that allows us to reshape what we are working on, while we are working on it. It is that on-going experiment that helps us find a viable solution ... Our actions are much more reasoned and purposeful. If something isn't working correctly then you “reflect” (a conscious activity) in the action-present. A critical aspect is the questioning of the assumptional nature of knowing-in-action (...) We reflect on action, thinking back on what we have done in order to discover how our knowing-in-action may have contributed to an unexpected outcome (Schön 1983:26).

I have use critical reflection by reflecting on my “lived experiences” (Whitehead 2009:273) throughout my study. I have reflected on my childhood. I have reflected on my “knowing-in-action” (Schon 1983:26) during my travels and experiences in search of my cultural origins, and then reflected on these actions since my return (Chapter 3). Part of my reflections in Chapter 3 focus on the values and norms of the amaXhosa and the amaMpondo. Then I reflect on my Born-Again Christian values, and then I reflect on my fashion career.

I reflectively ask myself what I can use from my “lived experience” (Whitehead 2009:273) among the amaXhosa and amaMpondo in my fusion fashion, and I identify a number of influences including for example that I chose cotton in my fusion fashion because of its low combustibility around open fires.

When I reflected on all these experiences, I identified that I have five personas and these personas must influence my Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion design

for a range of women: teenage women, young women, mature women, women who seek a young high fashion image, women who want to celebrate their amaXhosa and amaMpondo identity, and Born-Again Christian women. I present this range as evidence that I have responded to the question in the title of my study: “A narrative self-study: how do I demonstrate my multi-cultural origins in my art of fashion design?”

Then, when the range was exhibited at DUT Art Gallery from 3-16 April 2014, a comment book was provided for the visitors to give their comments. I reflect on the comments and find that the comments provide more evidence to validate my study: “A narrative self-study: how do I demonstrate my multi-cultural origins in my art of fashion design?”

In the process of telling my story, I used Narrative Enquiry. According to Creswell (2007:55), “narrative inquiry is an inquiry that captures the detailed stories or life experiences of a single life or the lives of a small number of individuals. Narrative inquiry (a look at a story of self),” echoed in Hamilton, Smith, and Worthington, 2008. Hamilton, Smith, and Pinnegar (2009:22) also record that “narrative study is the study of experience as story, and researches a way to think about and share experience”, and further state that “narrative inquirers are attuned to their feelings, and desires, which need an aesthetic reaction”.

I have used narrative inquiry because I am the human at the centre of this study so I am both the subject and the object of the study. My story of the “lived experience” (Whitehead 2009:173) of my confused and troubled childhood and my search for my amaXhosa and amaMpondo cultural origins is narrated in chapter 3 of this dissertation: “Why and how have I addressed my concerns about my cultural origins?”



Because Narrative enquiry considers “issues of temporality [it] acknowledges that people and events always have a past, present and future” (Hamilton, Smith, and Pinnegar 2009:22). In my study I was looking at how my origins (my past) and participating in my rituals have influenced my Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion range of garments (my present), and how my career is being shaped by my whole journey (my future).

My narrative included Auto-ethnography: Hamilton, Smith, and Pinnegar (2009:22) state that “auto-ethnography is a look at self within a larger context, and the look at self in action, usually within educational contexts”, but in my study, I focus on my art of fashion.

Auto-ethnographic enquiry is storytelling, usually is written in first-person voice. It can be in the form of short story, poetry, novel, photographic, scripts, personal essays, journal, fragmented and layered writing, and social science prose” (...) According to “auto-ethnography refers to writing about the personal and its relationship to culture. It is an auto-ethnographical genre of writing and research that displays multiple layers of consciousness”. (Ellis 2004:37) (...) They showcase concrete action, dialogue, emotion, embodiment, spirituality and self-consciousness. These features appear as relational and institutional stories affected by history and social structure, which themselves are dialectically revealed through actions, feelings, thoughts and language (Ellis 2004:38). (...) The process can be painful. But the pain is where the growth occurs. Sometimes the impetus for writing auto-ethnography is something other than pain. It comes from desire to remember and honour the past. We write to find the truth of our experience; some are painful whereas others are not (Ellis 2004:110).

I felt I needed to embrace the pain of my “lived experiences” (Whitehead 2009:273) of my childhood confusions, rather than fearing or running away from them. My aim was to face the truth and get healed. I used auto-ethnography because I was concerned about how my traditional origins have influenced how

things happen in my life, by responding to “Why and how have I addressed my concerns about my multi-cultural origins?” in Chapter 3.

My whole study is a self-study. According to Hamilton, Smith, and Worthington (2008) self-study is the “design methodology that comprises narrative a look at story of self”. Palmer (1998:39) tells us that “the fundamental principles of self-study are the perception that a person is a “persisting being,” one who has a history and whose identity is complex”.

I have used self-study to write about all my “lived experiences” (Whitehead, 2009:173), including finding my five personas – amaXhosa, amaMpondo, Basotho, born-again Christian, and Fashion Designer - which I discovered as a result of this study, and how each of these personas has influenced my art of fashion design in my Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion range of garments which I itemise, describe and analyse in Chapter 4 of this dissertation : “How have I used my multi-cultural origins to inform my art of fashion design?”

I have found Action Research very useful in my study because it uses questions in an “Action Research Framework” (Whitehead and McNiff 2006:89) to focus on what professionals want to improve in their professional practice in order to transform their lives and influence others.

Action research is an inquiry used by professionals to improve the quality of life for themselves and for other. It is a way of working that begins with an individual asking themselves, ‘How do I improve what I am doing in my professional practice? The intention is for an individual to evaluate one’s progress in order to influence the social community one lives with and works with (McNiff 2002).

I have used the action research because I needed to improve my own understanding about myself and my traditional origins, so that I could improve my practice in fashion, and contribute to society’s knowledge base, and influence fashion trends with my Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion range. I have

used the action research framework (Whitehead and McNiff 2006) for both of Chapters 3 and 4. In Chapter 3 I give an account of my childhood confusions, and how I discovered my traditional origins during my travels and rituals in the Eastern Province. In Chapter 4, I give an account of the design of my Mix-and-Match Fusion fashion range to demonstrate how I have improved my professional practice as a fashion designer.

I am also a practitioner-researcher.

Practitioner research is (...) [a] term (...) broad in scope, and covers a range of approaches which tend to be characterised by a desire to explore, explain or describe practice. Data collection tends to be more qualitative ...and the resultant report will often seek to identify key features of the practice, particular insight into practice or recommendation for future practice (McAteer 2013:12-13).

This type of research approach and technique is open to those who use it to research their professional development and improve their practice.

I have used practitioner research because I want to engage in both theory and practical fashion knowledge to improve and develop my fashion design practice. I use my practical work as the outcome data for analysis in my study.

I found visual methodologies particularly useful to analyse the visual evidence which I produced in the form of photographs to validate my study. Lassonde, Galman and Kosnik (2009) describe visual methodology as arts-based research methodology. Mitchell and Weber (2004 cited in Lassonde, Galman and Kosnik 2009:130) say

One of our main contentions is that certain theoretical stances and practical methods derived from cultural studies, visual studies, and the visual arts are particularly important to self-study (...) because they hold up another mirror to facilitate self-reflection, and force critical consideration of the social and cultural

dimensions of personal experience. And further, using the visual and the artistic can make self-study highly meaningful and pleasurable.

During my research design, I found that visual methodologies (Ponzetti 2003; Mitchell and Weber 2005; Lassonde, Galman and Kosnik 2009; Spencer 2011; Gaimster 2011) fitted well because my study was about learning by observing and participation. I needed to capture all the incidences of my journey of awareness. Through this journey of awareness, I discovered numerous things about myself, my multi-cultural origins and then I designed my final products for my Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion range to interpret the findings of my study. I have used visual methodologies (Ponzetti 2003; Mitchell and Weber 2005; Lassonde, Galman and Kosnik 2009; Spencer 2011; Gaimster 2011) to record the 83 individual fashion items, and to analyse my Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion range of garments in chapter 4 : “How have I used my cultural origins to inform my art of fashion design?”

### **How did I choose my research participants and why?**

I used “snowballing” (Liamputtong 2010:69; Atkinson and Flint 2001; Browne 2005) to choose my research participants. Snowballing refers to a ways in which a researcher may find people who have suitable information about the research topic. The identified participants should be suitable to provide reliable information for the research. “The researcher may commence with a group of people they know and then recruit more potential participants through contacts of the original group members” (Liamputtong 2010:69; Atkinson and Flint 2001; Browne 2005).

The term ‘snowballing’ is a metaphor for how the number of research participants grows. The researcher finds one person who will refer the researcher to the next participant(s) that are knowledgeable in the culture the

researcher is studying. I have used snowballing because the participants were relevant to assist with the right information about my origins.

My mother, Kelebone Lydia Madubela, was my first research participant. She gave me an understanding of where her and my father's relatives originated. Once I knew that my parents both originated in the Eastern Cape, I called Dr Mndende who was a guest speaker on TV2 SABC talking about traditional beliefs versus Christianity. She referred me to her principal healer and sister-in-law, Mrs Thandeka Sakele Mndende at Sakele near Umthatha in the Eastern Cape.

Mrs Mndende told me to find my father's relatives or his clan people in order for me to do my Imbeleko ritual. Through the assistance of the police at Sterkstroom station, I found my father's clan people - amaMpondo a Nyawoza. One of the amaMpondo a Nyawoza clan members, Mrs Gumbula offered me hospitality, and the experience of my rituals – imbeleko and intambo. Thereafter I went and found my mother's relatives in Mount Fletcher and spent a week with them. I later returned to Mrs Gumbula's house to do the intambo ritual.

### **Concluding thoughts ...**

I found this combination of research methodologies and methods very useful in my study.

## CHAPTER 3

### **Why and how have I addressed my concerns about my multi-cultural origins?**

“Harena ho tseba moo reeang teng  
Haeba re sa tsebe moo re tsoang teng.”

“Ngekhe sikwazi apho ziya khona  
xa singakwazi apho zivela khona.”

“Singekwazi lap ho siya khona  
ze sazi lap ho sive la khona.”

“We cannot know whither we go  
‘til we know whence we come.”

The quotes I record above in all the languages of my multi-cultural origins demonstrate the commonality of their meaning and the importance of history to show a way forward. My lived experience of my multi-cultural origins has helped me find the connection between my five personas, and to express my understanding of myself in ‘my art of fashion’.

### **What does the literature tell me about the impact of cultural origins on the development of people?**

Knowledge and experience of our cultural origins are significant in the development of the human (Goldberg 1994; Caws 1994). Research has shown that non-participation in one’s rites of passage can result in illness undiagnosed by medical doctors (Elliot 1994; Ingpen & Wilkinson 1994; Afonso & Taylor 2009; Joyce 2009). Afonso and Taylor (2009) record that in many cases, African students experience problems in their schooling and academic studies when

their connection to their cultural origins is challenged by their academic development, which was my personal experience well into adulthood.

Rites of passage are stages of development in a person's life, from birth, through adolescence to adulthood and to death expressed in rituals or ceremonies (Gennep 2004:2-3). Rites of passage are believed to be essential in building a strong sense of self-acceptance in society. Participation in our rites of passage connects us with our inner selves and our forebears. This process becomes complicated when our origins are rooted in a variety of cultures. As a child I was ignorant of my cultural origins, and only experienced my cultural rituals as a fully grown adult.

Caws (1994:378) believes that "who we are" culturally is about "where we're coming from". As such, "where we come from" is the background against which our taste, values, beliefs, desires, opinions and aspirations make sense. So if one does not know where one comes from, one cannot know who one is, and one will have difficulty understanding others.

Caws (1994:378) adds that culture has its roots "in the practice of careful attention to the gods [ancestors] who were cultivated to ward off their anger and invite their blessing" in the practice of rituals to mark rites of passage. The role of rites of passage is significant in most African societies because they record and communicate acceptable values to the individual, who will later affect society (Kasomo 2009:165-166) as they progress through life.

I was influenced also by what I read about searching for one's lineage (Hammond-Tooke 1984), evidence of descent studies (Hammond-Tooke 1985) and studies about ancestors and ancestor worship (Hammond-Tooke 2007). I found that once I had experienced my cultural rituals, I had a better understanding of myself.

I was encouraged by all of the above to use qualitative research which

seeks to gather information about a phenomenon involving human behaviour and the reasons for such a behaviour with an aim of understanding it better. To study the research problem, qualitative researchers use an emerging qualitative approach to inquiry, the collection of data in natural settings sensitive to the people and places under study, and data analysis that is inductive and establishes patterns or themes. The final written report or presentation includes the voices of participants, the reflexivity of the researcher, and a complex description and interpretation of the problem, and it extends the literature or signals a call for action (Creswell 2007:37).

In my study, I used a number of “emerging qualitative” methodologies (Creswell 2007:37).

### **What methodologies do I use in this chapter?**

In this chapter I frame my use of the action research framework (Whitehead and McNiff 2006:89).

“What is my concern?

Why am I concerned?

What experiences can I describe to show why I am concerned?

What can I do about it?

What will I do about it?

What kind of data will I gather to show the situation as it unfolds? (...)

How do I evaluate the evidence based account of my learning?”

(Whitehead and McNiff 2006:89).



Because I had a number of concerns, I adapted Whitehead and McNiff's (2006:89) questions as follows:

"What was my concern? Why was I concerned? What evidence do I have for my concern?

What was my major concern?

What was my sub-concern 1?

Why was I concerned about sub-concern 1?

What evidence do I have for sub-concern 1?

What was my sub-concern 2?

Why was I concerned about sub-concern 2?

What evidence do I have for this concern?

What was my sub-concern 3?

Why was I concerned about sub-concern 3?

What evidence do I have for sub-concern 3?

What was my sub-concern 4?

Why was I concerned about sub-concern 4?

What evidence do I have for sub-concern 4?

What did I do to address my concerns? What happened? What evidence do I have that my concerns about my cultural origins have been addressed?"

As part of my evidence for my action research questions, I used auto-ethnography (Ellis 2004; Hamilton, Smith, and Pinnegar 2009) together with

narrative enquiry (Creswell 2007; Hamilton, Smith, and Worthington 2008; Hamilton, Smith and Pinnegar 2009) to tell my story.

**What was my concern? Why was I concerned? What evidence do I have for my concern?**

**What was my major concern?**

I was concerned about my confusion regarding my cultural origins arising out of my childhood circumstances and the dreams I had when I was a child.

**What was my sub-concern 1?**

I was concerned about my childhood circumstances that confused me about my cultural origins. I found it difficult to socialize with people who insulted me and my family.

**Why was I concerned about sub-concern 1?**

I was concerned because my confusion made me very unhappy. I was lonely because the people in the village where I lived called my family, and all South Africans, derogatory names. My parents came from amaXhosa and amaMpondo communities, and spoke isiXhosa. The people in my grandmother's community where we lived were Basotho and spoke Sesotho, and discriminated against us because our language was different from theirs. Apart from the language difference, my parents and grandmother, with whom I stayed, had different spiritual beliefs which were often conflicting and difficult to comprehend for me as a child. My absent father and grandmother were strong traditionalists and my mother was a Born-Again Christian, which caused even more conflict.

### What evidence do I have for sub-concern 1?

My father - who abandoned my mother, my sister, Maseabata, my brother, Thami, my half-brother, Balekha, my half-sister, Kuki, and me when I was three years old - is

Mpondo wa Nyawuza,  
ndayeni,  
Uthahla,  
useqele,  
fako umusukulwana u mbhaka,  
uhlambangobende,  
umqhuqhuse,  
uziqelekazi.  
Undamase.  
Ukubuzalelwa u bokhozi ha kufane le kubupiwe .

When my father abandoned us, we were forced to move to Lesotho and stay with our Mosotho grandmother -

Mohlakoana oa Mmapholo ea lisema,  
Ngoana ea sa jeng polokoana ea maobane  
maila mangoatheloa,  
lula moo re o khaketse .

I was raised in Lesotho by my Xhosa mother, Kelebone Lydia Madubela -

Ngunkwali ubhokula kamlabatheki  
unongubo ntloko  
abanye bazibelethile  
ananye bazibelethile  
ushashazela

umashubel' esavela ibuzi  
 elagedl'umhlaga  
 kwavela ambabuzi  
 namabuzi buzwana,  
 yintaka engcodo zibomvu yikokoriya ko

We arrived at a strange place called Qoaling ha Seoli different from the place we came from. Sesotho spoken in the Free State is different to the one spoken in Lesotho. Our peer group laughed at us, because we sounded like toddlers when we tried to speak the Sesotho spoken in Lesotho. In addition, my mother is fluent in Xhosa and can chant her clan name. When we were young, she taught us it. In my family, I was the one who used to know how to chant the clan name best. So I spoke isiXhosa, and Sesotho as spoken in the Free State.

In that place, I felt very isolated. The people in that place called my family demeaning names to make us feel unwelcome and unwanted, such as, ngebelegebele, which might come from the sound of Xhosa dialect clicks; mafreistata, which means a foreigner who comes from the Free State in South Africa; makoerekoere, which was the general name given to black African people in Lesotho who were not Sesotho speakers.

My Mosotho grandmother insisted that we speak our Xhosa language at home, even though we were living in Lesotho. This confused me and my siblings to the extent that my older half-brother, Balekha, and half-sister, Kuki, threatened our grandma that if she persisted in using Xhosa language they would disappear and go to South Africa without her consent. This was the end of speaking our mother tongue, isiXhosa, and so we forgot it.

My mother told me that before attending pre-primary school, it was difficult for me to play or talk to my peers. She told me that I was close to her uncle, the lady chief of the village who was our neighbour, and another woman who was

my grandmother's best friend, Malebohang Jokobina Maphakisa. Mme Jokobina's husband worked in the mines in South Africa until his accident (see the story later in this chapter). She had three sons, and all of them were older than me: her last born was the same age as my older half-brother. There is something significant about Mme Jokobina and our friendship. This is why I have to explain her in detail. She was my first real best friend. After her, I have never had another friendship like that, until late in 1980s when I found Mme Malebohang Modise, my mom's distant relative. I called her my aunt.

When I was four and half, we were recruited to attend pre-primary school at the nearby Roman Catholic church pre-school which was taught by two nuns. It was the beginning of my breakthrough into some light or a little understanding of what was happening around me. I started to socialize with other children, although the language was still a setback for me. I am a soft-spoken person and reserved by nature. I think I took after my mother.

### **What was my sub-concern 2?**

I was concerned about the dreams I had of my ancestors and what they were telling me.

### **Why was I concerned about sub-concern 2?**

I was concerned because, at about the age of four, I started dreaming of my father's ancestors, who were people I had never seen before. My first dreams were of a Khoisan man and a white complexioned woman, who seemed to be protecting and guiding me by telling me things that my mother and grandmother could not.

I was concerned because my mother and grandmother disapproved of my dreams. My mother told me to tell the people in my dreams to stop visiting me. My grandmother called me 'Joseph the Dreamer'. I did not understand these responses until the reasons were revealed in my dreams.

**What evidence do I have for sub-concern 2?**

My first important dream happened when I was a little older than four years.

I dreamt I was walking on the bank of a big river, and saw a beautiful goat, with a white body and with a reddish colour between the eyes. It walked in front of me until it entered in the water. When I stayed on the bank and became reluctant, it spoke to me and said “We have been waiting for you”. When I stepped into the water there was no water, and the goat turned into the Khoisan man that I had dreamed of before.

The Khoisan man led me to a big round hut. Inside it was spotlessly clean, decorated as if it was a guest house, and there was a big woven green thing that was tall enough to reach near the roof. I thought it was sesiu - food storage container. I was told to sit on a grass mat, and the Khoisan man departed. After sitting down, I heard a voice coming from behind the door, “You are welcome. Now is the time”. To my surprise, the big green woven thing was a big snake, and when it spoke I realized its head was on top. But I was calm, like it was normal to talk to beasts. Immediately behind the green snake was a light brown snake, bigger than the green one. They were curled up in the form of the sesiu. The brown snake greeted me with a male voice and said, “Molo sthadwa sam.” – “I’m your great-grandfather. We are all here. We have been waiting so long for you.”

The green snake spoke in a lady’s voice directing me to take my gifts from the big clay pots placed near the wall. The clay pot had a trim of beads at the bottom and on top. In the clay pot, I found a lechoba - a skirt made of soft leather the colour of a reddish ochre, a reddish horsetail hair decorated with beads, some bead work and a small drum decorated with beads the same colour as on the clay pots. While I was taking those things out of the pot they said, “Someone will assist you to wear that before we start our lessons”. I heard

the sound of clapping hands. When I turned to see what was happening, the same Khoisan man came with four beautiful women, and the snakes disappeared. The women were carrying some small clay pots in their hands. They were singing but I could not make sense of the language they were using. The women were wearing grass skirts decorated with beads, and their breasts were covered with soft leather. On their ankles were white things making sounds when they danced. The Khoisan man put a handmade small leather bag down on the mat.

