



# Interview with Joseph Mzikweni

|                                 |                                 |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Project name:                   | Land Act Project                |
| Date of interview:              | 24 June 2013                    |
| Location of interview:          | Braklaagte                      |
| Language/s of interview:        | Setswana                        |
| Length of interview:            | 01h: 47m: 08s                   |
| Name of Interviewer:            | Tshepo Moloji                   |
| Name of interviewee/s:          | Joseph Mzikweni                 |
| Name of translator (if any):    | Lesego Ramafoko                 |
| Name of transcriber:            | Lesego Ramafoko                 |
| Audio file name/s of interview: | LAP_BRA_JosephMzikweni_20130624 |

Tshepo Moloi [TM]: Let us begin. Today is the 24<sup>th</sup> of July

Joseph Mzikweni [JM]: June, sir

TM: 2013. I am Tshepo Moloi, I am with *Mme* [term of respect for older women in Setswana] and *Ntate* [Setswana term of respect for an older man] Muzu-

*Mme*: Muzukweni. It is Muzukweni.

TM: Oh! Muzukweni! And Koko Motsusi.

Koko: Yes

TM: I would like to take this time to thank you for letting us into your home

JM: Thank you.

TM: We are going to talk about Braklaagte and how you remember it.

JM: Yes, *Ntate*

TM: And if *Mme* would like to fill in, you are welcome to. That would not be a problem. Yes. Let me start, sir by taking it back a little and ask you to tell us your full names and when you were born.

JM: I am the son of *Rra* Muzukweni. My Setswana name is Baepetse. My English name is Joseph. And my surname is Muzukweni

TM: Muzukweni

JM: Yes. I was born here in Lefurutshe. I came here wanting to build – I liked this place after *Rre* Mangope's government. That is when I ran away

TM: Ah!

JM: From Gauteng, I worked in Gauteng and I ran here to Lekubung, although I had asked my parents while my father was still alive that I would not build in the place of Masibodole. You are not a person of Masibodole. I said that I want to build in Lekubung. I didn't want people the next thing telling me that I was a *Letebele*. [Setswana word for a person of Ndebele ethnicity]. This place in Lekubung is nice because it doesn't have problems. It also has a *Kgosi* [Setswana word for king, or headsman] that likes every person. So it was as time went on that I got the opportunity to build here in Lekubu. We were in Harungwana, I went to *Rre* Mosi. Mosi Segakweng. I lived at their place near *Mme* Seipati Segakweng. *Rre* took me and went to take to me *Kgosi*. I got into a place at the *Kgosi*'s meeting place called *Rre* Ramakgobi. There were still some questions that the elders would ask. *Ntate* Monametse would ask who I was. I said to him that I was born in Masibodole. At Mokwena. He said well in that case my child, you are home. He asked where my parents were from and I told him that my father was born in Coligny.

TM: Where in Coligny?

[TIMECODE – 04m: 34s]

JM: In Queenstown

Koko: Eastern Cape

JM: Yes, in the Eastern Cape

TM: With all the Xhosa people

JM: Yes, yes. My father would tell us that. Ntate Ramokgoba said “well what about your mother?” I said my mother was from Ngwaketse. They brought the materials and built in the village Graskop. They were taken by Rre Manyane who said to them that they should leave Trust here and go to Masibodole. Why? Because the white people may come and take them. It was at that point that my parents decided to build there in Masibodole.

TM: What made your father leave from Queenstown and come here?

JM: He came here for work as he explained. Then, Ntate packed up. He had lost his mother at that time when he was still working in that village...on the mines

TM: Was that his on his mother or father’s side?

JM: Ntate

TM: So it was his mother?

JM: He had lost his wife

TM: His wife... okay.

JM: The man I knew. The woman was the one who offered to help us when we were in the villages.

Koko: That was the father’s first child. The child with the first wife

TM: The first wife

Koko: The first wife

JM: Then my father said that my mother’s father...where he had built. He was part of the Anglican Church. He was a priest. My father explained that he was actually Mophaphatsi. My father was the type of person who did not have problems in any of the churches. He liked every and any church. My mother said when I asked him what I had wanted in Masibodole, he said I like the old man, because we would not suffer because my Mother’s father was a priest. That was when he decided to stay there, in Masibodole. He later died in that house in Masibodole.

TM: When you arrived in Masibodole, which year was it? Do you remember?

JM: It was 1950

TM: Mm-hmm

[TIMECODE – 08m: 17s]

Koko: What about your date of birth *Rre Muzukweni*? When were you born?

JM: Well, I no longer understand.

Koko: You don't understand? Okay. Thank you.

JM: Or maybe I don't –

TM: What has happening in 1950?

JM: In 1950, I was still young so I didn't really understand what was happening. I did not remember what happened

Koko: I don't remember the date of birth for you, *Rre Muzukweni* but I have the registry papers for the ANC. We can check properly on the ID. If we have a look in there, we will know

TM: Okay, we can check it.

JM: Yes, because you see these things, these things all about history, ID's were taken and they would get lost.

Koko: Hello, I'm sorry. *Ntate* here: when was he born?

Other: 1950. The 7<sup>th</sup> of October, 1950.

Koko: Okay. As I was looking at him I thought he was a very old man

Other: That's because of illness

JM: Yes, has been sickness, *Ntate*. So, then it was...we are finished with my family's background, right?

TM: Yes

JM: So then I came, *Ntate* Ramokgobe. He was a senior man in the *Kgosi's* committee. And he took me to the *Kgosi*

TM: And who was *Kgosi* at that time?

JM: *Rre Lokolaone*

TM: *Rre Lokoloane*

JM: Sebogodi. When I went to them...they knew my parents. There was a man who was a good friend of my mother's. They said to me "man, you are a child of Bakwena people. Your grandfather was of the Bakwena by birth. There is nothing that says you are going to make a name for yourself in the corner. That was when the man who took me to *Kgosi*, also got me something to do. I lived next door to his mother. He gave me a chance there. I had not been married, at that stage, yes.

Koko: You were still thinking of marriage?

[TIMEDCODE – 11m: 37s]

JM: That's right. I was not able to live there because they said that I should be their son-in-law. Even if I had gotten married, the woman I married was even liked by my parents. She left me and kicked me out. That is when I found this woman. I found her while she was at school.

Koko: That woman is a teacher

TM: Oh yes

Koko: She's a school teacher

TM: Right here in Lekubung?

JM: Yes

TM: *Rre Muzukweni* when did you get here in Lekubung when you started living here?

JM: I got to Lekubung in...

Koko: Do you not remember the year?

JM: I don't remember the year but the papers that time... they signed my papers, it should be there

Koko: Oh do you still have that document?

JM: I still have it, *ntate*. I could go and quickly get it.

TM: Yes, please. Oh, so when you arrived in Braklaagte is was '83

JM: Yes it was '83, man.

TM: And that was when you began staying here?

JM: Yes, *ntate*

TM: When you arrived here, what kind of a place would you describe it as?

JM: Please don't move those things...when I arrived here, it was a village that was a good place and one that was free from conflict. The people of Lekubu were people of peace