I was lead to another room, and in this room there was a big bath that looked like it was made with rocks. Around it was a fire already burning coal without any smoke, and it looked like the water was hot. The ladies walked around the bath, and then they knelt down and prayed. The man took off his necklace with the beaded ornament and poured out the substance in the water. It made flames of many colours. When it reached the water, the flame went off, and it smelt good like essence. He instructed the ladies to continue, and he left. The other one poured something from the clay pots. I was instructed to get in the bath, and they bathed me like a child. Then they smeared my whole body with something from the pots they carried. They took a few coals from the bath place and put some herbs on it. I was instructed to kneel. They covered me with a woven wool blanket and after that they dressed me with the gifts I took from the big clay pots. After having the bath, I felt like there was something new about myself. I was refreshed. It was like I saw things in a different way. I was led to the other room.

In the next room, there was some food, but it was served on leaves. Most of the foods were crops and fruits and the clay pots were filled with milk and water that was described as the water from the well. They were many people in the room. They looked warm and welcoming. It was my first time to see them, but they looked like my relatives. They introduced themselves. Some were my uncles,

aunts, cousins and one said he was my half-brother. I was stunned by the way he resembled my elder half-brother, Baleka. We had our meals and after that I was taken to a room full of elderly people.

Once I entered, I saw the white-complexioned woman that I used to dream about. She welcomed me and told me she was my grandmother, Nkhono Mmaseroto, and she introduced all people in the room. I was told to go and rest because there would be no rest for me after that day. Nkhono Mmaseroto took me to where I was going to sleep. There was no bed. There was a grass mat put on the layer of green crushed grass - later I was told it was the horse dung. I was told that it would protect me from evil spirits that would poison my mind, and so that I could hear all the elders' instruction during my rest. They called sleep a rest. Before Nkhono Mmaseroto went, she told me a story about my family and then she told me what my duties would be between the spiritual world and the living world. She talked till I fell asleep.

In my sleep I was taught lots of herbs, stones and what they cured and protected. When I woke up, it was like I was returning from a journey where I had met different people - Khoisan, Basotho, Xhosa, and other people from tribes and nations - I could not tell from which nation they came. The people who scared me were small tiny people I had never seen in my life. They taught me lots of useful cures and they were the cleverest of all I met. They used insects, soil and stones to cure ailments and for protection and could even communicate with animal, birds and insects.

When I woke up, I was taken by the Khoisan man and four women again. They bathed me and dressed me with the leather skirt that had an inner skirt made of beads in front, and the back was made of the strings made from tsikitlane - a wild plant, that bears yellow flowers, and leaves with two textures. The outer leaf is dark green at the back, but the front is white and has a white secretion, like milk. Basotho peel off the white layer and weave it into strings to make theethane



- the string to hold beads that they tie on the newborn with the belief that it shapes the waist. I was then led to the farewell feast. This time all the people were there, elders, and young people. After the feast, the Khoisan man gave me the small leather bag and was instructed to lead me home before it became late. Everything was done according to plan.

When we reached the same place where the water ended, the Khoisan man turned into the goat, and then disappeared when we got to the place where we had met. This dream lasted three weeks, according to the living world. It felt like three days. Before the dream ended, I was wearing diviner attire and beating a drum and I was singing the songs that I was taught there.

I have phobia about water because of these dreams. When I told my mother and grandmother about this dream, my traditionalist grandmother first entertained my stories about my dreams, but my born-again Christian mother was strongly discouraging. This caused my family and me much unhappiness. I felt that I lacked something in my life and I did not fit in.

After this first dream, there came many after. I dreamt many times of a lady wearing white clothes coming towards me. She came in a slow motion like she was not moving, until she stood next to me, not talking, making no signs. When I tried to talk I was mute. Then she moved the same way backwards, when she reached the same position when she showed, then she disappeared. The nights I dreamt these kinds of dreams I would wake up sick and not understanding what had happened. The dreams would keep reoccurring during the day when I was alone.

My grandmother, Nkono MaNgoako was very light in complexion. The woman in my dream looked like a white person but her hair was covered with white cloth like her dress. When I told my mother about her, my mother told me to tell her to leave me alone because I had nothing to do with the dead people.

Once when this white-complexioned lady came again in a dream, I found that I could speak and I asked who she was. With a soft voice she said, "I am the mother of MaNgoako Mositsi Khubelu. I am the mother of your grandmother."

I then asked: "Then what do you want from me because I am not your clan?"

She replied "Yes, I know, but I am sent by my elders to tell you that you are the chosen one in this generation. At first it was me, then your grandmother, but she ran away from the calling to be married to the outsider. Then in the next generation, your mother was chosen but she refused too. In this generation you are the one".

I asked "Why did you choose me out of five of us from my mother's womb? Why did they not choose my uncle's children? Or why did they not choose one of my sisters?"

In her answer, she pointed at the birthmark I have between my breasts and said "You were chosen from birth and marked with these."

When she said those words I saw a bright light between my breasts, right where the black birthmark is. While I was astonished by the light she disappeared.

The next time she showed up, I told her that I had chosen to be a Christian. Her face was upset, and she disappeared with tears running from one eye. She told me that I must be true to my belief because when the others came back they won't be as friendly as she was. The last time she visited me, she did not talk. She was sad and still had tears running from one eye. She stood near me, then shifted slowly away. Before she disappeared, she raised her right hand and waved goodbye and disappeared. After my final encounter with the messenger in my dream, she too was forced to surrender the dream of my joining the legacy of the Khoisan.

But even though my dreams stopped, there were other problems. These problems started when I was supposed to be promoted from Christian Soldiers – the youngest group in the church school, to be a Mary's Child which were an older group.

Everything was prepared for me to be a Mary's Child. I had passed the process. My mother was informed and accepted it. She needed me to be engaged in the Christian religion, so as long as I was happy with it, she gave her blessing.

We spent the weekend before the ceremony at the mission from Friday after school until Sunday. On Saturday I had a dream of the Khoisan man. He gave me a small leather handmade bag, saying "This is our gift". But when I tried to take it, he pulled his hands back. He did this twice, until I knelt down and clapped my hands. He attempted to give it but then showed me with a sign – "Not here". I thought it was only a bad dream without meaning.

During breakfast the next day, I helped set the table, and when I entered the dining room no one was there except the person behind coming with me, my class mate, a nun. When I entered, I saw the same Khoisan man holding the same bag and looking towards me. With shock, I lost my grip on the dishes and covered my eyes with both hands. The person with me was shocked at what was happening.

I was taken to the counselling room. They prayed for me, but things got out of hand. I was shaking. They say my face looked strange. The last thing I remember saying is "I am sorry I cannot go ahead with the Ceremony". The Holy Father was called to pray for me because they thought I was possessed by demons. But I had not told anyone what I saw or dreamed about, as I was already dedicated, and a group leader. The Mother Superior sent a call for one of my family to be notified. I was treated for shock and slept, invigilated by one of the oldest nuns who worked in the laundry and in the garden.

When I woke up, my older sister and younger brother were there to collect me. I felt at peace with my inner being. When I got home, my grandmother was amazed to see me well because she was told I was sick. She tried to question me about my dreams but knowing that she would mock me and make fun of me, I could not tell her. The only thing I said was “I do not think it is a good idea to be there”.

When I told my mother about my dreams, she said I must have nothing to do with dead people. She believed that my dreams were about demons. However, when I did tell my grandmother, she called me ‘Joseph the Dreamer’. These responses from people whom I trusted and relied upon for guidance as a child devastated me.

Furthermore, when I was going to join my grandmother’s church choir, the Khoisan man showed me that I did not belong there. This was a harsh statement coming from a grown-up directed at a child. I could not figure out where exactly I belonged or where I could be accepted.

### **What was my sub-concern 3?**

I was also concerned about the prophetic nature of my dreams, and possibly being driven by evil spirits.

### **Why was I concerned about sub-concern 3?**

I was concerned because knowing of the sad things that were going to happen, used to disturb my inner peace. I also wished that I had the ability to stop the events, or not to be the messenger of bad news. I also did not understand the difference between being prophetic and being driven by evil spirit, and there was no-one who could tell me this.

### **What evidence do I have for sub-concern 3?**

The prophetic dreams I had about misfortune and death in the community.

*First Dream: The prophetic dream about my best friend Paseka, a distant cousin*

Before Paseka's death, I dreamt of him fighting with an animal that was big and lived in the dam, but I could not explain it. I started warning him to play far from the water, but he did not listen.

The day he drowned, he came to me to do some homework, but when he heard that the older boys were going swimming, he left his books and promised to come back soon. Sometime after he left, I heard screaming. Everyone in our village was running towards the dam. I felt a strange feeling, like my heart was being ripped apart. I could not feel the earth under my feet. Instead of following the others, I hung on to Fido, our family dog.

Paseka's death was a great loss for me. I could not get over the shock for some weeks. Then Tikoe's mother encouraged Tikoe to study with me. At first, I was short tempered with Tikoe, thinking that he would also leave me, but as time passed, we became close. We had two things in common: we were not fighting types, and were both reserved, although I was two and half years older than him.

*Second Dream: Mme Jakobina's husband's accident in the mines in South Africa*

Before Mme Jakobina's husband was injured they told me of how I had dreamt about it and told my grandmother to be there for her because her husband was to be injured in the big hole full of dust. A few weeks after I told my grandmother about the dream, Mme Jakobina's husband got injured in the mines. My friendship with Mme Jakobina did not include the rest of her family, when she came for a visit at home. I had the understanding that she visited my grandmother, and I used to respect their privacy.

**What was my sub-concern 4?**

I was concerned about my grandmother rejecting my dreams.

**Why was I concerned about sub-concern 4?**

I was concerned because the culture of sharing dreams no longer existed in the family.

**What evidence do I have for my concern about sub-concern 4?**

I dreamt of having a big farm where all of my brothers and sisters worked, selling our products to big firms and to other farmers, and most of the community was employed too. This was the dream that made my grandmother become bitter about my dreaming. She became furious and called me 'Joseph the Dreamer,' and as a result I began to hide my dreams from my family. Mme Jokobina was the only one who was supportive and encouraged me to pursue that dream. She believed that I would be a leader in the family as well as in the community.

**What did I do to address my concerns? What happened? What evidence do I have that my concerns about my multi-cultural origins have been addressed?**

In this account, I am using auto-ethnography (Ellis 2004; Hamilton, Smith, and Pinnegar 2009), and narrative enquiry (Creswell 2007; Hamilton, Smith, and Worthington 2008; Hamilton, Smith, and Pinnegar 2009), methodologies to answer the following action research framework (Whitehead and McNiff 2006:89) questions: "What did I do to address my concerns? What happened? What evidence do I have that my concerns about my multi-cultural origins have been addressed?"

I cluster these questions because I found that separating the account of my actions, the happenings and the evidence created repetition and confusion.

After grappling with the question of my origin and identity from my childhood to my adulthood, I finally got the courage to seek information to understand the happenings in my life. There could not have been a better person to discuss this issue with other than my mother.

In December 2010, I started asking my mother about her childhood, and her marriage. My interest in her past alarmed her and she wondered why I was keen on it. This was especially so because previously there was a time she wanted to explain to me about her past but I told her that whatever happened does not make her a bad mum. However, I now was ready to hear her story and I assured her that I loved her and could not judge her based on her past. I even told her that it was not just for me but that it is equally, if not more important also for my son to know where he comes from and who he is.

By that time I had started reading about the Xhosa culture and its beliefs. I realized that one of the basic requirements for children was to know their parents' clan names - isiduko or seboko - and know how to chant praises in order to communicate with their inner beings, and to get in touch with their inner cultural and spiritual feelings. As I have already recorded, my mother taught me my isiXhosa clan praises, and my grandmother encouraged this, but the xenophobic animosity of the people at Qoaling ha Seoli stopped this practice, and this added to my confusion about my origins.

Myself, just like any other child, am a product of the union between two people, my father and my mother. Hence, in order for me to be fully in touch with my cultural and spiritual inner being and to know how it had influenced my life, I realized that I had to know both my parents' ethnic cultures.

Coincidentally, around the same period I engaged my mother concerning her past. On the fourth Sunday in December 2010, there was a programme about 'spiritual beliefs', at around 10.00 on SABC2. It was addressing the issue of

'traditional beliefs verses Christianity', and I watched it. The guest speaker was Dr Nokuzola Mndende, a Traditional Religious Leader, lecturer, healer, writer and the owner of Icamagu institution, in Eastern Cape. She pinpointed a few practices in Xhosa culture that have a great impact in the life of a Xhosa child when he/she grows up and the consequences of not doing them that can lead to bad omens in life.

She mentioned some of the major bad omens such as being disabled, bed-wetting, unable to socialize, low self-esteem and being falsely accused. She stated that other invisible experiences include having nightmares, developing a fear of the unknown and even contracting incurable sicknesses. I recognised that I had some of the latter.

This program made me realise that I should take notice of my cultural birthright. At that moment I realized that many things I had experienced in life could have been due to the fact my parents did not follow the cultural practices when I was born and growing up. This motivated me to read more about the Xhosa culture and to inquire from my mother about it. However, my mother did not know about the ethnic rituals, since she had not undergone them due to being a born-again Christian. I finally found the contacts of Dr Mndende since by then it was clear to me that the only people who could answer my questions fully were those who practiced and believed in Xhosa and Mpondo traditional beliefs.

I contacted Dr Mndende on 7 February 2011 and explained to her that my parents were Xhosa and Mpondo, that I was a Born-Again Christian, and was raised by my grandmother who is a Mosotho. I informed her that I do not speak Xhosa, and I had never done my Xhosa birth rituals. On 20 February, 2011, Dr Mndende gave me an assignment to find out my family tree from my father and mother and their clan names. I sent these to her as soon as I could. She replied after two weeks stating that if I was serious about exploring my birth rights, I must start by asking my ancestors, and forget about my Christianity. She said



that my ancestors would be with me and I would find what I was seeking. She said that to do this I must meet her in person in the Eastern Cape, so she could give me the analysis of my family tree.

In another call on Sunday, 17 April, 2011, Dr Mndende told me that my case was complicated and hence she would refer me to her sister-in-law who had initiated her, named Thandeka Sakele Mndende. On Monday, 18 April, 2011, I contacted Thandeka and explained to her my situation and pointed out that this self-study was toward my Masters' academic research. Luckily she understood what I wanted since she had been doing it with other students from different academic institutions. She too told me that I had to meet with her face-to-face, so I had to go to the Eastern Cape.

As I prepared for this journey to know and understand my birthright, fear gripped me. I began to ask what I was putting myself through. I prayed to God and my forefathers to lead and guide me. My mother was worried about how I would manage because she knew that I could not sleep in a stranger's home. Her fears were based on my previous experience with a prophetess who felt uncomfortable around me and even claimed to be disturbed by my presence. But I told my mother it was what I wanted to do and that it could help me to learn more about myself. I also informed my younger brother and he was supportive and encouraged me to go ahead. This made me feel strong and motivated.

My visit to Eastern Cape began at 06.00, 23 April, 2011. After a long and tiring bus journey from Durban to Umthatha Ultra City, and then a taxi ride, I finally arrived at Sakele, Thandeka's place after 17.00, 23 April 2011. Thandeka arranged to do the interview with me the following morning, 24 April 2011.

During the interview I explained to her that I was going to use a digital camera to record our conversation and if she felt uncomfortable to answer any question she was free to ask that it not be recorded or even not respond to that question.

She proceeded to ask where I originated from and how old I was. I found that we were born in the same year, 1963. Her question made me feel at ease, but I kept addressing her with the same respect I knew traditional healers deserve, namely Mama for a woman and Tata for a man. She was comfortable around me and kept eye-contact all through the interview until she excused herself, to smoke snuff tobacco. After that, she started to become a typical healer, breathing deeply and talking in an authoritative tone. I felt my hairs stand on end for a while. There was a strong energetic presence in the room. She explained Xhosa beliefs and their traditional rituals with strong emphasis like a politician or Pentecostal pastor. Thereafter she addressed me,

“Thandi, you have not done your imbeleko. You have to do it. This type of ritual must be done by your father’s family. Then they must make intambo for you. The pains you experience, the difficulties and rejection in your life are caused by not practicing your clan rituals. You have a strong ancestral background. They have been with you and protecting you from bad omens directed at you. But you have to take steps, find them and do those things. They will unblock you. You have been called by both your father’s and your mother’s clans.”

There was silence for some seconds, and then she asked me what else I wanted. After the interview, Thandeka allowed me to stay with them for two weeks to observe and learn how they live as amaXhosa.

During that time, I learned that according to amaXhosa culture when a baby is born, the mother and the child are put in seclusion until the umbilical cord falls off. Then the baby is introduced to the close female family members and the wider community, during which the ritual of Sifudu is performed. The ritual, Sifudu, is believed to strengthen the baby’s spirit and provide protection against future evil attacks. For Sifudu, the women surround the fireplace and burn Sifudu leaves which produce dark pungent smoke. The women sit on either side of the fire. The baby is held upside down and passed over the fire and through

the smoke between the women three times. Then the baby is given to her mother who will pass the baby under her left and then under the right knee. The baby is then washed and smeared with white ochre, *ingceke*, made of the ground powder of *mthomboti* wood.

The next ritual for a Xhosa baby is *inkaba* which entails the burying of the umbilical cord and the placenta at the place of the baby's birth. *Inkaba* is particularly significant to the clan because it ties the baby to the place of his or her birth, thus connecting the baby to mother nature and the land of the ancestors. *Inkaba* is the place where the person can go to dream and communicate with his or her ancestors in times of need.

The following ritual for a Xhosa baby is *imbeleko*, which is the ritual welcoming the child into the greater community. For this ritual, a goat is slaughtered. The hide of the goat is a sacred connection with the ancestors for the new member of the clan. The clan then gathers together to celebrate the new member of the clan with a feast.

In my case, there had been no chance of performing these rituals for me when I was a baby because I was not born at my father's homestead, and Thandeka told me that some of these rituals were necessary for me to move forward.

During the time that I was with Thandeka, I attended two rituals which Thandeka performed. I left Thandeka's place on 1 May, 2011 to go to my father's *amaMpondo* homestead where my rituals would be performed.

My father's *amaMpondo* family live at *Ilethuthu* (*Sterkstroom*). I had already found Mrs Gumbula - known as Gogo - who volunteered to help me because she was from the *amaMpondo* clan. Through the assistance of the police at *Ilethuthu* (*Sterkstroom*) on 2 May 2011, I arrived at Mrs Gumbula's place.

The following day on 3 May 2011, Mrs Gumbula invited other relatives for a family gathering to announce to them my situation, and to invite them to join together to do the rituals for me, as a member of the amaMpondo family. They told me the procedure that they would follow. I called Thandeka and she confirmed that what my amaMpondo family was describing was what was needed.

### *Brewing umqompothi*

My first task was to brew umqompothi for my ritual introduction to the ancestors, which I had to do myself.

We purchased the ingredients on 3 May, and early the next morning, on 4 May, we started to brew isidudu: I mixed two kilograms of maize meal, one kilogram umothombo mela and some used dried umothombo mela was put aside for the next brew. I mixed all ingredients with warm water and covered them until the following day.

On 5 May, Mrs Gumbula made an open fire for me to cook isidudu. I strained the water off isidudu and poured it into a big pot (made out of a drum), brought the water to boil and then poured the remains and stirred continuously to prevent forming lumps. This was done until the mixture had simmered for 15 minutes. When it was cooked, I served it into half full 20 litre buckets to cool it until it was lukewarm. Then I poured it into a big plastic container, added six kilograms umothombo mela and the dried used umothombo mela and mixed it well, using my hands, and covered it to warm the container, but not fully sealed in order to allow the release of carbon dioxide gas while brewing.

The previous night I had seen Mrs Gubula sew a maize meal sack in the shape of a beanie. Then I was told that it is used as ungohluza – a beer sieve. When she finished sewing, I washed it with Domesto bleach and rinsed it well. On 6 May, Phumza taught me how to sieve the beer. We poured enough into the

sieve to allow shaking and squeezing. After that I cleaned the main container and we used a flour sieve for the final fine taste and poured the beer in two 25 litre containers. I then poured the beer in the family five litre silver tin container. This container is used by only the amaMpondo clan. I was told to place the containers at the corner of the dining room. Gogo contributed R150 towards my ritual and sent someone to buy one packet XXX mint, one packet of Boxer tobacco, a box of matches and 750ml bottle of Viceroy brandy. All the stuff was put next to the umqompothi. I was touched by Gogo's gesture. She made me feel at home. I was very emotional about everything. The love they showed me was caring and trusting. I thought to myself, if this is how amaMpondo or amaXhosa treat each other, then it really is what God calls 'love'. Just as Jesus said in the Bible, "They will know you by the way you love each other".

*My ritual introduction to the ancestors on 6 May 2011*

The ceremony started at two in the afternoon. The amaMpondo elder chanted the clan name. He told the participants the aim of the gathering was to introduce me to amaMpondo clan, to request the ancestors to accept me in the homestead as their granddaughter. After his speech I was told to serve the beer to the elders using a special five litre silver container that is used by the family to do rituals. I had to drink it first and then give it to the elder of the family. Although I am a married woman, I was not supposed to cover my head, because in amaMpondo clan, I am a daughter, so I must leave my head bare. After serving umqompothi, I was instructed to serve the brandy: the first tot was mine and I poured some on the floor for ancestors. Then someone took over and served the others. I served tobacco, then I served matches and later the mints. Each one in the room gave a speech requesting the ancestors to welcome me, and open the way for my next ritual iqcamako or imbeleko. Then we danced ukuxhentsa.

Ukuxhentsa is performed inside house as follows: the audience sits round the wall, and performers give them time to clap and repeat a spiritual chant of only a few notes. One of the chants repeated for my ritual was “inkosi yaMampondo iyabaleka”. While chanting, the performers make a circle in the centre of the house, lift their feet alternatively in time to the clapping, coming lightly down on their toes, stamping their heels, and quivering every muscle up their bodies to their cheeks and arms. This dance is said to be a “soul dance” (Hunter 1936:325). The dancing is part of communication with the ancestors. By around 16.30 the ritual was done and everyone was gone. We were not supposed to clean the house until the following morning. I put back everything in the corner of the dining room.

Once I had been accepted by the ancestors, it was time for my imbeleko ritual to be performed.

*My imbeleko ritual was done on 7 May 2011*

The goat, white small beads and maize samp had been bought. In the morning I washed all the things used for my rituals, but did not wipe the five litre silver container dry, which was according to custom.

In the morning after a bath, I was instructed to apply red ochre to my face without looking in the mirror. Since my mother was not present, one of the granddaughters of Gogo who had already done her ritual was appointed to represent my mother. We were sitting on the grass mat. We were told not to leave the place till the ritual was over. We slept there for two days during which we were allowed to visit only the toilet.

The imbeleko ceremony started at two in the afternoon. The elders of the family came in first. At two o'clock the chief elder of the clan chanted the amaMpondo clan name,

uMpondo  
 uNyawusa  
 uNdayela  
 uThahla  
 uziQelekazi  
 fako  
 uMzukolwana uBhaka  
 uhlambangobende  
 umqhuqhuzi  
 uziqelekazi  
 uNdamase  
 ukuzalelwa ebukhosini akufni obupiweyo

They were standing by the open door holding the goat that is going to connect me with our ancestors, chanting “With this beast you are now the part of amaMpondo a Nyawuza, we plead with them to protect you and get rid of bad omens, to bring light and prosperity in your life”.

Then they went out to slaughter it. During slaughtering, before they tear it between the chest at the V point shape, the goat should give a cry as a sign that the ancestors had received the beast. If it did not cry the whole exercise stops. However, when it gave out that cry everyone shouted “Camuqu, siyabulela makhosi” – “We thank you ancestors”. Then the man slaughtered the beast.

Before they dissected the goat, they cut a piece of meat under the left foreleg (because I am a female) and braai'd it on the open fire, and while it was still not well cooked, they served it to me. I was required to be the first one to eat it, then my 'mother'. When they had finished dissecting it, and had cleaned the innards, it was placed near us – me and my 'mother' - by our pillow. They told the ancestor that “Here is meat for you to accept our granddaughter. It is for you to protect her in all walks of life and heal her”. Then they told me, “Here is our

beast to connect you with amaMpondo a Nyawuza's ancestor". I was informed to remember what I dream and must tell my dream to my 'mother' first thing in the morning. I did have a dream and it was clear. I saw a cloud rushing in one direction across the sky as if it was being chased. Then suddenly the sky was clear. And when I looked around, I found myself alone and no one was there. I told my 'mother'.

In the morning of 8 May 2011, Gogo cooked samp, and at around 10.00 everyone was gathering. The elder man of the family and others came in and informed the ancestors that we had come back to finish the feast and that we were taking the meat to cook and eat as amaMpondo a Nyawusa. The elder man dissected the goat's spine and cut off the sinew from the spinal cord. He scrubbed off all the flesh until it was a long white belt. He kept on rubbing it with maize meal to dry it. Then he split it into long strands of fibre.

They left one leg of the goat and cooked the rest of the meat in separate pots and on separate fires, and served on separate dishes for men and women. Before anyone could eat, it was served to me and my mother's representative. Even though I do not eat meat, because I am a vegetarian, I had to eat it because it was my ritual. After eating, the family ate outside. Phozi, Gogo's daughter, gave each of the males outside some beads. They came to me inside and gave them to me and said a few words as a prayer to the ancestor. The prayer stated thus, "Let the darkness be removed in your life and let there be light and may the amaMpondo guide and lead you". Or "God be with you and amaMpondo guide you the rest of our life, all sickness and misfortunes be replaced with light". Then they dropped the beads in the saucer I was holding.

*The uku tshisa amathombo ritual was done on 9 May 2011*

On 9 May 2011, the last day of my imbeleko, the family came. Gogo cooked the last leg in the morning. They called it the day of uku tshisa amathombo - burning



of bones. All the bones from the meat were collected and placed on the skin where the meat was kept. Gogo was busy twisting the fibres together to form a string necklace. She strung the beads without using a needle since that is the way to do it. It took her the whole morning to do that. In the afternoon our brother was informed to be the elder of the family. It was his duty to put the necklace Gogo had made around my neck. I knelt down and he came holding the necklace and praised the clan name and said, "Let darkness disappear and the light be revealed in your life". He put the necklace around my neck and shook my hands and said, "From today onwards, uMaNyawuza the granddaughter of amaMpondo, be healthy and work and have richness, look after our elders and amaMpondo will guard you". All the women in the room shouted in agreement, "Camagu MaNyawuza".

The minute they shouted, I felt like insects were crawling on my body for some seconds. I accepted saying "Deya bonka"<sup>4</sup>. Gogo was in the lounge of the other house. When I approached her she clapped her hands exclaiming "Use mohle motwana me! amaMpondo a vumele" – "You are so beautiful my child. amaMpondo has accepted you". She threw her arms open and I came forward and we embraced. I had the same feeling all over my body as when the women shouted. I thanked her for all the trouble she went through and the warmth she showed me. It was an emotional moment for both of us. She told me that since my mother is not of the amaMpondo's homestead I would have to leave the beast's horn there, because it is supposed to be hung where my ritual was held. She further said that I was welcome to do all my rituals at her homestead.

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<sup>4</sup> My Xhosa is poor. I found out afterwards that I should have said "Ndiya bulela", but I believe that my ancestors understood.

*I met my Mother's family - the Madubelas - on 14 May 2011*

I found the Madubela family at Entabayekhunjwa village. When I got into the village, I met Sephamantla Madubela, a young boy who is one of the Madubela children: He accompanied me to meet Gogo, who was preparing herself to go to a funeral. She volunteered to take me in and inform other relatives about my presence.

The fact that Gogo was a mature woman, made me to feel at home. Her granddaughter was friendly, and they spoke Sesotho. They told me that there were other Madubelas across the village and that if I thought of going further they could take me to someone.

I asked whether there was anyone older than Gogo. They said not. Gogo was the oldest in the family clan. I felt at home. There was a mixed feeling of healing power around which comforted me.

Later in the evening, Gogo gave me the feedback of her meeting with the family. They promised to come the following day. I phoned my mother and let Gogo talk to her. During their talk my mother seemed to know the family better than Gogo. But they ended up knowing similar people that my mother mentioned.

At the meeting, I asked for permission to record the information they had about MaNgwale's culture and their rituals. They were unsure that I was really one of the Madubela family. One family member asked for my ID and they each looked at it and said that the spelling of the name was acceptable. When I realized that they doubted me, I thought of phoning my mother, but Gogo told them that she had spoken to my mum and she knew certain family members like the one they had buried a few months ago from Pietermaritzburg, who was my mother's uncle, and a younger brother to my mother's father – BabaMgane, who was Gogo's brother-in-law.

Then one of the Madubela men asked for my mother's number. He called her and she told him my grandfather's ethnic name, together with his brothers' names, and how they follow each other. She chanted her clan name. Then he exclaimed and told the others that my mother was really one of them.

After that I asked them about their culture, and they allowed me to record it. I found that they actually told me little about their rituals and culture. I think that this was because they still doubted me. Then some of them contradicted each other. I felt the resentment of the history of those people who went to towns and never came back, and died away from home. I got the feeling that they wanted to make them pay by not talking about them, or admitting they were their relatives. I remembered that my grandmother used to be furious when she talked about her husband's relatives who had left home and not returned.

I stayed with the Madubela family until the morning of 18 May, and then I returned to Durban.

#### *My visit to Thaba-nchu in June, 2011*

During the June 2011 academic vacation, I went home to Thaba-nchu in the Free State. The main reason was to bury my aunt-in-law and then to return to Durban for my studies. I found my father's relative with the help of a police friend. I asked him to look for the Caka surname, so that I could trace my father's relatives in the Free State. I managed to meet my cousin Nocawe who enlightened me about my father's culture and genealogy. Nocawe's grandfather and my grandfather were siblings. She even made me understand why my mother was not free to talk about my grandmother, my father's mother. I realized that in life there are things that keep on repeating themselves in the family. While my parents' marriage was good, my grandmother was not supportive of their marriage. Besides that, my father and my mother both were called to be traditional healers – as told to me by Nkhono Mmaseroto, my maternal

Grandmother in my ancestral dreams. Neither of them followed the calling, and this denial caused them to separate.

My father's family is typical traditional amaMpondo. Most of them are magqirha – diviners and healers, and herbalists. In my father's family no one is still alive, because they denied their gifts. They all had difficulties in life including abusing alcohol and even trying to change their names to their mother's with the hope of running away from being healers and herbalists. I heard again and again that we are not aware of our strengths that are visible to others. Such powers can intimidate spouses and upset marriages, no matter how soft and humble we can be.

When I entered my cousin's yard, I felt a strong healing power that alarmed my body. During the conversation my cousin's was friendly and opened up to answer my questions. Then I gave her a chance to tell me what she saw in me - I gave her a moment to foretell. She did what Mrs Mndende did: she excused herself and sniffed her snuff while looking at me intensely, and then she started telling me things what my siblings were doing. Then I told her that I needed her to look into my life not those of people around me. She told me it is not simple to prophesy for me, because my ancestors are too protective and jealous to expose anything in my life. I was alarmed by the answer. I have experienced the same treatment from several prophets and healers. I ended up being confused whether I was possessed by evil power or I was not being visible.

When it was explained by my cousin, I noticed how I had been naïve and lacked knowledge of who I am and how strong and capable I am. Deep down in me I felt relieved and had a sense of forgiveness for the hurts I experienced from my childhood. I realized that whoever hurt me she or he sees in me what I was not aware that I had. It was when I was with my cousin who shared the same ancestors that I learnt to forgive my past experiences and focus on what I have. My vision and dreams are the only hope for my future. Whatever came to me, I

prayed and submitted it all to God and believe that He will lead my way. Even about my calling, I do not have to follow what my forebears did before me. I might underestimate what is real, what God needs me to be. I think and understand I am on the right path to understand where I came from, and who I am, where I am to go, and God will lead the way.

Arnold (cited in Storey 2009:6) describes culture as being “a pursuit of our total perfection by means of getting to know all the matters which most concerns us (one’s group of society)”. Ingpen and Wilkins (1994:6) stress on this point by saying culture may be described as our

social heritage (...) The totality of habits and skills that people learned from each other, to a great extent within the family setting, in other words it is our entire way of life in a society in order to appreciate fully how we interact with other people.

I went to Ilithuthu at my new family to do intambo in September 2011. The process was mostly similar to imbeleko except that imbeleko involves a temporary necklace which can become worn-out or get lost.

Another difference was that I slept alone near the slaughtered goat so that the ancestors could communicate with me. In the morning the elder of the family took out the white part (animal sinew) in the middle of a spinal cord, dried it and wove it with the cow’s tail fibre to make a necklace and decorated it with white small seeds beads, as had been done for the imbeleko. This permanent intambo necklace was put around my neck in the same way as for imbeleko. The intambo necklace is the one I was wearing on 3 April 2014 during Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion exhibition opening.

### **Concluding thoughts ...**

After I went through imbeleko, I realized that my dreams are clearer and direct that I can notice their meaning and the messages they relayed. After the

intambo ritual, I felt more close to my inner being and had a better understanding of who I am. These experiences in my life have taught me to embrace all my past and learnt that I cannot know who I am if I do not know where I come from, let alone understand others and the world around me. Clearly, the fear of the unknown, confusion and isolation was overshadowing my talents. My participation in my rituals has restored my inner being. I have no confusion and fear anymore, and am able to express my thoughts and feelings in the form of my art of Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion, which I address in the following chapter.

## Chapter 4

### **How have I used my multi-cultural origins to inform my art of fashion design?**

My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge:  
because you have rejected knowledge.

Hosea 4:6

I realised that my lack of knowledge and rejection of my multi-cultural background had been destroying me because I had been conforming to the teaching that my multi-cultural background is barbaric. I also realized that my lack of knowledge about the teachings of Jesus had been adding to my destruction. I needed to be reminded that Jesus says, “Come just as you are” (John 3:37) so that I could accommodate both my multi-cultural origins and my Christian beliefs.

In chapter 3, I gave an account of my multi-cultural origins.

In this chapter I account for my understanding of ‘my art of fashion’, what I understand about fusion fashion from the literature, and the methodologies I have used in this study. I then ask questions adapted from the action research framework (Whitehead and McNiff 2006:89).

“What is my concern?

Why am I concerned?

What experiences can I describe to show why I am concerned?

What can I do about it?

What will I do about it?

What kind of data will I gather to show the situation as it unfolds? (...)

How do I evaluate the evidence based account of my learning?”

(Whitehead and McNiff 2006:89).

My adapted questions are:

What was my concern?

Why was I concerned?

What evidence do I have for my concern?

What did I do? Why did I do it? What happened?

What are the individual 83 individual fashion items which I designed and/or constructed for my Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion range?

How do I mix and match the 83 individual fashion items to create fusion fashion outfits for a range of women?

How is/has my “lived experience” (Whitehead 2009:273) of my ancestral dreams influencing/ed my mix-and-match fusion fashion range?

How is/has my “lived experience” (Whitehead 2009:273) of rituals during my Eastern Cape travels influencing/ed my mix-and-match fusion fashion range?

What metaphors are there in my fashion design?

### **What do I mean by ‘my art of my Fashion’?**

Buxbaum (1999:152-3) perceives that twentieth century fashion borrows from art and vice versa: “at the end of the century, fashion has become what art wanted to be, the spirit of the age is manifested in fashion”. In my case, my fashion borrows from my many cultures which fuse with my five personas to make art. In another way, ‘my art of my fashion’ is how I create individual fashion items which can be mixed and matched to create a series of fashion items at minimal cost. In another way, ‘my art of my fashion’ is about the social influence of my designs in that people can see that the traditional and cultural can be fused and mixed and matched in ways that are unexpected and surprising. In yet another way, ‘my art of my fashion’ is about the metaphors I have created to express my learning and growth as a person.



### **What does the literature tell me about Fusion Fashion?**

Fusion Fashion is the mixture, borrowing, or merging of ethnic costume or the costume of previous decades and centuries with contemporary global style to create a new style. Fusion Fashion includes the process of taking ideas from one or more ethnic styles and combining them with the western fashion styles to form a new look, and new globally accepted fashion items. Someone may mix the ethnic music, mythology, lifestyle, artwork, costume and western styles to great new and accepted Fusion Fashion. Fusion Fashion targets those markets which might include those who find difficulty in identifying with foreign trends.

Steele (2005:103) called the process retro style. The fashion meaning of retro, first applied to clothes in the 1970s, refers to styles that are either copied or adopted from earlier periods. Steele further states that at the beginning of twenty-first century, a new fashion mix appeared, one based on borrowing from other times, therefore retro, but one tweaked with “newness”.

Skov (2010:170) describe fusion as retro and vintage. He defines retro as originating from the Latin word meaning “back” or “backward”. He mentioned that the word was used in Europe in the 1990s to refer to the clothes from the period after the World War II. The term “retro” was used to describe design appearing in phenomena ranging from movies to car design and the food industry.

Skov (2010:170) says

Retro stylists refer to historical fashion images for inspiration and models for combining secondhand clothes in a historical correct manner, with matching accessories, makeup, and hairstyle ... it became increasingly used for new garments copying old styles.

Skov (2010:170) refers to vintage as bringing back the high qualities of the fashion of previous decades into contemporary fashion. Specifically vintage

fashion refers to designs copied from previous decades, which are found only in boutiques or vintage fashion stores. Vintage fashion is produced in the limited numbers for those individuals who want to get in touch with the quality designs from the past.

According to Steele (2005:314) the fusion of the ethnic costume with modern style was adopted in Korea where the use of traditional dress called *banbok*, which means “dress of our race” was combined with to western dress called *yongbok*. This combination or fusion is distinct from purely traditional or purely western dress.

Ombo, Sneppen and Wiirtz (2008:50) identified that “thinking globally acts local” referring to the process of globalisation impacting on local trends towards fusion. Craik (2009:312) agrees with Ombo, Sneppen and Wiirts, providing the example of the Chinese using fushi (local costume) and mixed it with shizhuang (modern style) to create designs which made it one of the leading countries in fashion products. India followed bringing back the ethnic to create new fashionable flowing material (Boobbyer, 2008:88, Welters and Lillithun, 2011:555). Craik’s (1994:36-43) views agree with the above authors, by showing that many designs borrow ideas from the past and blend with western styles to earn prominent successes in the world of fashion.

According to Mei (2010:161) and Steele, (2010:168-178) the fusing of ethnic costume, jewellery, and cosmetics with western dress, jewellery and cosmetics was seen at the beginning of twenty-first century. The international fashion world began to favour an oriental style, which meant that oriental elegance, simplicity and mystery became global elements of fashion. Mei further indicates that the Chinese were proud to wear Chinese costumes such as Chinese jackets which were considered fashionable.

In Asian dress, Niessen, Marie, Leshkowich and Jones (2003:2) claim to recognize changes in the 1990s, where they saw the Asian fashion becoming a global trend. Asian designers combine their traditional outfits with modern styles to form garments which were adopted by elite Americans. For example, Princess Diana was seen wearing salwaar-kameez in Pakistan in May 1997, and musicians such as Janet Jackson and Madonna produced videos inspired by Asian images. Sarong skirts and kimono jackets have become part of the working dress of American fashion designers.

Skov (2010:330-1) points out that “fusion fashion” contributes to nation building and sustaining the local economy of the country, because introducing ethnic costume details into fashion encourages people to appreciate their national origins and identity. Skov reports that combining Danish national dress with fashionable clothing developed an interest among Danes in Danish culture and society, which raised their awareness of their national origins and history. In addition, the encouragement of Danish dress style was intended to limit the imports of luxury goods, and thus strengthen the Danish economy. This was seen as significant to the development of modern life and a modern nation state

Loschek (2009:107-109) summarizes the whole process of copying and merging the details of the fusion fashion as “context crossing”. The author defines crossing context as the sense of fusion adaptation, revaluation, anachronism and paradoxes with, and as, tried and trusted strategies. It is the technique promoting, for example, the changes Coco Chanel made by transferring the regional identity of the alpine “farmer’s jacket” to the international haute couture of a Chanel jacket. And Gianni Versace combined a denim jacket with a silk crinoline-like skirt with Renaissance-style pattern in the 1992 Spring/Summer collection (Roche and Birrell, 1997:255).

In summary, I see Fusion in a wide range of Fashions as another expression of globalisation which includes, increasingly, the inclusion of all cultural identities and expressions.

### **What methodologies do I use in this chapter?**

I use the action research framework<sup>5</sup> (Whitehead and McNiff 2006) to address my concerns, and visual methodologies (Lassonde, Galman and Kosnik 2009; Mitchell and Weber 2004; Ponzetti 2003) to describe and analyse my Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion range.

### **What was my concern?**

I was concerned that the South African fashion industry is not producing garments that incorporate norms and values of all my cultural origins, which are Basotho, amaXhosa, amaMpondo, and born-again Born-Again Christian.

### **Why was I concerned?**

Southern African women living in rural areas and townships frequently use open fires for cooking during their traditional events, such as weddings, funerals, and initiations, so they prefer cotton because of its low combustibility. These women also prefer to wear garments made of seshweshwe and decorated with tucks, tapes, shirt buttons and beads. They also prefer outfits that are semi-fitting to allow them to move easily when they sing and dance. These semi-fitted garments are also elasticated at the waist and use drawstrings for fastening so that they can be worn when pregnant and when they gain and lose weight. I believe that there is a need for these factors to be included more frequently in design for rural women in South Africa.

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<sup>5</sup> See Appendix D

### **What evidence do I have for my concern?**

During my journey of awareness, I observed that many of my clanswomen living in rural communities prefer to wear clothes that are accepted in their own environment to insure that they live up to their community values and norms. Their community values and norms are not catered for in current commercial fashion designs.

While I was staying in Sakele with Thandeka to learn about and experience the Xhosa culture, I observed that in every ritual they did, the amaXhosa at Sakele were dressing according to the event and the work they were doing. They wore full length skirts of seshweshwe and wraparound skirts of mpaqwa decorated with numerous stitched bias binding tapes, cloaks and elaborate beadwork. The amaMpondo people whom I visited wear similar outfits. The amaXhosa and amaMpondo differ only in their headgear, and young women do different hair styles. None of these styles are accommodated in current commercial fashion design.

When I was growing up among Basotho, I realized that Basotho wear seshweshwe dresses of mid-calf length, decorated with tucks and most of their outfits are made of plain cotton fabric and decorated with shirt buttons and lots of tapes: bias binding, zigzag tape, narrow tapes.

### **What did I do? Why did I do it? What happened?**

I designed 83 individual fashion items which demonstrate the influence of my cultural origins. I constructed all 83 fashion items myself except for the beaded collar (figure 44), beaded loveletters (figure 73) and the fringed skirt (figure 18) which I had made for me by Philele Shabane.

I then mixed and matched these 83 individual fashion items to inform my Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion range.

### **Why have I designed a Mix-and-Match range?**

I have designed a mix-and-match range so women can create different outfits from very few items, which is economical.

### **What are the individual 83 individual fashion items which I designed and/or constructed for my Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion range?**

In this section, I list and describe the 83 individual fashion items in my Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion range. Each individual item is numbered and named together with a photograph of each item. I will use the numbers, figures (viz. photographs), names, and descriptions of these 83 items to identify the ways in which the mix-and-match process worked in 15 exhibited outfits at the Durban University of Technology Art Gallery from 3-16 April, 2014, e.g. "Skirt 1 (figure 1): Full length skirt in brown leopard print seshweshwe with a half elasticated waist, and a semi-fitted fish tail. It is decorated with three lines of white bias binding at the hip line, one narrow white tape in front from side seam to side seam, two lines forming triangle in the centre front decorated with three shirt buttons, five lines white narrow tapes stitched vertically to knee length. Two lines of white bias binding stitched in the curve way, two lines narrow white tapes, and two lines medium zigzag".

**SKIRTS (20)**

Figure 1 : Skirt 1

Skirt 1 (figure 1) : Full length skirt in brown leopard print seshweshwe, with a half elasticated waist, and a semi-fitted fishtail. It is decorated with three lines of white bias binding at the hip line, one narrow white tape in front from side seam to side seam, two lines forming a triangle in the centre front decorated with three shirt buttons, five lines white narrow tapes stitched vertically to knee length. Two lines of white bias binding stitched in a curve, two lines narrow white tapes, and two lines medium zigzag.



Figure 2 : Skirt 2

Skirt: 2 (figure 2) : Eight-panel semi-fitting A-line skirt in brown, gold and white seshweshwe fabric with big pockets and a lined hem, decorated with tucks and a stitched padlock at the centre of the tucks.



Figure 3 : Skirt 3

Skirt 3 (figure 3) : Mid-calf A-line apron in padlocks and chains print fabric with a pleated hemline and decorated with yellow piping.





Figure 4 : Skirt 4

Skirt 4 (figure 4) : Apron overskirt in masapo blue and white seshweshwe print, slit from hipline on both sides, shaped and enhanced with contrasting honey cube seshweshwe, trimmed with yellow piping and bias binding and seams decorated with tapes.



Figure 5 : Skirt 5

Skirt 5 (figure 5) : Eight-panel full-length fishtail skirt in yellow and blue honey cube seshweshwe print with a half elasticated waistline, with white piping between the front and back panel ending with shirt buttons and beaded fringes. It has a front opening and is fastened with press-studs.



Figure 6 : Skirt 6

Skirt 6 (figure 6): Apron in Hitler seshweshwe print fabric, with big pockets, and lined hem, and decorated with tucks.



Figure 7 : Skirt 7

Skirt 7 (figure 7) : Straight cut mid-calf skirt in Hitler seshweshwe print fabric, decorated with tucks with draw-string waist band.



Figure 8 : Skirt 8

Skirt 8 (figure 8) : Overskirt in cotton fabric printed with padlocks and chains, with symmetric hemline decorated with piping, and fastening on the left side with buttons.



Figure 9 : Skirt 9

Skirt 9 (figure 9) : Circular wrap-round skirt in white umbhaco fabric printed with beaded love letters, decorated with medium cotton tape at the hemline.



Figure 10 : Skirt 10

Skirt 10 (figure 10) : Plain cream white mid-calf length cotton wrap-around skirt decorated with tucks, with a front overlap made of padlock and chains printed fabric decorated with piping on hemline. It is tied with soft belts.



Figure 11 : Skirt 11

Skirt 11 (figure 11) : Knee length overskirt in white umbhaco fabric, symmetrical in front, with black piping around the hem, decorated and fastened with beaded loveletter safety-pins.



Figure 12 : Skirt 12

Skirt 12 (figure 12) : Full length skirt in white umbhaco fabric, cut straight from waist to above the knees, then flared and decorated with medium black tapes, and lined with plain white cotton.



Figure 13 : Skirt 13

Skirt 13 (figure 13) : Skirt in white umbhaco fabric, cut straight from waist to above the knee, with a full length flare to ankle length at the back, cropped in front and decorated with medium black cotton tapes.



Figure 14 : Skirt 14

Skirt 14 (figure 14) : A lined double-layered amber leather skirt, micro-mini length in front with a straight hemline, and thigh length at the back, fastened with press-studs.





Figure 15 : Skirt 15

Skirt 15 (figure 15) : A lined double-layered soft suede rust amber leather skirt, micro-mini length in front with a straight hemline, and thigh length at the back, fastened with press-studs.



Figure 16 : Skirt 16

Skirt 16 (figure 16) : A soft leather white lined skirt with shaped yokes - two yokes in front, and one at the back. It is front opening to expose the thigh area,

and is mid-calf length at the back. It is fastened with eye-lets and spaghetti leather string. The spaghetti leather string is inserted in the seam of the yoke, and the yoke seam is reinforced with top stitching to strengthen the seam to sustain the shape, and hold padlocks. A locked padlock hangs on each loop. Each yoke is decorated with circular mirrors, framed and fringed with multi-coloured beads.



Figure 17 : Skirt 17

Skirt 17 (figure 17) : An apron skirt fringed with small colourless, ivory and gold beads with razor decoration at the waist front.





Figure 18 : Skirt 18

Skirt 18 (figure 18): Theethane – a beaded fringed skirt decorated with razor blades in pink, white, turquoise, blue, yellow, orange, and purple.



Figure 19 : Skirt 19

Skirt 19 (figure 19) : Crocheted miniskirt using Solomon stitch or lover stitch. It is lined with cotton knit fabric, and fastened with a button at the waist line.



Figure 20 : Skirt 20

Skirt 20 (figure 20) : Overskirt made of white umbhaco, cut symmetrically and overlapping in front, decorated with black narrow tapes, zigzag tapes and shirt button sewn on with small beads covering the button holes.

#### **PANTS (4)**



Figure 21 : Pants 1

Pants 1 (figure 21) : Straight cut pants in masapo blue and white seshweshwe prints, with side seam pockets, a half elasticated waist elastic, and a front open using buttons.



Figure 22 : Pants 2

Pants 2 (figure 22) : Wide-leg pants of cream white umbhaco fabric, with large seshweshwe tucked pockets and decorated with tapes above hemline, and drawstring for tying if desired. It has an elasticated waistband if desired.



Figure 23 : Pants 3

Pants 3 (figure 23) : Cream white catsuit with shoulder straps, decorated with broad narrow tapes and zigzag tapes.

**TOPS (9)**

Figure 24 : Top 1

Top 1 (figure 24) : Long-sleeved semi-fitted top in brown leopard print seshweshwe, with a shaped hemline, with a front opening, and round neckline. It is fastened with brown press studs, and decorated with four lines white bias binding, two white lines medium zigzag, decorated with a shirt button with a bead fringe, and six lines of white narrow tapes.



Figure 25 : Top 2

Top 2 (figure 25) : Long-sleeved semi-fitting top in yellow white brown seshweshwe fabric, decorated with tucks above the hip and stitched on padlocks with a high extended collar. The left side of the waistline is decorated with beads.



Figure 26 : Top 3

Top 3 (figure 26) : One shoulder cropped reversible seshweshwe top with decoration of piping in all seams: one side made with Hitler seshweshwe print and the other with masapo blue and white seshweshwe print.



Figure 27 : Top 4

Top 4 (figure 27) : Halter-neck top in brown leopard print seshweshwe, gauging with pleats, and fastened with golden neck wire.



Figure 28 : Top 5

Top 5 (figure 28) : Sleeveless top in yellow and blue honey cube seshweshwe print with yellow and white bias binding at the hemline. It has a shaped hemline



short in front and long at the back to the middle of the buttocks. It has a front opening and fastens with press-studs.



Figure 29 : Top 6

Top 6 (figure 29) : Full length in front bib-bustier top held together with spiral beaded wire in front, lined with cotton.



Figure 30 : Top 7

Top 7 (figure 30) : Bustier top or apron/bib, decorated with broad and narrow tapes



Figure 31 : Top 8

Top 8 (figure 31) : Crocheted short-sleeved top using Solomon stitch or lover stitch.





Figure 32 : Top 9

Top 9 (figure 32) : White crocheted fringed brassiere with beaded straps and cups.

### CLOAKS (3)

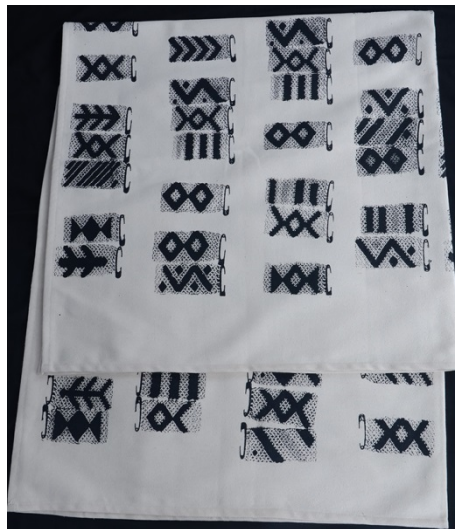


Figure 33 : Cloak 1

Cloak 1 (figure 33) : Cloak in cream white umbhaco fabric printed with beaded loveletter safety pins.



Figure 34 : Cloak 2

Cloak 2 (figure 34) : Blanket cloth cloak finished on the edges with Hitler seshweshwe print fabric.



Figure 35 : Cloak 3

Cloak 3 (figure 35) : Cloak in white umbhaco fabric printed with beaded love letter safety pins.

**CAPES (5)**

Figure 36 : Cape 1

Cape 1 (figure 36) : A cape in plain cream white cotton fabric, cropped to elbow length, and cropped higher in front to reveal the navel. It opens in front with concealed fastening.



Figure 37 : Cape 2

Cape 2 (figure 37) : High collared shaped cape in black and white umbhaco, decorated with narrow cotton tapes, and finished with piping around the outer

seam from the front neckline to around the hemline. It is fastened with a single press-stud inside and decorated with one button on the right side.



Figure 38 : Cape 3

Cape 3 (figure 38) : Cream white crocheted cape decorated with locked padlocks and three lines of crocodile stitch in contrasting colours across the shoulder seam.



Figure 39 : Cape 4

Cape 4 (figure 39) : A body cape made of multi-colour beads. I used Zulu imfibinga seeds in their natural state, and some I dyed yellow, blue, red and green. The centre panel of the cape hangs from the collar bone to above the knee and is beaded in chevron design with same-sized multi-coloured beads. The collar of the cape is made of different sizes of beads in pure white, baby blue, royal blue with a single green bead in the centre with small pair of yellow beads.



Figure 40 : Cape 5

Cape 5 (figure 40) : A cape cropped to elbow length, shorter in front to reveal the navel, made of white umbhaco fabric printed with organic beads, and fastened with a drawstring at the neckline on the left shoulder.

### **COLLARS (3)**



Figure 41 : Collar 1

Collar 1 (figure 41) : Detachable high pleated collar in brown leopard print seshweshwe, decorated with shirt buttons stitched on with small beads covering the button holes.





Figure 42 : Collar 2

Collar 2 (figure 42) : Detachable pleated high collar in yellow and blue honey cube seshweshwe print, and decorated with shirt buttons stitched with small beads covering the button holes.

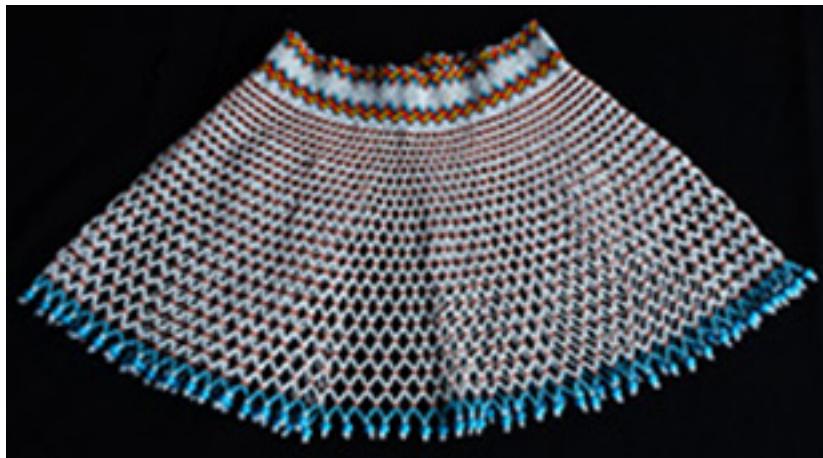


Figure 43 : Collar 3

Collar 3 (figure 43) : A beaded collar made of small beads of the following colours: pink, white, turquoise, blue, yellow, orange, purple.



### **CUFFS (3)**



Figure 44 : Cuffs 1

Cuffs 1 (figure 44) : Cuffs in brown leopard print seshweshwe, decorated with shirt buttons stitched on with small beads covering the button holes



Figure 45 : Cuffs 2

Cuffs (figure 45) : Pleated cuffs in padlock and chains printed fabric with press studs to attach it to the sleeve



Figure 46 : Cuffs 3

Cuffs 3 (figure 46) : Detachable pleated cuffs in yellow and blue honey cube seshweshwe print, and decorated with shirt buttons stitched with small beads covering the button holes.

## HEADGEAR (6)



Figure 47 : Headgear 1

Headgear 1 (figure 47) : Elaborated headgear in padlocks and chains print fabric.

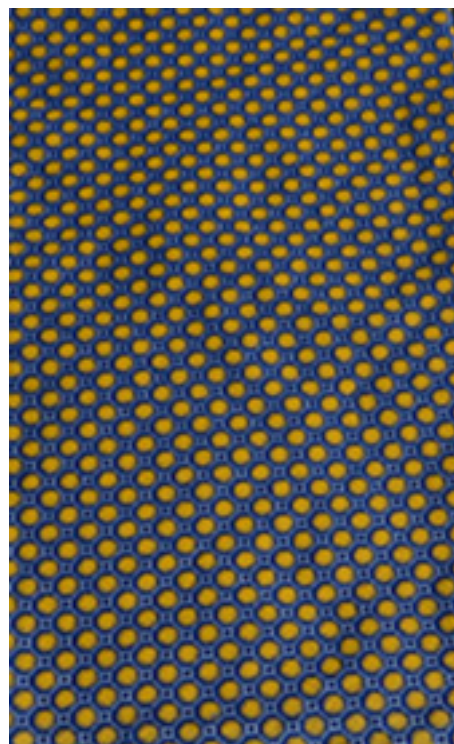


Figure 48 : Headgear 2

Headgear 2 (figure 48) : Elaborated headgear of yellow and blue honey cube seshweshwe print.



Figure 49 : Headgear 3

Headgear 3 (figure 49) : Exaggerated doek made with umbhaco fabric printed with beaded love-letter safety pins.

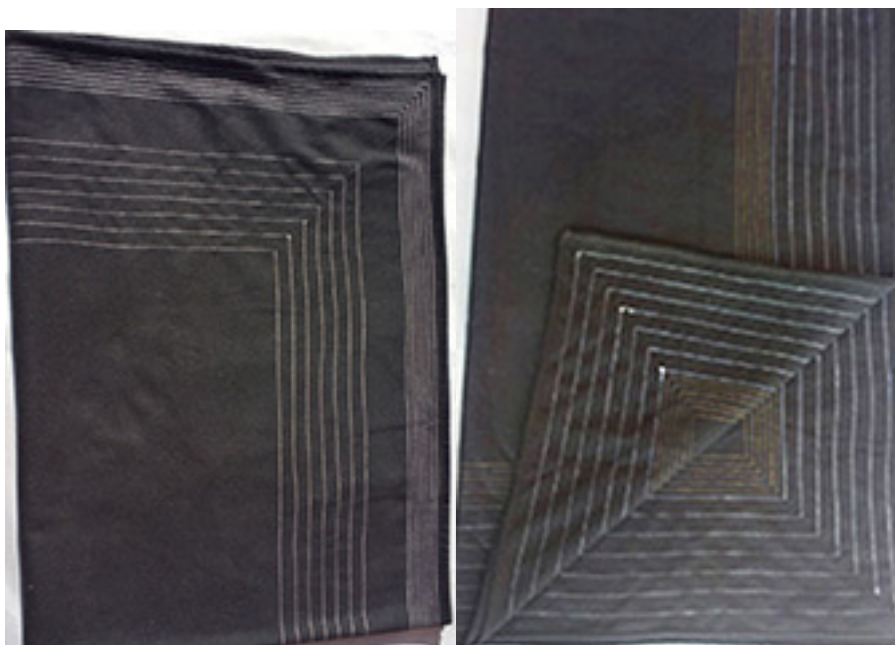


Figure 50 and 51 : Headgear 3

Headgears 4 & 5 (figure 50& 51) : 2 x Elaborated black Melton fabric doek, finished on the edge with narrow hem and decorated with multiple plain stitch rows.



Figure 52 : Headgear 6

Headgear 6 (figures 52) : elaborated Melton fabric doek, finished on the edge with white bias binding and decorated with multiple plain stitch rows.

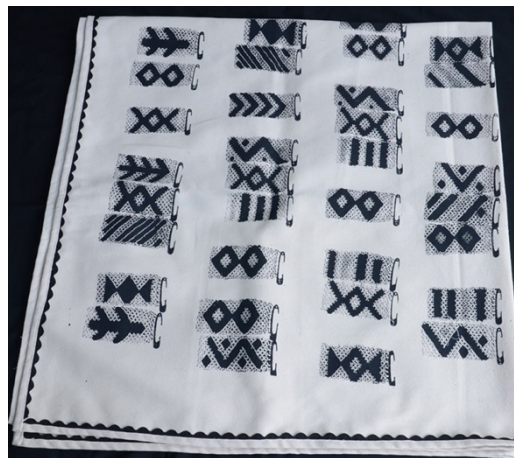


Figure 53 : Headgear 7

Headgear 7 (figure 53) : Cloak in cream white umbhaco fabric printed with beaded love letter safety pins with the hem decorated with black zigzag tapes.

## **LEGWARMERS (2)**



Figure 54 : Legwarmers 1

Legwarmers 1 (figure 54) : Crocheted suspender leg warmers.



Figure 55 : Legwarmer 2

Legwarmers 2 (figure 55) : Crocheted suspender leg warmers.



## **GLOVES (1)**



Figure 56 : Gloves 1

Gloves 1 (figure 56) : Crocheted gloves

## **HANDBAGS (6)**



Figure 57 : Handbag 1

Handbag 1 (figure1) : Beaded half litre silver tin used as a handbag, lined inside with detachable brown leopard seshweshwe print.



Figure 58 : Handbag 2

Handbag 2 (figure 58) : Beaded one litre silver tin used as a handbag, with a detachable lining of yellow and blue honey cube seshweshwe.



Figure 59 : Handbag 3

Handbag 3 (figure 60) : Black and white crocheted handbag, lined with white cotton fabric, with a loose crocheted flap, and closing with a drawstring.



Figure 60 : Handbag 4

Handbag 4 (figure 60) : Handbag made with umbhaco fabric lined with padlock and chains printed fabric, covered with Solomon stitch, and enhanced with two multi-colour butterflies, and fastened with one press-stud.



Figure 61 : Handbag 5

Handbag 5 (figure 61) : Shining metal tin handbag, decorated with beads.

## **BELT (1)**

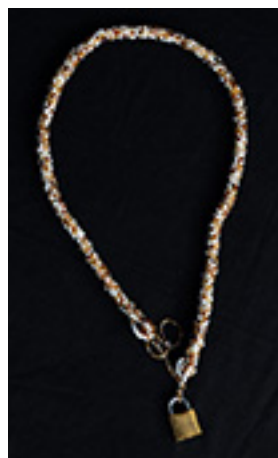


Figure 62 : Belt 1

Belt 1 (figure 64) : Beaded belt fastened with a padlock.

## **JEWELRY (16)**



Figure 63 : Jewelry 1

Jewelry 1 (figure 63) : Necklace made of the umqombothi herb and organic imfilinga beads.



Figure 64 : Jewelry 2

Jewelry 2 (figure 64) : Beaded wire necklace with a single padlock.



Figure 65 : Jewelry 3

Jewelry 3 (figure 67) : Necklace made out of organic imfibinga beads and African herbs.



Figure 66 : Jewelry 4

Jewelry 4 (figure 66) : Spiral wire organic imfibinga beaded arm bracelets.



Figure 67 : Jewelry 5

Jewelry 5 (figure 67) : Disc multi-coloured beaded earrings.



Figure 68 : Jewelry 6

Jewelry 6 (figure 68) : Earrings of umqombothi herbs, organic imfibinga and multi-coloured beads.



Figure 69 : Jewelry 7

Jewelry 7 (figure 69) : Necklace made of white herb, umqomboti, organic imfibinga beads and ostrich eggshell.



Figure 70 : Jewelry 8

Jewelry 8 (figure 70) : Round beaded earrings made of organic imfibinga beads and white beads.





Figure 71 : Jewelry 9

Jewelry 9 (figure 71) : Necklace of umqombothi herbs, pecan-nut shells, and white and orange beads.



Figure 72 : Jewelry 10

Jewelry 10 (figure 72) : Necklace made of pecan nut shells, umqombothi and organic imfibinga beads.



Figure 73 : Jewelry 11

Jewelry 11 (figure 75) : Beaded Loveletter safety pins



Figure 74 : Jewelry 12

Jewelry 12 (figure 74) : Necklace of stringed organic imfibinga beads.



Figure 75 : Jewelry 13

Jewelry 13 (figure 75) : Earrings of beaded discs on long beaded chain.



Figure 76 : Jewelry 13

Jewelry 13 (figure 76) : Beaded necklace in purple and gold.



Figure 77 : Jewelry 14

Jewelry 14 (figure 77) : Bracelets of organic imfibinga beads on spiral wire.



Figure 78 : Jewelry 15

Jewelry 15 (figure 78) : Earrings of balls covered with white beads

### **MIRRORS (3)**



Figure 79 : Mirror 1

Mirror 1 (figure 79) : Mirror covered with zebra skin, supported on beaded in brown, gold, white and silver.



Figure 80 : Mirror 2

Mirrors 2 (figure 80) : Two mirrors covered with white soft leather supported on multi-coloured beaded wire.

### **MASKS (3)**



Figure 81 : Mask 1

Mask 1 (figure 81) : Grass veil mask with green, white and yellow beads



Figure 82 : Mask 2

Mask 2 (figure 82): Grass veil mask with blue, green orange and white beads.



Figure 83 : Mask 3

Mask 3 (figure 83): Grass veil mask with white, orange, green and baby blue beads.



### **How do I mix and match the 83 individual fashion items to create fusion fashion outfits for a range of women?**

From the 83 individual fashion items I designed and made, I describe here 15 mix-and-match outfits from the practical component displayed at the Durban University of Technology Art Gallery from 3-16 April, 2014. I describe them as I exhibited them at the gallery.

I describe and analyse Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion outfits for the following categories of women which reflect various aspects of my five personas:

- one outfit for women who wish to celebrate their amaXhosa and amaMpondo identity
- two outfits for mature women
- two outfits for Born-Again Christian women
- five outfits for young women who seek a young high fashion image
- three outfits for young women and teenagers

**Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion outfit for women who want to celebrate their amaXhosa and amaMpondo identity.**



Figure 84 : Women who want to celebrate their amaXhosa and amaMpondo identity



**Figure 85 : Women who want to celebrate their amaXhosa and amaMpondo identity : Inner top under the cape (Figure 84) above.**

*Which of the 83 individual fashion items do I mix-and-match in this fusion fashion outfit for women who want to celebrate their amaXhosa and amaMpondo identity? (Figures 84 and 85)*

Skirt 11 (figure 11): Knee length overskirt in white umbhaco fabric, symmetrical in front, with black piping around the hem, decorated and fastened with beaded love letters safety-pins.

Top 9 (figure 32): White crocheted fringed brassiere with beaded straps and cups.

Cape 2 (figure 38): High collared shaped cape in black and white umbhaco, decorated with narrow cotton tapes, and finished with piping around the outer seam from the front neckline to around the hem line. It is fastened with a single press-stud inside and decorated with one button on the right side.

Headgear 5 (Figure 52): Elaborated Melton fabric headgear, finished on the edge with white bias binding and decorated with multiple plain stitch rows

Jewelry 7 (figure 69): Necklace of umqombothi herbs, white herbs and ostrich eggshells.

Jewelry 10 (figure 74): Earrings of multi-coloured beads and umqombothi herbs.

Jewelry 11 (figure 75): Beaded Loveletter safety pins

The garment is accessorized with a necklace of beads and umtombothi tree herbs which are used by breastfeeding married women to protect and cure children's ailments in the traditional amaXhosa and amaMpondo cultures

*What evidence is there of my multi-cultural origins in this mix-and-match fusion fashion outfit for women who wish to celebrate their amaXhosa and amaMpondo identity?*

This outfit is inspired by both the amaMpondo and amaXhosa cultures. The use of tapes is to create the image of water waves which comes from both cultures. The traditional use of beaded love letter pins, and multiple layered skirts come from both amaXhosa and amaMpondo cultures.

The whiteness of the outfit is influenced by the lady in my dreams wearing white flowing garments.

The white woolen crocheted brassiere and fringe is influenced by the cultural practice of healers for decorating their outfits – the fringes denote a free spirit. The woolen crochet was influenced by the woolen blanket I was covered by after my bath in my ancestral dreams. The fringe relates to the details of the gift outfit I was given. Fringing has a connection with the spiritual attachment and healing element.

I use white beads to dominate my design, derived from amaMpondo, AmaXhosa and Basotho cultures to relate to purity in healing, while shiny colourless beads represent clear water. These beads are fashionable, but for this outfit they are connected to the colour of water, the brown of winter leaves and the earth, and the yellow of dry grass. I find that these colours connect me spiritually with mother-nature, the sleepiness of plants and animals, and the plants and the earth.

Umqombothi is used as a perfume among African as well as protection charm.

The beaded love letter overskirt creates the look of cultural communication between lovers. Beaded loveletters were used by young women as gifts to young men to propose a relationship.

This outfit can be worn by married young women, mature women as well as marriageable women who wish to incorporate the traditional look. It can be worn for special occasions.

**First Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion outfit designed for young high fashion image:**



Figure 86: A young high fashion image

*Which of the 83 individual fashion items do I mix-and-match in this fusion fashion outfit for a young high fashion image?*

Skirt 7 (figure 7): Straight cut mid-calf skirt in Hitler seshweshwe print fabric, decorated with tucks with draw-string waist band.

Skirt 10 (fig 10) : Plain cream white mid-calf length cotton wrap-around skirt decorated with tucks, with a front overlap made of padlock and chains printed fabric decorated with piping on hemline. It is tied with soft belts.

Top 3 (figure 26): One shoulder cropped reversible seshweshwe top with decoration of piping in all seams: one side made with Hitler seshweshwe print and the other with masapo blue and white seshweshwe print.

Headgear 1 (figure 48): Elaborated headgear in padlocks and chains print fabric.

*What evidence is there of my multi-cultural origins in this Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion outfit for women who want to celebrate their women who seek a young high fashion image?*

The short top that exposes the stomach is influenced by my amaXhosa and amaMpondo origins. The amaXhosa and amaMpondo women expose their midriffs without being ashamed. Revealing and exposing this part of the body is regarded as culturally acceptable.

Multi-layered skirts are popular among traditional amaMpondo and amaXhosa women. The overskirt was also used as an apron. The drawstring fastening allows different sizes and shapes to fit into the garments.

Cotton was favored because of the very warm climate, particularly in the summer months, and because of its low combustibility around open fires, which are a requisite for amaXhosa and amaMpondo cultural feasts.

### Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion outfit for mature women



Figure 87 : Fusion Fashion outfit for mature women



*Which of the 83 individual fashion items did I mix-and-match in this fusion fashion outfit for mature women?*

Skirt 9 (figure 9): Circular wrap around skirt in white cotton beaded loveletter print.

Cape 2 (figure 38) : High collared shaped cape in black and white umbhaco, decorated with narrow cotton tapes, and finished with piping around the outer seam from the front neckline to around the hem line. It is fastened with a single press-stud inside and decorated with one button on the right side.

Headgear 6 (figures 52): Elaborated Melton fabric doek, finished on the edge with white bias binding and decorated with multiple plain stitch rows.

Jewelry 11 (figure 73): Beaded Loveletter safety pins

Black and white outfit of umbhaco; high collar shaped cape. It is made of umbhaco cotton fabric, decorated with narrow cotton tapes. Finished with piping round the outer seam (neckline through front to round hem line.) fasten with one inside press studs in front and decorated with one button on right side. Matched with flare wrap skirt, decorated with black cotton braiding tapes at the bottom to give the waved shape of river waves, and fastened with beaded safety pins. Coordinated with elaborated Melton fabric doek; finished on the edge with white bias banding and decorated with multiple plain stitch rows.

*What evidence is there of my multi-cultural origins in this mix-and-match fusion fashion outfit for mature women?*

The shaped cape is influenced by fashion and Born-Again Christianity.

The whiteness of the outfit is influenced by the lady in my dreams wearing white flowing garments.

The skirt is ankle length – both amaMpondo and amaXhosa married women wear ankle-length skirts. The wrap skirt is used as a piece of item to receive a bride in marriage. The outfit allows the woman to use it even when she is putting on weight or pregnant. The skirt is cut out of a full circle, and it has the nice fullness that enhances amaXhosa dance. Most of amaXhosa skirts have fullness to enhance the singing and dance. Because singing and dancing are at the core of our cultures, we celebrate by singing and dancing. We pray to God through singing and dancing, we worship in singing and dancing. Similarly, when engaging in hard work we sing and dance to give us strength and encourage us to work hard and attain what we aim to achieve. We communicate with our ancestors by singing and praises. Furthermore, when we are mourning we equally sing and dance.

This fashion was mostly accepted among South Africans after the democratic elections in 1994 as the fashion item to indicate our pride in being South African.

**First Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion outfit designed for Born-Again Christian women**



Figure 88: "Born-Again Christian women"

*Which of the 83 individual fashion items do I mix-and-match in this fusion fashion outfit for Born-Again Christian women?*

Skirt 3 (figure 3) : Mid-calf A-line apron in padlocks and chains print fabric with a pleated hemline and decorated with yellow piping.

Skirt 2 (figure 2) : Eight-panel semi-fitting A-line skirt in brown, gold and white seshweshwe fabric with big pockets and a lined hem, decorated with tucks and a stitched padlock at the centre of the tucks.

Top 2 (figure 25): Long-sleeved semi-fitting top in yellow white brown seshweshwe fabric, decorated with tucks above the hip and stitched on padlocks with a high extended collar. The left side of the waistline is decorated with beads.

Headgear 1 (figure 48): Elaborated headgear in padlocks and chains print fabric.

Handbag 6 (figure 58).Beaded half litre silver tin used as a handbag, lined inside with detachable brown leopard seshweshwe print.

*What evidence is there of my multi-cultural origins in this Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion outfit for Born-Again Christian women?*

The use of seshweshwe fabric is amaXhosa, amaMpondo, and Basotho influence. The silhouette is influenced by fashion. The silhouette of the outfit is semi-fitting, it is Born-Again Christianity influenced.

A brown Seshweshwe colour is most appreciated by Basotho. White among AmaXhosa denotes purity. The outfit can be worn with and without the collar and cuffs mixed and match around the collection outfits to create other styles.

Leopard print is the most beautiful design that is often used in fashion to indicate that the outfit is African influenced. The headgear of the elderly men in my dream wore leopard skin to denote that he is a chief.

The style of the outfit is accepted in fashion: the fish tail skirt is a fashionable item. And the cut of the top it has the features of close fitting casual jacket. The outfit can be worn by married, mature as well as marriageable women.

**Second Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion outfit designed for a young high fashion image**



Figure 89 : Young high fashion image

*Which of the 83 individual fashion items did I mix-and-match in this fusion fashion outfit for a young high fashion image?*

Skirt 19 (figure 19): Crocheted miniskirt using Solomon stitch or lover stitch. It is lined with cotton knit fabric, and fastened with a button at the waist line.

Cape 3 (figure 39): Cream white crocheted cape decorated with locked padlocks and three lines of crocodile stitch in contrasting colours across the shoulder seam.

Handbag 4 (figure 60): Handbag made with umbhaco lined with padlock and chains printed fabric, covered with Solomon stitch, and enhanced with two multi-colour butterflies, and fastened with one press-stud.

Jewelry 16 (figure 78): Necklace of white herbs and infibinga beads.

Crochet outfit; a cream white crochet cape decorated with locked padlocks on shoulder lines seam. The cape is decorated with three lines of crocodile stitch across shoulder line with contrast colours. Matched with mini skirt, made of Solomon stitch or lover stitch. Lined with knit cotton fabric, fasten with button on wait line. Coordinated with crochet hand bag; made with Solomon stitch and enhanced with two multi-colour butterflies. Fasten with one press-studs. And the necklace I made out of organic beads and African herbs.

*What evidence is thereof my multi-cultural origins in this mix-and-match fusion fashion outfit for women who seek a young high fashion image?*

The cape and crochet reflects the influence of Born-Again Christianity as well as fashion: crochet is regarded a classic fashionable item. amaXhosa, amaMpondo and Basotho were taught crochet by the missionaries. In most cases both

culture use crochet garment as their culture. The neck lace is influenced by both amaXhosa and amaMpondo.

The woolen crochet was influenced by the woolen blanket I was covered by after bath in my ancestral dream.

Miniskirt is fashionable statement of revealing and exposing certain part of the body. Miniskirt is not accepted in Born-Again Christian culture. The outfit can be worn by fashionable young women.

**Third Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion outfit designed for women who seek a young high fashion image**



Figure 90: A young high fashionable image



*Which of the 83 individual fashion items do I mix-and-match in this fusion fashion outfit for women who seek a young high fashion image?*

Skirt 1 (figure 1): Full length skirt in brown leopard print seshweshwe, with a half elasticated waist, and a semi-fitted fishtail. It is decorated with three lines of white bias binding at the hip line, one narrow white tape in front from side seam to side seam, two lines forming a triangle in the centre front decorated with three shirt buttons, five lines white narrow tapes stitched vertically to knee length. Two lines of white bias binding stitched in a curve, two lines narrow white tapes, and two lines medium zigzag.

Top 4 (figure 27): Halter-neck top in brown leopard print seshweshwe, gauging with pleats, and fastened with golden neck wire.

Cuffs 1 (figure 45): Cuffs in brown leopard print seshweshwe, decorated with shirt buttons stitched on with small beads covering the button holes.

Brown leopard print seshweshwe out outfit: Full-length skirt decorated with tapes, with elastic waistband at the back. The outfit is matched with detachable pleated cuffs. Matched with seshweshwe leopard print halter-neck top; the top is finished on the neck line with gold wire, which is used as an opening and fastener.

*What evidence is there of my multi-cultural origins in this mix-and-match fusion fashion outfit for women who seek a young high fashion image?*

The use of seshweshwe fabric reflects amaXhosa, amaMpondo, and Basotho influence. The semi-fitting silhouette is influenced by fashion and Born-Again Christianity, but the top is not acceptable in Born-Again Christian culture.

A brown seshweshwe colour is most appreciated by Basotho.

White among amaXhosa denotes purity. The outfit can be worn with and without the collar and cuffs to create other styles.

The outfit can be worn by young and married fashionable women. It is suitable for special occasion.

**Fourth Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion outfit designed for women who seek a young high fashion image**



Figure 91: A young high fashion image

*Which of the 83 individual fashion items do I mix-and-match in this fusion fashion outfit for women who seek a young high fashion image?*

Pants 2 (figure 22): Wide-leg pants of cream white umbhaco fabric, with large seshweshwe tucked pockets and decorated with tapes above hemline. It has a draw-string above the hem it can be gauge if desired to create other look. It is elasticated waist line.

Top 6 (figure 29) : Bib-bustier top held together with spiral beaded with imfibinga organic beads wire in front, lined with cotton.

Cuffs 3 (figure 47): Detachable pleated cuffs in yellow and blue honey cube seshweshwe print, and decorated with shirt buttons stitched with small beads covering the button holes.

Headgear 7 (figure 54): made with umbhaco fabric printed with beaded love letter safety pins and finished at the hem with black zigzag.

*What evidence is there of my multi-cultural origins in this mix-and-match fusion fashion outfit for women who seek a young high fashion image?*

The outfit incorporates the fabrics Basotho, amaXhosa and amaMpondo cultures, and the bib style of the amaXhosa, amaMpondo. The pants are fashionable western style. The outfit is not accepted in the Born-Again Christian culture.

amaXhosa women can enjoy their cultural look in a fashionable style without feeling like they are wearing old-fashioned traditional attire. The outfit can be worn by teenagers and fashionable women who like to demonstrate appreciation of who they are, as proudly South African women.

**Fifth Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion outfit designed for a young high fashion image**



Figure 92 : A young high fashion image

*Which of the 83 individual fashion items did I mix-and-match in this fusion fashion outfit for a young high fashion image?*

Skirt 4 (figure 4): Apron overskirt in masapo blue and white seshweshwe print, slit from hipline on both sides, shaped and enhanced with contrasting honey cube seshweshwe, trimmed with yellow piping and bias binding and seams decorated with tapes.

Pants 1 (figure 21): Straight cut pants in masapo blue and white seshweshwe prints, with side seam pockets, a half elasticated waist elastic, and a front open using buttons.

Top 3 (figure 26): One shoulder cropped reversible seshweshwe top with decoration of piping in all seams: one side made with Hitler seshweshwe print and the other with masapo blue and white seshweshwe print.

Collar 2 (figure 43): Detachable pleated high collar in yellow and blue honey cube seshweshwe print, and decorated with shirt buttons stitched with small beads covering the button holes.

Cuffs 2 (figure 34): Pleated cuffs in padlocks and chains print fabric with press studs to attach it to the sleeves

Headgear 2 (figure 49): Elaborated headgear of yellow and blue honey cube seshweshwe print

Headgear 6 (figures 50): Elaborated Melton fabric doek, finished on the edge with white bias binding and decorated with multiple plain stitch rows.

*What evidence is there of my multi-cultural origins in this mix-and-match fusion fashion outfit for women who seek a young high fashion image?*

The seshweshwe fabric is influenced by all of amaXhosa, amaMpondo and Basotho cultures. In this design I have adopted the culture of double layered

skirts which is typical of the amaXhosa culture. The outfit is designed with the aim of accommodating a woman who does not feel comfortable wearing dresses, and likes to wear pants covered with an overskirt to attend traditional funerals, to go to church, and other occasions. The pants are cut straight are semi-fitted. The top reflects the amaXhosa culture of exposing the upper torso and covering only the breasts for mature woman. This is a high fashion outfit. It is also for women who need a cloak to cover exposed parts.

The elaborated headgear is influenced by the amaXhosa culture. The size of the headgear demonstrates the status of the woman in her marriage. South African women who enjoy showing their appreciation of their culture in the new democratic era adopt this style of dress.

In many cases, this style is worn by South African women who follow the Rasta Faria belief. They wear this elaborated headgear so that they can cover their heads and their dreadlocks when attending traditional rituals.

I think that this outfit would be well received among homosexual women.

**First Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion outfits for teenagers and young women - Model on the left**



Figure 93 : Fashion outfits for teenagers

*Which of the 83 individual fashion items do I mix-and-match in this fusion fashion outfit for teenagers and young women:*

Skirt 15 (figure 15): A lined double-layered soft suede rust leather skirt, micro-mini length in front with a straight hemline, and thigh length at the back, fastened with press-studs.

Top 9 (figure 32) White crocheted fringed brassiere with beaded straps and cups.

Jewelry 12 (figure 74): Necklace of imfilinga organic beads stringed organic beads.

### **Second Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion outfit for teenagers and young women - Model in the centre**

*Which of the 83 individual fashion items do I mix-and-match in this fusion fashion outfit for teenagers and young women:*

Skirt 16 (figure 16): A soft leather white lined skirt with shaped yokes - two yokes in front, and one at the back. It is front opening to expose the thigh area, and is mid-calf length at the back. It is fastened with eye-lets and spaghetti leather string. The spaghetti leather string is inserted in the seam of the yoke, and the yoke seam is reinforced with top stitching to strengthen the seam to sustain the shape and hold padlocks. A locked padlock hangs on each loop. Each yoke is decorated with circular mirrors, framed and fringed with multi-coloured beads.

Skirt 18 (figure 18): Theethane – a beaded fringed skirt decorated with razor blades in pink, white, turquoise, blue, yellow, orange, purple.

Cape 4 (figure 40): A body cape made of multi-colour beads. I used Zulu imfilinga seeds in their natural state, and some I dyed yellow, blue, red and



green. The centre panel of the cape hangs from the collar bone to above the knee and is beaded in chevron design with same-sized multi-coloured beads. The collar of the cape is made of different sizes of beads in pure white, baby blue, royal blue with a single green bead in the centre with small pair of yellow beads.

Jewelry 13 (figure75): Earrings of beaded discs on long beaded chain.

### **Third Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion outfit for teenagers and young women - Model on the right**

*Which of the 83 fashion items do I mix-and-match in this fusion fashion outfit for teenagers and young women:*

Skirt 14 (figure 14): A lined double-layered amber leather skirt, micro-mini length in front with a straight hemline, and thigh length at the back, fastened with press-studs.

Skirt 17 (figure17): An apron skirt fringed with small colourless, ivory and gold beads with razor decoration at the waist front.

Top 4 (figure 27): Halter-neck top in brown leopard print seshweshwe, gauging with pleats, and fastened with golden neck wire.

Jewelry 14 (figure 76): Beaded necklace in purple and gold.

Jewelry 15 (figure 77): Bracelets of organic beads on spiral wire

*What evidence is there of my multi-cultural origins in these mix-and-match fusion fashion outfits for teenagers and young women?*

The outfit is influenced by amaXhosa, amaMpondo and Basotho initiates' outfits. The outfit is made fashionable by its design and being lined, and the use of press-stud fasteners.

The crocheted white fringed brassiere is decorated with white, brown, silver, and colourless beads. The crochet is influenced by Born-Again Christianity as well as fashion: crochet is regarded a classic fashionable item.

The woolen crochet was also influenced by the woolen blanket I was covered with after my bath in my ancestral dreams. The soft leather skirt and the fringed beaded inner skirt are influenced by the gift I was given as a gift in my ancestral dreams.

The design of the leather skirt reflects the culture of the Basotho initiation to marriage-ability for girls. The rust leather reflects the raw soft leather smeared with red ochre. The first garment that was design by God for Adam and Eve was made of leather. Before the creation of fabric man made their garment with leather.

The beadwork is influenced by the amaXhosa and amaMpondo culture of adornment. As well as the looks of initiated girl's adornment of elaborated beads work and mirrors and colourful object the decorated their outfit

The outfit is not acceptable in Born-Again Christianity.

It can be worn for special traditional occasions by teenager.

**Second Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion outfit for Born-Again Christian women - model on the left, and sixth Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion outfit for women who seek a young high fashion image**



Figure 94: A Born-Again Christian woman (left) and a woman seeking a young high fashion image (right). Both Born-Again Christian women and women seeking a young high fashion image wear Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion outfits, and feel acceptably fashionable.

*Which of the 83 individual fashion items did mix-and-match in this fusion fashion outfit for Born-Again Christian women?*

Skirt 1 (figure 1): Full length skirt in brown leopard print seshweshwe, with a half elasticated waist, and a semi-fitted fishtail. It is decorated with three lines of white bias binding at the hip line, one narrow white tape in front from side seam to side seam, two lines forming a triangle in the centre front decorated with three shirt buttons, five lines white narrow tapes stitched vertically to knee length. Two lines of white bias binding stitched in a curve, two lines narrow white tapes, and two lines medium zigzag.



Figure 95: Born-Again Christian women

Figure 95 shows another way to style the outfit in Figure 94.

Top 1 (figure 24) : Long-sleeved semi-fitted top in brown leopard print seshweshwe, with a shaped hemline, with a front opening, and round neck line. It is fastened with brown press studs, and decorated with four lines white bias binding, two white lines medium zigzag, decorated with shirt button with a bead fringe, and six lines of white narrow tapes.

Collar 1 (figure 42): Detachable high pleated collar in brown leopard print seshweshwe, decorated with shirt buttons stitched on with small beads covering the button holes.

Cuffs 1 (figure 45): Cuffs in brown leopard print seshweshwe, decorated with shirt buttons stitched on with small beads covering the button holes.

Handbag 5 (figure 57): Beaded half litre silver tin used as a handbag, lined inside with detachable brown leopard seshweshwe print.

Brown leopard print seshweshwe outfit: Full length skirt decorated with tapes, and a full sleeves length top with front opening. Fasten with brown press studs, buttons and fringes beads. The outfit is matched with detachable high pleated collar and cuffs.

*What evidence is there of my multi-cultural origins in this mix-and-match fusion fashion outfit for Born-Again Christian women?*

The garment is full length and semi-fitting, with a high neck shape, and long sleeves. The culture of Born-Again Christians among whom I was raised, did not allow a woman to wear garments that exposed her body. This garment fits all the Born-Again Christian prescriptions, but the look is fashionable. The design of the top reflects the soft casual jacket currently in fashion. The use of tapes to decorate the jacket is influenced by Chanel. The seshweshwe fabric reflects the amaXhosa, amaMpondo and Bosotho influences. The colour brown is currently a fashionable winter colour. Among African cultures brown connects us with mother-nature. The leopard print reflects the headgear of the Great-Grand father chief in my dreams.

The model above is a Born-Again Christian, she thanked me for giving her the opportunity to wear this outfit. She told me that she used to have reservations about wearing seshweshwe, but that my designs had changed her opinion. She

explained that my clothes made her feel so good, like a most sophisticated lady. And then she said “I am going to design something like this.”

**Fifth Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion outfit designed for women who seek a young high fashion image – model on the right above and below**



Figure 96: Outfit for women seeking a young high fashionable image



*Which of the 83 individual fashion items do I mix-and-match in this fusion fashion outfit for women who seek young high fashion image?*

Skirt 5 (figure 5): Eight-panel full-length fishtail skirt in yellow and blue honey cube seshweshwe print with a half elasticated waistline, with white piping between the front and back panel ending with shirt buttons and beaded fringes. It has a front opening and is fastened with press-studs.

Top 5 (figure 28): Sleeveless top in yellow and blue honey cube seshweshwe print with yellow and white bias binding at the hemline. It has a shaped hemline short in front and long at the back to the middle of the buttocks. It has a front opening and fastens with press-studs.

Collar 2 (figure 43): Detachable pleated high collar in yellow and blue honey cube seshweshwe print, and decorated with shirt buttons stitched with small beads covering the button holes.

Cuffs 3 (figure 47): Detachable pleated cuffs in yellow and blue honey cube seshweshwe print, and decorated with shirt buttons stitched with small beads covering the button holes.

Headgear 2 (figure 49): Elaborated headgear of yellow and blue honey cube seshweshwe print

Handbag 1 (figure 57) : Beaded half litre silver tin used as a handbag, lined inside with detachable brown leopard seshweshwe print.

*What evidence is there of my multi-cultural origins in this mix-and-match fusion fashion outfit for women who seek a young high fashion image?*

The length of the skirt and the use of tapes are influenced by amaXhosa, amaMpondo, Basotho, Born-Again Christianity and fashion cultures. The flared skirt accommodates the norms of both cultures for dancing enhancement.

amaXhosa, amaMpondo, Basotho, and Born-Again Christian cultures influence married women to cover their heads.

The blue colour is a calming element while the yellow colour enriches the brightness of the outfit's outstanding elements.

The outfit's silhouette is acceptable in fashion, and can be worn for special occasions. Because short sleeves are not acceptable in the born-again Born-Again Christian culture, there should be a long sleeve inner or a shawl to cover exposed arms.

The detachable collar and cuffs were fashionable in the Victorian era, and are also useful to create different outfits.

The outfit can be worn by young and married fashionable women. It is suitable for special occasions.

**What were the critical reflective questions I asked while I was designing, making and mixing and matching my Fusion Fashion range?**

While I was designing and making the individual fashion items and mixing and matching them to create my fusion fashion, and after I had completed the process, I repeatedly asked myself three critically reflective "in action" and "on action" (Schon 1983:49) questions.

- "How is/has my "lived experience" (Whitehead 2009:173) of my ancestral dreams influencing/ed my mix-and-match fusion fashion range?"
- "How is/has my "lived experience" (Whitehead 2009:173) of rituals during my Eastern Cape travels influencing/ed my mix-and-match fusion fashion range?"
- "What metaphors are there in my fashion design?"

**“How has my “lived experience” (Whitehead 2009:173) of my ancestral dreams influenced my mix-and-match fusion fashion range?”**

I found a number of influences of my ancestral dreams in my fashion design.

The 83 individual fashion items I designed and made are dominated by white, which is the colour of the garments of the white complexioned woman in white clothes in my ancestral dreams.

I use suede leather in my Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion teenage range because it looks the same as the soft leather skirt that I got as a gift in my dream, and the handmade leather bag that the Khoisan man wanted to give me as a gift.

I use elaborate beadwork in my Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion range. My beaded cape that has both organic beads and the glass beads was influenced by the beadwork I was wearing when I came out of the water in my ancestral dreams.

The leopard print I use is influenced by the headgear of my traditional great-grandfather that he wore to distinguish himself as chief in my ancestral dreams as told by Nocawe.

In my Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion range I use woolen crocheted capes, brassieres, short-sleeved tops, bags, and mini-skirts which are influenced by the woolen blanket that I was covered with after the four women bathed me in my ancestral dream.

**“How did my “lived experience” (Whitehead 2009:173) of rituals during my Eastern Cape travels influence my Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion range?”**

I found a number of influences of my “lived experience” (Whitehead 2009:173) of rituals in my Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion range.

During my stay in Sakele with Thandeka from 24 April to 1 May, I observed women and men novices wearing seshweshwe while preparing for the special slaughtering of the cow.

I saw how often elaborate beadwork is part of the dress of the amaXhosa. While during communication praises in the evenings, they change to their white umbhaco outfit with elaborate beadwork. Magqirha will put on umothika - fringed cow skin skirt - on top of umbhaco. Umothika is worn only by magqira who have graduated and the skirt is a sign that they are seniors. They put on groups of light blue long bead necklace. Underneath they wear qinayafuba - beaded collars. The women wear cross-your-heart brassieres decorated with beads and the men wear white vests. The senior magqirha wear mphetshe - a vest of beads. On top of umothika, those who can afford it, enhance their outfits with isinqe - short beaded aprons that are open in front, and cover them at the back from the waist to the middle of buttocks. Those who cannot afford the isinqe, put on small towel. They cover themselves with cloaks while they are outside the hut.

The novices wear simple umbhaco or their white knife-pleated cotton skirts and apply white ochre on their faces and legs. Their strings of small white seed beads indicate how far he/she has progressed with his/her course: beginners use one choker string, others wear two or three strings.

During my imbeleko all woman wore dresses with double layers: a top skirt, a long skirt and a scarf or small towel to tie around their waists to cover the top of their buttocks, an apron, and long-sleeved top to cover their arms and two layers of doeks on their heads. Even my sisters on those occasions wore dresses. But they did not cover their heads. Men too have their arms covered.

During intambo those participants who had already done the intambo ritual come wearing their intambo necklace. In my Fusion Fashion range, I have adopt

the use of seshweshwe, uumbhaco, and the whiteness colour of the novice clothes, and the whiteness of the dress of the maqgira and their elaborated use of the beads work.

I used the influence of decorated cross-your-heart bra and crochet white fringed brassiere with decorations of beads on stripes and around breast cups. I use the influence of isinqe to design the over-skirt with beaded loveletter safety pins attached. I design the collar beads in teenage category influenced by qinayafuba. And the organic beaded cape is the influence of mphetshe. Most of long flared skirts in my design are influence by the culture of amaXhosa married women wear the full length flared skirts. The skirts have elasticated waists to allow for different African shapes. The elastic is also used to enable the women to use the garment even when their gain weight or lose weight. The semi-fitting and fullness of the skirt enhances traditional dance.

### **“What metaphors are there in my Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion?”**

I found that there were three metaphors in my Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion design: ‘Padlocks and Chains’, ‘Mirrors’ and ‘Beaded Love letter Safety Pins.’

#### *Padlocks and Chains*

As I journeyed through my master’s study, I realised that my limited knowledge about my multi-cultural origins had me padlocked in chains. As my knowledge of my origins grew, the locks opened and released me.

I was then able to understand my five personas – my amaMpondo persona, my amaXhosa persona, my Mosotho persona, my Born-Again Born-Again Christian persona and my Fashion Designer persona.

Once I understood whence I came, I was able to find commonality among my multi-cultural origins, which freed me to synthesise and express my

understanding of myself in my art fashion and design, hence “Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion” . . .

### *Mirrors*

I use mirrors in my Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion design as a metaphor for looking back whence I come, so that I can go forward with understanding, critical self-awareness and confidence.

### *Beaded LoveLetter Safety Pins*

At the beginning of my master’s journey, my belief that traditional beadwork was evil was one of my ‘padlock and chain’ issues. As I came to understand my amaXhosa and amaMpondo personas, my love affair with traditional beadwork developed so that I am now able to embrace the intricate beauty of beaded messages with joy.

### **Concluding comments**

In Chapter 5, I record evidence of the social and cultural influence of my Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion range.

## Chapter 5

### **What evidence do I have that I have demonstrated my multi-cultural origins in my art of fashion design in my Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion exhibition?**

We were born to make manifest  
the Glory of God that is within us.

It's not just in some of us;  
it's in everyone.

And as we let our light shine,  
we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same.

As we're liberated from our fear,  
our presence automatically liberates others.

Marianne Williamson

In this chapter I demonstrate my belief that the glory of God is within me as it is in everyone. I have let my light shine in my exhibition of mix-and-match fashion fusion, in the hope that my exhibition will inspire others to liberate themselves, and inspire others.

In this chapter, I ask the question “What evidence do I have that I have demonstrated my multi-cultural origins in my art of fashion design in my Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion exhibition?” I ask this question here to reflect on the title of my study: “A narrative self-study: How do I demonstrate my multi-cultural origins in my art of fashion design?” as a form of validation of my study. I reflect in this way with the help of the comments in a Visitors’ Commentary Book.

The Visitors’ Commentary Book was an A4 exercise book which I placed on the left side of the entrance to the Art Gallery, from the 3-16 April, 2014, for the visitors to comment on my Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion exhibition. When I

took my exhibition down there were 122 comments in the Commentary Book. All of them were very encouraging. I have scanned the Commentary Book, and appended it to this dissertation.

In this chapter, I have recorded the comments as they appear in the Commentary Book. I have not edited them in any way.

When I first read the comments in the Commentary Book, I felt a sense of accomplishment that I had told the story of my art of fashion clearly enough to impress and influence other people, as indicated in the 122 very encouraging comments in the Commentary Book.

### **What questions did I ask, and what evidence was revealed?**

In order to reflect on the comments usefully for my study, I asked myself the following questions:

What evidence do I have of my multi-cultural and social influence through my Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion range?

I then asked two sub questions:

“What evidence do I have of my multi-cultural influence through my Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion range?”

“What evidence do I have of my social influence through my Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion range?”

By “multi-cultural and social influence” I mean the ways that my Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion range influenced people to approve and admire my fashion range which reflects a strong sense of the traditional cultures in South Africa. I wanted to influence women to enjoy wearing clothes which reflect their



traditional origins. I wanted people to celebrate their traditional origins by admiring the fusion of the traditional and the fashionable in the outfits on display.

I chose the comments recorded here because I could see that the people who wrote these comments had 'read' my designs properly, and identified what pleased or surprised them about my art of fashion and me as a fashion designer. I record my comments about the comments in the Commentary Book in italics.

### **What evidence do I have of my multi-cultural influence through my Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion range?**

I record some the Visitors' many comments which refer specifically and by name to the cultures which they can see have been included in my Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion range. I like the way that these comments focus on the importance of culture, what culture means and the being proud of one's culture. I also like the fact that these comments approve of the mixing of the cultural and fashion influences.

- Khanyiswa - I was blown away by the designs & they remind me so much of who I am. In a sense or somehow they've made me proud of my Identity as a Xhosa/mpondo person. Keep the work going hopefully someday when I have a traditional wedding I'll ask you'll to design my traditional dress. Lovely!
- Ma Thandiwe's work is amazing, looking at her designs is like a mental excursion to the Xhosa tradition. It really takes you in and makes you want to know more about culture, how the traditional clothes should be worn and who wears them.
- This is exactly what we youngsters today need & want to see well some of us. This is very informative, it shows that a lot of research has been done. I LOVE IT!

- I now know more about the Sotho Xhosa etc culture, I feel like I am & come from all these diverse cultural backgrounds. EXCELLENT WORK, WELL DONE

From MDUDUZO

- Excellent display, love the outfits. Love the fusions of Xhosa & Sotho & urban. Love the interpretation of the study of culture and research this is excellent, work Well done!! Mabongi,
- Really a wonderful work... I'm inspired that you did not neglect your born-again Christian persona. May our good LORD indeed expand your territories. Your work is splendid, beautiful while a mix-match of old & new ...it's modern—ancient Zinhle Mthembu
- Wow Wow Good to see my cultural clothes in another province. Great art work. Love the Design of Izipeleti in the Xhosa traditional dresses. Mix of morden dressing with traditional Great stuff. Totaly Inspired

In the following section, I record the comments which show that people can see evidence of the influence of many cultures - without specifically naming them - in my Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion range. I like the acceptance of many cultures, which I think is important in 'new' South Africa. I like the fact that so many comments focus on being proudly South African and African, and on the mixing of the traditional and the fashionable. I was particularly struck by the fact that some people wanted me to extend my range to include all other cultures. I realise that this will mean that I will have to learn about other cultures so that I can design properly. I appreciated the comments about the connection between the music and the photos and the clothes, because this records that in our South African culture what we wear goes hand-in-hand with our singing and dancing and praising.

- Mama I am so touched with your amazing work, I am not of this culture but woowoow you made me think twice. Praying that God will inspire you more with this great work. T Khwela
- Wow Thandi! Absolutely incredible work. Love the concept that brought you to this stage. The in-depth cultural reference & attention to detail, mixed with your own style and interpretation is unfathomable MuitoBom! Tania + Mark.
- This collection brings out the African in all of us. WOW not only is it rich in texture/technical ability and symbolism, It is also proudly South African. It inspires us young designers to look for inspiration in our own cultures and our beautiful country and use materials that are readily available and proudly South African. I particularly loved the music and the symbolism of the printed fabrics.
- Outstanding work of art with a mixture of vibrant culture and strong person. Theme : Excellent. Especially the lock & chains design. Would like to know where the idea of using these element came from # curious (H.I.P aKa SG)
- A fascinating journey through you cultural origins expressed in beautifully designed and produced fashions. JA
- An incredible reminder that fashion is not necessarily 'western' or 'popular'. It can be retrospective and reminiscent of the very traditions and cultural perspectives that make us who we are. It is evident that the collection is a culmination of various identities & various journeys. Thank you for being brave enough to articulate the ways of an African woman without apologizing for who She is. Melusi
- GREAT WORK INDEED, WE LOVE THE FACT THAT YOU MERGED THE TWO CULTURES AND CREATED SOMETHING MAGNIFICANT OUT OF IT. A WONDERFUL REPRESENTATION OF WHO WE ARE AS AFRICANS.

YOUR UNIQUE STYLE IS EYE CATCHING & THE WORKS OF YOUR HANDS ARE HIGH ASTONING. KEEP MAKING US PROUD, WE WOULD LOVE TO SEE MORE OF YOU GARMENTS BEING PRODUCED INTERNATIONALLY, THE CLOTHING INDUSTRY IS YERNING FOR SUCH TALENT. XOXO ...

- More of Zulu culture please!! Beautiful work, please cater for all cultures in the future.

**“What evidence do I have of my social influence through my Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion design?”**

I record the comments which refer to the social influence of my Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion range. I have recorded these comments in three sections: those who

- admire my Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion range;
- want to buy my Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion garments;
- who modeled my Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion garments.

- People who admire my Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion range:

There were many admiring comments but far too many to record here. I chose to include these few comments here because each of them had something specific to say. *Many of the comments remind me of the challenges I went through up to this point. Again I felt that I had reached the point where I had told my story.*

*I realise that I like being an inspiration to younger people, because I have been inspired and wish to do the same for others.*

*I was struck by the people who saw my work as a spiritual gift. They have made me look at fashion in a new way. I always thought that fashion and spirituality were opposites.*

*I was also particularly struck by the comment from Kwezi, who can see that this is just the first part of my journey.*

- Dear Thandi, First of all, I congratulate you on your long journey (As Joan said,) “Only a few people in (Thandi’s Situation) would’ve gotten up and kept on walking up that hill. The journey has not ended and it won’t end! You have to be strong enough to keep on walking up that hill. Sincerely Khwezi Magwaza (Thenji’s Kid)
- Congratulations Mam Thandi for the job well done and the extra work you have put into your fashion. You are one out of thousand women that can do such an inspirational work that you have displayed. Sky is the beginning, so to so, continue and be focus you have lots to offer to the young ones. All the best & Congratulations. Abimbola
- Dear Lovely Thandiwe, your work & the patterns & the combinations & the spirituality in it & identity issues ARE MARVELOUS. Well Done!! Prof. Thenjiwe Meyiwa (HSRC)
- I highly appreciate how she scored the traditional dress to modern fashion. I wish if young students share her valuable experience and do it the same or better.
- This is an amazing collection, with vibrant colours and the use of biblical quotes make it seem that much personal. You did an amazing job overall the beaded collection was my particular favourite but overall all were beautiful. – Mlungisi

- I'M INSPIRED BY WHAT I'VE SEEN AND THIS IS SHOW HOW TRADITIONAL CLOTHES CAN GIVE TO US A MESSAGE. AND KEEP UP WITH THE GOOD WORK. MANGA

- Wow Thandi the knowledge you have shared here is amazing! May God continue to inspire you to go out and celebrate who you really are. And all that you share. Delysia

- Exquisite stuff. It shows passion and dedication was invested S.NB Tengane

- Absolutely marvelous creativity. You have rare gift Thandi. You have brought out the picture of a typical Africa woman. Your designs are unique and special' Keep it up. Achisa

- This work is quite uplifting, seeing how creativity can be transformed into spend art work. Keep it up. The sky is the starting point. Victor.

- Mam Thandiwe I like your designes, they are amazing, they shows that fashion is not just something that you do for money it something that comes from your heart.

- People who want to buy my Mix-and–Match Fusion Fashion garments

*I specifically looked for comments which recorded the wish to buy and wear my Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion garments, as I believe that this is a strong indication of the real admiration of the people, and a validation of my social and cultural influence.*

- You have a customer in me From: Yamela Mtolo

- Loved the designs and I wondered if the designs are up for sale

- I liked your designs, especially the beaded one (with uLusisi). You are amazing and Hot .... your work is really pleasing. W – O – W ... Keep up the good WORK Thandiwe. I would like to have one of your garments, this is what called superb.
- On point, I love everything and I would love to have a chance to own one or two of the displayed garments
- Wow It amazing. I'm truly inspired. These are most beautiful outfit I wonder where can I get them.
- Mmmh ... your work is so amazing I love it ... hopping to buy it for my madam ..Wandile
- Amazing artstry and fusion of traditional wear with modern cuts and some mind blowing original pieces : Where could we buy these Items?
- Joo, Thandi ... Beautiful, my sister. Feel like 'stealing' some outfits. Maleshoane
- Love the outfits hope you get to share it with us would Love to wear it.
  - People modelled my outfits: What did the undergraduate students who modelled my Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion garments for the photo-shoot and the exhibition say about the experience of wearing the outfits?

*The models' comments – Mabongi, Philile, Yamela, Londiey and Ngobile - made me realise that it is important to respect people when you work with them, so that the work becomes pleasurable. I was most impressed with the models as they needed no rehearsal. The whole experience was a special moment to remember for all of us.*

- MABONGI : IT WAS SUCH A BEAUTIFUL EXPERIENCE. CLOTHES MADE ME PROUD TO BE AN AFRICAN WOMAN. MODELING THE CLOTHES

WAS SUCH A PLEASURE. CONGRATULATIONS SIS THANDIWE AND THANK YOU FOR THE EXPERIENCE.

- PHILILE : Mam Thandi's clothes are really amazing, They fit well on us as models and they are comfortable. Her story about her journey is truly inspiration to me, she inspires me to reach my goals no matter what it take and fight the obstacles in my way.
- From Yamela Mtolo You are truly an inspiration, I want to be like you! Thank you for making me apart of the show! Thank you! Yamela
- Mam Thandiwe I like your work and I was so happy and still happy that you took me as one of your models. You really had the ability to spot that little talent and potential in me to have the pleasures to wear your clothes. I loved every single garment during the photo shoot. Much love Londiey
- Mam Thandiwe your work is amaaazing. I'm speechless and I'm really honoured and proud to have been a part of it .Thank You Ngobile

**What were my reflections about my personal experience of my Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion exhibition?**

I really appreciated the comments about me being proud of who I am and where I come from. Through this study I have learned to love and accept all who made me who I am, and learned that it was for a good reason that I have been created as I am.

I understand that I do not see a human being through their nationality: I see each person as an important human being who needs the same respect that I wish to be given.

I learned that many of the visitors think that I have a unique talent as expressed by the comments from the Commentary Book. I have never looked my work or



thought of it in that way. I did not realise that through fashion I can touch the lives of others. I saw fashion as just a profession, and did not see the spirituality in it.

I have a driven desire to continue designing clothes with an African Influence, and to listen to customers' understanding of what is their ideal cultural look.

Kwezi's comment reminded me that what I have achieved and can celebrate is that I have climbed only one mountain, and that there are many more to climb in the future. This comment made me think deeply and ask myself "What is the next step? Must I focus on my calling or not?"

### **Concluding thoughts**

I claim that the comments in Visitors' Commentary book contribute in part to the validation that I have demonstrated the influence of my multi-cultural origins on 'my art of fashion'.

## Chapter 6

### Conclusion

The future is not some place we are going,  
but one we are creating.  
The paths are not to be found,  
but made.  
And the activity of making them  
changes both the maker and their destination.  
John Schaar

As a result of this study, I have realized that I can make my own future, and that as I make that future, I am transforming myself and my future.

#### **What did I think that research was all about before I did this study?**

Prior to conducting this research, I thought research was investigating a certain aspect of fashion practice or a fashion item with the aim of improving them or finding out how fashion and fashion design changes, at a distance.

#### **What have I learnt about research from this study?**

I have learnt that I have used this study to unravel my personal problems and to assist me to improve my practice in my art of fashion. My study has also assisted others like MPR group, my family and friends to realize how important rites of passage are in one's life. My study has also enlightened me and others on the need for one to connect to his or her traditional origin in order to live life well. In one sentence, I have been transformed through my study.

### **Where have I responded to the questions I asked myself in chapter 1?**

In Chapter 3 I respond to the following questions: “How did my multiple origins confuse me?” and “How did I discover my missing cultural origins?” In Chapter 4 I respond to the following questions: “How has my upbringing influenced my fashion design practice?” and “How have I demonstrated my multi-cultural origins in and their relevance of fashion design in my art and practice as a fashion designer? I respond to “What did I learn about myself through the discovery of my missing cultural origins?” throughout the dissertation.

### **What have I learnt about fashion design from this study?**

I learned a great deal about fashion during my study. From my observation, while living briefly with my amaXhosa and amaMpondo parental families in the Eastern Cape, I learned that the people wear specific garments for each occasion and function. The garments that they wear for everyday work functions are sensible and useful: they wear garments made of noncombustible fabric because of open fires, and cover their bodies according to the cultural beliefs and norms. Among the healers, both women and men wear dresses during their feasts, indicating that there is no gender difference during ritual times. When I attended traditional events, I realized that the traditional healers might change their attire twice a day: if during the day they wore seshweshwe with multiple layers of garment, in the evening they would all change to umbhaco multiple layer garments with elaborate beadwork. Each time they changed there was a competition of who had coordinated her or his outfit better. In other words the people in those traditional communities connected their garments with the occasion, and took pride in their appearance, and have their own sense of style.

I realized that to design well for customers, I need to understand their culture and background.

I feel like I have achieved the purpose of my desire to satisfy the need of the young traditional wearer.

I realized that the current commercial fashions have little or maybe nothing to offer traditional people. Then I realized that there is a great need for traditionally-influenced garments for traditional communities in the commercial fashion industry.

### **What did I learn from my Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion exhibition?**

The opening of my exhibition took my breath away. It felt as if I was not the one who designed every piece and made almost every piece of the practical work I saw in front of me. The message of the padlock and chains, the beaded loveletter safety pins, and the mirrors printed on the fabric presented visually was more solid and vivid than when I was busy doing it, or presenting it orally. The models were saying “Thanks for giving us the opportunity to have the feeling of wearing your fusion fashion”. Others were astonished by the combination of my five personas: “We thank you for your insight of both your experience and your interpretation. It shows passion and skill to combine five personas. We never thought that fashion can fuse traditions and Born-Again Christianity.”

Then, during the week that I spent at the exhibition daily, I realised how most of the time as a fashion designer I have misinterpreted what customers are ideally looking for in clothing.

Some visitors were staff members of DUT who were going to attend the weddings and they wanted to wear traditionally influenced fashion. Most of the couples who came in, talked about their coming lobola negotiations, and that they needed a traditional outfit to suit the occasion. One of the first people to see the clothes explained how she needed exactly the outfit I was putting up for the feast when her boyfriend will come to present gifts to her parents.

I learned from students that they are more aware than we assume as fashion designers. I learned that the African students who attended the exhibition respect their traditional backgrounds, that most of them still wear and want to have garments designed that represent who they are. I observed how they looked around the exhibition and marveled at the way the dummies present the exchangeable character of the range.

From the exhibition comments I learned that many people who now live in the city but come from traditional backgrounds still want to connect with their backgrounds, and show in their dress where they come from.

### **What have I learnt about myself as a fashion designer from this study?**

As a fashion designer I learnt that there are potential customers and a market that the current fashion industry has not catered for. The whole experience influenced me to design fabric prints of beaded loveletter safety pins, padlocks and chains fabric prints to interpret my love for my traditional origins and I have designed a Fusion Fashion range as a result of what I have learnt.

I believe my Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion range will appeal and be useful to a wide range of women, not only in South Africa. I believe that the concept of Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion could be useful internationally.

### **What are my concluding reflections about my narrative self-study and the dissertation about my narrative self-study?**

In my study, I have “first” (...) looked through an ethnographic wide angle lens, focusing outward on social and cultural aspects of [my] personal experience; then, look[ed] inwards, exposing a vulnerable self that is moved by and may move through, refract and resist cultural interpretations. As [I have looked] largely backwards and forward, inward and outward distinctions, between the personal and cultural become blurred, sometimes beyond distinct recognition”

(Ellis 2004:37). I have been both confused and delighted by what I have discovered about myself and what I can do.

### **What have I learnt about myself from my narrative self-study?**

This study has taught me to live my life without fear. Before my journey of awareness, I was driven by the fear of the unknown. In this research study I learnt to understand that one has his or her own space. I do not have to stand for being oppressed and accept that it is normal. No one is created lesser than others. I have learnt to appreciate other nations with their values and norms. I even endeavour to know more about other cultures. This study has taught me to look at a person to see how great God is to create us with different values and norms, but loves us all. I can say that research opens us to new horizons of understanding that help us to address our fears and have an enhanced view of life.

I also learnt that to earn knowledge one has to be humble and respect other people's practices and space. As a university student I did not approach my participants with the attitude that I know better than them or even wear trendy clothes. I approached them like someone who needed their assistance and they sincerely helped me. This taught me that a bad attitude locks the heart of human beings, whereas, with a good attitude I can achieve everything I put my mind to.

Indeed, my Mix-and-Match Fusion Fashion range has accommodated all my five personas.

The study has shown me that I can do more, only if I focus on what makes me happy and share gladly with people who share the same dream. The only obstacle in my way is my mind. A positive thinking attitude can and will lead to the high heights. Most of the time negative thinking is what stops good things happening.

I realised that my whole study was not just about me getting a masters degree. I realised that I have made a public declaration, a public promise to serve the community with my skills. I have made a promise to follow my passion, my calling, which is to keep serving people by inspiring them to look at the full scope of what the fashion market can do for them.

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## **Appendix A: Exhibition CD**

## Appendix B: Commentary Book

### MTech Fashion Fusion Exhibition

(3<sup>rd</sup> April – 17<sup>th</sup> April 2014)

I would like to sincerely thank you for taking your time to attend this exhibition. Your presence is so valuable and I hope you have enjoyed every moment of it. I kindly request you to provide your comments and suggestions as they will be really useful for my Dissertation.

Yours sincerely,

Miss Thandiwe E Madubela

COMMENTS

Wow Thandi! Absolutely incredible work. Love the concept that brought you to this stage. The in-depth cultural reference & attention to detail, mixed with your own stylized interpretation, is unfathomable. Muito Bom! Tania+Mark.


Joo, Thandi... Beautiful, my sister. Feel like 'sterling' some outfits. Malisiane

Thandi Wow! I wouldn't know where to start exploring my feeling about such a beautiful work that you've. I wish you all the very best in your career and would indeed like to encourage you go a doctorate after your masters. Just see yourself as a doctor of fashion and design. Carry on with your good work sisi. Well Done!!!

/Sandile 

A VERY JOB WELL DONE THANDI. I AM VERY PROUD OF YOU. HOWEVER, PLEASE KINDLY CONSIDER DESIGNING FOR MEN AS WELL. YOU WILL GO PLACES. WELL DONE ONCE AGAIN GOD BLESS YOU.

REGARDS/

THABANI KULUMALO. 



Dear Thandi

First of all, I congratulate you on your long journey (As you said,) "Only a few people in (Thandi's Situation) would be gotten up and kept on walking up that hill!"

The journey has not ended and it won't end! You have to be strong enough to keep on walking up that hill!

Sincerely,

Khwezi Mgawaza (Thandi's Kid)

Dear lovely Thandiwe,

Your work on the patterns & the combinations & the spirituality in it & identity issues ARE MARVELOUS.

Well Done!!

Prof. Thandiwe Meyiwa (HSRC)

Dear Adorable Thandi

Mama, your work is such tremendous and I am truly inspired by your work of art. It very traditional and I really like the way you approach it. One day I wanna be where you are keep on rolling Show them what you got mama



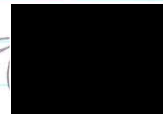
10 this was made for you. may God continue blessing you and be with you in each and every circumstances you come along.

THIS IS FASHION, IT NEVER DIES  
IT EVERYWHERE. THE WORLD IS  
ALWAYS ON THE RUNAWAY



ZAMANI (Student) @ Br. Brickfield Campus

11 Well DONE, THANDI!  
You have a customer in me!



From: Yameka Mtalo

12 You are truly an inspiration, I want to be like you! Thank you for making me part of the show!

Thankyou!  
Yameka

Well done Thandi, Your designs are very beautiful, Keep up the good work. — Nhlaka Mnguni (BRICKFIELD)

13

YEAH THIS IS ART !!!

14 Please keep it up the good work you are doing, what I've seen is so so amazing and I really appreciate it. This is so good, beautiful, traditional and cultural as well. Please do carry on with your career (creativity).

15 I highly appreciate how she geared the traditional dress to modern fashion. I wish if young students share her valuable experience and do it the same or better.

16 WHAT A WONDERFUL JOB YOU HAVE DONE THANDIWE E. MADUBELA PLEASE KEEP IT UP BECAUSE YOUR WORK IS VERY APPRECIATED AND IT HAVE BEEN RECOGNISED AS MODELS WITH HIGH CAPABILITIES AND THE ACHIEVEMENT IS REWARDED TO YOU, WELL DONE.

17 MABONGI : IT WAS SUCH A BEAUTIFUL EXPERIENCE, CLOTHES MADE ME ~~PROUD~~ PROUD TO BE AN AFRICAN WOMAN, MODELING THE CLOTHES WAS SUCH A PLEASURE. CONGRATULATIONS SIS THANDIWE AND THANK YOU FOR THE EXPERIENCE.

18 PHILE : Mom Thandi's clothes are really amazing, They fit well on us as models and they are comfortable. Her story about her journey is truly inspiration to me, she inspires me to reach my goals no matter what it take and fight the obstacles in my way.

SIZE: VERY BEAUTIFUL and distinctly african. What a creative genius.

Email Add: Smelembsegeorge@gmail.com.

Absolutely marvelous creating. You have a rare gift Thandi. You have brought out the true picture of a typical African woman. Your designs are unique and special. Keep it up. Achisa.

Thandi - still waters run deep! You hid your talent from us! Wonderful work. Wish you the best! & see you back in Capoeira!  
 <XX Maria Cristina.

I REALISED THAT I DIDNT KNOW YOU AFTER ALL TODAY I V MET THE OTHER SIDE OF YOU. Im PLEASED TO MEET YOU. (SHABZ)

This is an amazing collection with vibrant colour and the use of biblical quotes made it seem that much personal. You did an amazing job overall the beaded collection was my favourite but overall all were beautiful. - Mlungisi

A fascinating journey through your cultural origins expressed in beautifully designed and produced fashions.  
 Jenny Aitchison.

This collection brings out the African in all of us. Wow not only is it rich in texture/technical ability and symbolism, It is also



pradly south African. It inspires us young designers to look for inspiration in our own cultures and our beautiful country and use materials that are readily available and proudly South African. I particularly loved the music and the symbolism of the printed fabrics.

Love the designs of tradition all over africa and using some looks as something from the western tradition. Mixture of all kinds. Amazing clothes, love the teenage girl using and the use of "sweshwesh". Traditional women love it.

Outstanding work of art with a mixture of vibrant culture and strong person. Theme: excellent.

Especially the lock & chains design. Would like to know where the idea of using these elements came from # curious (H.I.P aka SG)

An incredible reminder that fashion is not necessarily 'western' or 'popular'. It can be retrospective and reminiscent of the very tradition and cultural perspectives that make us who we are. It is evident that the collection is a culmination of various identities & various journeys. ~~Exc~~ Thank you for being brave enough to articulate the ways of an african woman without apologising for who she is. Melusi.

lovely work, very beautiful, good to see different styles of traditional wear. I don't know all the styles although this really did open me to a world of designs.

Wow!!!! Beautiful stuff keep up the good work!!!! Doing us proud with our Tradition...

Amazing artistry and fusion of traditional wear with modern cuts and some mind blowing original pieces: where could we buy these items?

I am impressed. Thank you for the effort you put into this exhibition, it's appreciated.

It a nice piece of work, Very well researched, Inspirational and also Educational, KEEP IT UP WELL DONE.

Incredible Art works (fashion). I like the way she depict cultural background through fashion. It really interesting. Nice Works.

Amazing

Awesome

Outstanding work. Thank you. Moxlebi @tsnile Matsela



ARE AS AFRICANS. YOUR UNIQUE STYLE IS EYE CATCHING & THE WORKS OF YOUR HANDS ARE HIGH ASTONISHING. KEEP MAKING US PROUD, WE WOULD LOVE TO SEE MORE OF YOUR GARMENTS BEING PRODUCED INTERNATIONALLY, THE CLOTHING INDUSTRY IS YEARNING FOR SUCH TALENT. XOXO...

Your Designs are very Beautiful. A Job well Done! 😊. Next time plz do other tribes eg. Swatis, Ndebeles, Vendas etc we would like to see the whole variety

Lovely [REDACTED] 😊

All the designs are beautiful and good use of colour but we would like to see other cultures clothing! as we ~~but it~~ ❤️

loved the designs and I wondered if the designs are up for sale 😊

Wow wow Good to see my cultural clothes in another person. Great art work. Love the designs of respect in the Xhosa traditional dresses. Mix of modern dressing with traditional great skill. Totally inspired.

I liked your designs, especially the beaded one (with ukotisi). You are amazing and hot... your work is really pleasing. W-O-W! keep up the good work Thandwe. I would like to have one of your garments, this is what called superb.

[REDACTED]

Mam' Ehandine I liked your work and I was so happy and still happy that you took me as one of your models. You really had the ability to spot that little talent and potential in me to have the pleasures to wear your clothes. I loved every single garment during the photo shoot. Much Love. Londiey. ♡

Mam I love your work.  
Much love Sashin. 😊

It's awesome work! such an inspiration ♡  
Love: Tri, Sali, kinz, Candy.

Mam Thandine I love your designs especially the mixing of different cultures and make it look like one wear. It is so awesome.

Ohw... wow speechless beautiful what an amazing collection of designs...

On point, I love everything and I would love to have a chance to own one or two of the displayed garments.

I have been mesmerized by the beautiful work of art in the different designs. it is very beautiful, modern traditional fusion. in




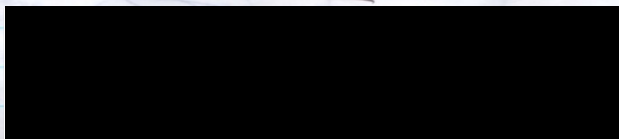
58 Beautiful work indeed, I love it 😊

59 This work is extraordinary. A lot of time and dedication has been put in this great work. This lady should be given, rather awarded a Doctor of Technology for this extraordinary piece.

60 I suggest she does another mini research and straight to PhD. I am impressed with her passion and resilience.

Keep it up Theandi  
And May Your Ancestors  
and Our High God  
continue to inspire you  
to greater heights

Peace





very interesting

THE DESIGNS ARE BEAUTIFUL, VERY INTERESTING  
STYLES - GOOD WORK.

Love your work, totally inspired and also  
proud that my culture was being expressed  
fully. "Mosebetsi o kgalele ka mme"

I simply love all the creations. Was pleasantly  
surprised to find the designer at her age  
to be so fashion forward.

Most creative and inspiring talent. Hope the  
rest of the world gets to appreciate it as  
well

Love the outfits, hope you get to share it with us, would  
love to wear it.

Wow it's amazing. I'm truly inspired. These are most beautiful  
outfits. I wonder where can I get them.

Mama Thandane i love your  
work... mangesi

Mam Thandiwe your work is amazing. I'm speechless and I'm really honoured and proud to have been a part of it. Thank you ☺ ... Ngobile

This work is quite uplifting, seeing how creativity can be transformed into special art work. Keep it up, the sky is the starting point. Victor.

Mmmh... your work is so amazing I love it... happy to buy it for my madam... Handile

Very inspiring!!

Mam Thandiwe's work is amazing, looking at her designs is like a mental excursion to the Xhosa tradition. It really takes you in and makes you want to know more about culture, how the traditional clothes should be worn and who wears them

I love your work mam Thandiwe keep it up. It reminds me where I come from.

Mam Thandiwe I like your designs they are amazing, you show that fashion is not just something that you do for money it's something that comes from your heart.

Mama I am so touched with your amazing work, I am not ~~a Xhosa~~ <sup>of this</sup> culture But wooooow you made me think twice. Praying that God will inspire you more with this great work. T.Khwela



There are two ways to live your life:

- One is as though nothing is a miracle
- The other is as though everything is a miracle; what I saw here is a miracle

Congratulations and keep on doing what u do!

All the best André

\*MAM Thandiwe God has gave you this gift of life to touch so many heart by these extraordinary fashionable designs. I am speechless never I seen such all the best you are going far.

Extraordinary exceptional work!!! Big up's, what an insightful way of showcasing the beauty of these various tribes. The fusion with modern-day trends. Totally amazing.

Congratulations Mam Thandi for the job well done and the extra work you have put into your fashion. You are one out of thousand women that can do such an inspirational work that you have displayed. ~~Heaven~~ Sky is the beginning, so to so, continue and be focus you have lots to offer to the young ones.

All the best & congratulations. Abimbola

We love how you went from history to modern culture, love your ideas.  
Nandipha Gera; Thabiso Gumede

Keep on what you do, cause surely you the best, such a traditionally marks in a modern fashion, and looks more fashionable than you can ever imagine. Totally GREAT. Big upps!!!!

Great work. An informative exhibition. Love it, love it, ~~love it~~.  
From: WAH [REDACTED]

This is exactly what we youngsters today need & want to see well sometimes. This is very informative, it shows that a lot of research has been done. I LOVE IT! I now know more about the <sup>XHOSA</sup>SOtho cultures, I feel like I am & come from all these diverse cultural backgrounds.

EXCELLENT WORK. WELL DONE

From: MDUDUZO [REDACTED]

This a great work she knows what young people need and want when it comes to traditional things, she modernised all her stuff

Excellent work

Normand [REDACTED]

A great combination of Nguni clothing. Best use of pulping, texture and binding. Not to mention the bead work it out of this world. Magnificent job done. THANK YOU FOR REMINDING US OUR TRUE SELF.

YOU ARE THE PRODUCT OF THE SOIL "TRUETH". NN Mng



It's very interesting, you changed my mind about traditional clothing, I no longer look at it as something from the past. But now combined with modern styles, it's amazing.

This is amazing and I didn't expect much about traditional clothing but they are so interesting and attractive. Wow!

It was a really enjoyable experience to be taken through fashion ~~fash~~ fusion.  
Thank you for the talk through.

Your fashion is inspirational, warm & beautiful.  
Keep on doing what you do best and achieve what you were born to do.  
Raymond Fortuin.

I'M INSPIRED BY WHAT I'VE SEEN AND THIS IS SHOW HOW TRADITIONAL CLOTHING CAN GIVE TO US A MESSAGE. AND KEEP UP WITH THE GOOD WORK.

MANGA

This is such an amazing things I've ever seen, It is very beautiful and its makes us proud about our cultures. I think you guys got it

It was really an enjoyable moment to be at the fusion, your fusion is very beautiful, keep on doing your best and thank you for giving us the opportunity to see it. ~~Adedun~~.

Beauty and wisdom fused in one aspect we as women take so much care in! Well done!

A Brilliant mix of modern mixed with our old traditional garments. Wonderfully displayed. ~~Amma~~.

YOU USE AMBITION, INSPIRATION, MOTIVATION AND THE TRUE AFRICAN CULTURE TO DESIGN AND IMPLEMENT THIS FINE CREATION. YOU ARE THEREFORE AMBITION, INSPIRATION & MOTIVATION TO ~~FOR~~ I, A YOUNG WOMAN WHO IS PROUD OF HER AFRICAN CULTURE. LOVE YOUR DESIGNS !!!

This is a Marvellous expression of an understanding of multicultural environment. It has been expressed very well.

Fashion fusion and integrated ideas, Well Done Thandi. All the best with everything my friend



Now Thandi the knowledge you have shared here is amazing! May God continue to inspire you to go out and celebrate who you truly are! And all that you share.

Amazing Thandi. Thanks for the knowledge that you have shared with us. And for the inspiration - you have shown me how I can include my spiritual influences into my study.

lots of love  
Shubs.

Excellent display, love the outfits. Love the fusions of Xhosa & Sotho & urban. Love the interpretation of the study of culture and research. This is excellent work. Well done!!

So inspirational, so lovely to be a first year and look at your range, and everything you put into it - emotionally and physically - to see what we might one day be able to achieve.

Thank you for your time, sharing  
your experience, knowledge, I am  
inspired. Thank you! Joliswa Shange

I am inspired, a true definition of culture. keep up the  
good work. [REDACTED]

It is a great way of merging modern way of mixing  
traditional clothing with high-fashion. It reminds me  
for where I come from, the Eastern Cape. Although it is  
not my culture, but it reminds me of home. Beautiful.

A. Makeni

Wonderful work. I am so motivated to start  
loving my Xhosa culture. I love your  
work. You are the best. Good luck in your  
future plans of being one of the top  
S.A designers.

LOTS OF LOVE

Yolanda ♥

Good Marvellous extremely Good work indeed BIG UP TO YOUR  
ART GALLERY [REDACTED]

KG HLOZI

Exquisite stuff. It shows passion and dedication was invested.  
Sibusiso Tsengane

Beautiful... just beautiful!!! [REDACTED]

Anneline Jacob



Wonderful work! Sandelle Nibodi.

Interesting work of art. Nishithi Sewnath

Wow! wow! wow! Amazing, beautiful, inspirational and just fabulous. I loved everything and how it all related back to her life. Absolutely beautiful. Very Proud.

Absolutely beautiful, well done & all the best. Tiomara

Incredibly beautiful Thandiwe! I can see and I admire the hard work that has gone into each garment! So inspiring as a first year fashion student. Thank you for giving us a glimpse of your heritage!

Highly Appreciated! L.

Well done Thandiwe!!! An outstanding display of your 'research findings'! Good luck with all future plans.

Santha Moodley.

Really a wonderful work.. I'm inspired that you did not neglect your born-again Christian persona. May our good Lord indeed expand your territories. Your work is splendid, beautiful while a mix-match of old & new... it's modern-ancient ☺...

Zuhle Mthembu

More of Zulu culture please -!"

Beautiful work, please cater for all cultures in the future.

## Appendix C: Consent Forms

### Durban University of Technology

#### Appendix A: Consent form

#### INFORMED CONSENT BY SUBJECTS TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH PROJECT

##### Preamble

The university and those conducting this project subscribe to the ethical conduct of research and to the protection at all times of the interests, comfort, and safety of subjects. This form and the information that it contains are given to you for your own protection and full understanding of the procedures. Your signature on this form will signify that you have been informed about the procedures and the benefits of this research project that you have had adequate opportunity to consider the information communicated to you, and that you voluntarily agree to participate in the project. Any information that is obtained during this study will be used as per the agreement, viz. that it will be documented in a thesis for scholarly purposes, and for public information, where relevant and applicable, and only with your prior consent.

\*\*\*\*\*

##### Consent Form

Having been asked by Thandiwe Madubela of the Department of Fashion at the Durban University of Technology to participate in a research project, I have discussed and understood the procedures which will take place.

I understand that the procedures to be used in this study and personal risks in taking part.  
I understand that I

BONGEKILE SONDEZI.....

may withdraw from participating in this study at any time, even if I sign this consent.  
I also understand that I may register any concern that I may have about the study with the researcher named above or with Dr Joan Conolly

##### Isandulelo

Inyvesinalaboabenzawaningobazibophezele kwimigomoyokuziphathaokwamukelekilenokuv ikelaamalungelongsosonkeisikhathi, izifiso, ukw anelisekanokuphephakwalaboabazobayingxenyeyocwaningo. Lelifomuneminingwaneekuloinikez elelwekuwenghlosyokukuvikelanokukwazis angenqubo-mgomo.

Ukusayinakwakholelifomukuyindlelayokukhom bisaukuthiunolwazingenqubo-mgomonenzuzoyalolucwaningonokuthiubeneth ubaelanelokunqondisaulwazioludluliselweku we,

futhiuzivumelengokwakhoukubayingxenyeyalol ucwaningo.  
Nomayiluphiulwaziolutholakelekulocwaningolu yosetshenziselwaekubhaleniibhukwanaelizosiza abanyeabafundinokwandisaulwazi lomphakathin jengokwesivumelwamonangokwemvumeyakho.

\*\*\*\*\*

##### Ifomulezivumelwamo

Njengobangicelwe u: Thandiwe Madubela Department of Fashion e Durban University of Technology ukubaabambeiqhazaocwamingwenioluchazwen genhla. Ngiyayiqondainqubomgomoezolandelwa kulolucwamingo.

Ngiyaqondaukuba

.....

noma nini noma sengisayenile lelifomu.  
Ngiyakuqondafuthiukuthingazwakalisaukuk hathazekakwamingololucwaningokumcwaningi obhalwengenhlanomakusolwazi u Dr Joan Conolly (cel.no.0832949607)

Consent Form Thandiwe Madubela March 2014



(cell phone number: 083 2949 607.) I may obtain copies of the results of this study by contacting Thandiwe Madubela, cell phone number 0735389691.

I understand that the information gathered for this study is intended for public access and possible inclusion in school curricula. By signing this form, I am acknowledging that I understand the contents of this document.

Name: MABONGI SONDEZI

Address: 83 ST ANDREWS

47 RUSLYN DURBAN LOD

Signature: [REDACTED]

Witness: [REDACTED]

Date: 03-04-14

Ngingatholaisishicilelosemiphumelayalolucwan ingongokuthintana no: ThandiweMadubela,ku cell namba:0735389691.

Ngiyakuqondafuthiukuthiulwazioluqoqwekulol ucwaningoluhlelelweukusetshenziswangumphakathinanokuthilufakweohlelwenilokufundisaezi kolweni.

Ngokusayinalelifomu, ngivumaukuthingiyakuqondaokuqethweyileli bhukwana

Igama: .....

Ikheli: .....

.....

Sayina : .....

Ufakazi: .....

Usuku: .....

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I understand that I

LANOLWE.....NOBUHE.....HAGEBE

may withdraw from participating in this study at any time, even if I sign this consent.

I also understand that I may register any concern that I may have about the study with the researcher named above or with Dr Joan Conolly

**Isandulelo**

Inyavesinalaboabenzaucwaningobazibophezele kwimigomoyokuziphathaokwamukelekilenokuv ikelaamalungelongasosonkeisikhathi, izifiso, ukw anelisekanokuphephakwalaboabazobayingxenyeyocwaningo. Lelifomuneminingwaneekuloinikezelelwekwengehlosoyokukuvikelanokukwazis angenqubo-mgomo.

Ukusayinakwakholelifomukuyindlelayokukhom bisaukuthiunolwazingenqubo-

mgomonenzuzoyalolucwaningonokuthiubeneth ubaelanelelokugondisisaulwazioludluliselweku we,

futhiuzivumelengokwakhokubayingxenyeyalolucwaningo.

Nomayiluphiulwaziolutholakelekulocwaningolu yosetshenziselwaekubhaleniibhukwanaelizosiza abanyeabafundinokwandisaulwazi lomphakathin jengokwesivumelwamonangokwemvumeyakho.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Ifomulezivumelwamo**

Njengobangicelwe u: Thandiwe Madubela Department of Fashion e Durban University of Technology

ukubaabambeiqhazaocwamingwenioluchazwen genhla. Ngiyayiqondainqubomgomoezolandelwa kulolucwamingo.

Ngiyaqondaukuba

.....

noma nini noma sengisayenile lelifomu.

Ngiyakuqondafuthiukuthingazwakalisaukuk hathazekakwamingololucwaningokumcwaningi obhalwenghlanomakusolwazi u Dr Joan Conolly (cel.no.0832949607)

Consent Form Thandiwe Madubela March 2014

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I understand that the information gathered for this study is intended for public access and possible inclusion in school curricula. By signing this form, I am acknowledging that I understand the contents of this document.

Name: LANDIWE N. MADUBELA

Address: P.O. Box 843

JOZINI 3969

Signature: [Redacted]

Witness: [Redacted]

Date: 13-04-2014

Ngingatholaisishicilelosemiphumelayalolucwaningongokuthintana no: ThandiweMadubela,ku cell namba:0735389691.

Ngiyakuqondafuthiukuthiulwazioluqoqwekulolucwaningoluhlelelweukusetshenziswangumpha kathinanokuthilufakweohlelwenilokufundisaezi kolweni.

Ngokusayinalelifomu, ngivumaukuthingiyakuqondaokuqukethweyileli bhukwana

Igama: .....

Ikheli: .....

Sayina : .....

Ufakazi: .....

Usuku: .....



## Durban University of Technology

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#### INFORMED CONSENT BY SUBJECTS TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH PROJECT

##### Preamble

The university and those conducting this project subscribe to the ethical conduct of research and to the protection at all times of the interests, comfort, and safety of subjects. This form and the information that it contains are given to you for your own protection and full understanding of the procedures. Your signature on this form will signify that you have been informed about the procedures and the benefits of this research project that you have had adequate opportunity to consider the information communicated to you, and that you voluntarily agree to participate in the project. Any information that is obtained during this study will be used as per the agreement, viz. that it will be documented in a thesis for scholarly purposes, and for public information, where relevant and applicable, and only with your prior consent.

\*\*\*\*\*

##### Consent Form

Having been asked by Thandiwe Madubela of the Department of Fashion at the Durban University of Technology to participate in a research project, I have discussed and understood the procedures which will take place.

I understand that the procedures to be used in this study and personal risks in taking part.

I understand that I

*Thandiwe Madubela* .....

may withdraw from participating in this study at any time, even if I sign this consent.

I also understand that I may register any concern that I may have about the study with the researcher named above or with Dr Joan Conolly

##### Isandulelo

Inyavesinalaboabenzaukwaningobazibophezele kwimigomoyokuziphathaokwamukelekilenokuv ikelaamalungelongsosonkeisikhathi, izifiso, ukw anelisekanokuphephakwalaboabazobayingxeny yocwaningo. Lelifomuneminingwaneekuloinikez elelwekuwenghlosoyokukuvikelanokukwazis angenqubo-mgomo.

Ukusayinakwakholelifomukuyindlelayokukhom bisaukuthiunolwazingenqubo-

mgomonenzuzoyalolucwaningonokuthiubeneth ubaelanelokudondisisaulwazioludluliselweku we,

futhiuzivumelengokwakhokubayingxenyeyalol ucwaningo.

Nomayiluphiulwaziolutholakelelucwaningolu yosetshenziselwaekubhaleniibhukwanaelizosiza abanyeabafundinokwandisaulwazi lomphakathin jengokwesivumelwamonangokwemvumeyakho.

\*\*\*\*\*

##### Ifomulezivumelwamo

Njengobangicelwe u: Thandiwe Madubela  
Department of Fashion e Durban University of Technology  
ukubaabambeiqhazaocwamingwenioluchazwen genhla. Ngiyayiqondainqubomgomoezolandelwa kulolucwamingo.

Ngiyaqondaukuba

.....

noma nini noma sengisayenile lelifomu.

Ngiyakuqondafuthiukuthingazwakalisaukuk hathazekakwamingololucwaningokumcwaningi obhalwenghlanomakusolwazi u Dr Joan

Conolly (cel.no.0832949607)

Consent Form Thandiwe Madubela March 2014

(cell phone number: 083 2949 607.) I may obtain copies of the results of this study by contacting Thandiwe Madubela, cell phone number 0735389691.

I understand that the information gathered for this study is intended for public access and possible inclusion in school curricula. By signing this form, I am acknowledging that I understand the contents of this document.

Name: Thandela Moko

Address: 99 Bale Avenue  
Woodlands Durban

Signature: 

Witness: 

Date: 3 April 2014

Ngingatholaisishicilelosemiphumelayalolucwaningongokuthintana no: ThandiweMadubela,ku cell namba:0735389691.

Ngiyakuqondafuthiukuthiulwazioluqoqwekulolucwaningoluhlelelweukusetshenziswangumpha kathinanokuthilufakweohlelwenilokufundisaezi kolweni.

Ngokusayinalelifomu, ngivumaukuthingiyakuqondaokuqokethweyileli bhukwana

Igama: .....

Ikheleli: .....

Sayina : .....

Ufakazi: .....

Usuku: .....



## Durban University of Technology

### Appendix A: Consent form

#### INFORMED CONSENT BY SUBJECTS TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH PROJECT

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Philile D. T. Gumede

may withdraw from participating in this study at any time, even if I sign this consent.

I also understand that I may register any concern that I may have about the study with the researcher named above or with Dr Joan Conolly

##### Isandulelo

Inyuvesinalaboabenzaucwaningobazibophezele kwimigomoyokuziphathaokwamukelekilenokuv ikelaamalungelongasosonkeisikhathi, izifiso, ukw anelisekanokuphephakwalaboabazobayingxenyeyocwaningo. Lelifomuneminingwaneekuloinikezelelewekuwenghlosoyokukuvikelanokukwazis angenqubo-mgomo.

Ukusayinakwakholelifomukuyindlelayokukhom bisaukuthiunolwazingenqubo-mgomonenzuzoyalolucwaningonokuthiubeneth ubaelanelokuqondisisaulwazioludluliselwekuwe,

futhiuzivumelengokwakhokubayingxenyeyalolucwaningo.

Nomayiluphiulwaziolutholakelekulocwaningoluyosetshenziselwaekubhaleniibhukwanaelizosiza abanyeabafundinokwandisaulwazi lomphakathinjengokwesivumelwamonangokwemvumeyakho.

\*\*\*\*\*

##### Ifomulezivumelwamo

Njengobangicelwe u: Thandiwe Madubela Department of Fashion e Durban University of Technology ukubaabambeiqhazaocwamingwenioluchazwen genhla. Ngiyayiqondainqubomgomoezolandelwa kulolucwamingo.



Ngiyaqondaukuba

.....

noma nini noma sengisayenile lelifomu.

Ngiyakuqondafuthiukuthingazwakalisaukuk hathazekakwamingololucwaningokumcwaningi obhalwengenhlanomakusolwazi u Dr Joan Conolly (cel.no.0832949607)

Consent Form Thandiwe Madubela March 2014

<p>(cell phone number: 083 2949 607.) I may obtain copies of the results of this study by contacting Thandiwe Madubela, cell phone number 0735389691.</p>	<p>Ngingatholaisishicilelosemiphumelayalolucwaningongokuthintana no: ThandiweMadubela,ku cell namba:0735389691.</p>
<p>I understand that the information gathered for this study is intended for public access and possible inclusion in school curricula. By signing this form, I am acknowledging that I understand the contents of this document.</p>	<p>Ngiyakuqondafuthiukuthiulwazioluqoqwekulolucwaningoluhlelweukusetshenziswangumpha kathananokuthilufakweohlelwenilokufundisaezi kolweni.</p>
<p>Name: <u>Philile D.T. Gumedz</u></p>	<p>Ngokusayinalelifomu, ngivumaukuthingiyakuqondaokuqukethweyileli bhukwana</p>
<p>Address: <u>B119 ONDINI RD</u></p>	<p>Igama: .....</p>
<p><u>TONGAAT 4400</u></p>	<p>Ikheli: .....</p>
<p>Signature: </p>	<p>.....</p>
<p>Witness: </p>	<p>.....</p>
<p>Date: <u>3 April 2014</u></p>	<p>Sayina : .....</p>
	<p>Ufakazi: .....</p>
	<p>Usuku: .....</p>

## Appendix A: Consent form

### Durban University of Technology

#### INFORMED CONSENT BY SUBJECTS TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH PROJECT

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Consent Form Thandiwe Madubela March 2014



Conolly(cel phone number: 083 2949 607.) I may obtain copies of the results of this study by contacting ThandiweMadubela, cel phone number 0735389691.

I understand that the information gathered for this study is intended for public access and possible inclusion in school curricula. By signing this form, I am acknowledging that I understand the contents of this document.

Name : Nqobile Nxumalo

Address: St Wendolins, Pinetown,  
36 Monarch Hill, Pinetown, 3609

Signature: [Redacted]

Witness: [Redacted]

Date: 15 - 05 - 2014

Ngingatholaisishicilelosemiphumelayalolucwaningongokuthintana no: ThandiweMadubela, ku cellnamba: 0735389691.

Ngiyakuqondafuthiukuthiulwazioluqoqwekulolucwaningoluhlelelweukusetshenziswangumpha kathinanokuthilufakwehlelwenilokufundisaezi kolweni.

Ngokusayinalelifomu, ngivumaukuthingiyakuqondaokuqokethweyileli bhukwana

Igama: .....

Ikheli: .....

Sayina : .....

Ufakazi: .....

Usuku: .....

## **Appendix D: Action Research Framework (Whitehead and McNiff, 2006)**

### **Issue / Question**

- What really matters to me? What do I care passionately about? What kind of difference do I want to make in the world?
- What are my values and why?
- What is my concern?
- Why am I concerned?
- What kind of experiences can I describe to show the reasons for my concerns?
- What can I do about it?
- What will I do about it?
- How do I evaluate the educational influences of my actions?
- How do I demonstrate the validity of the account of my educational influence in learning?
- How do I modify my concerns, ideas and actions in the light of my evaluation?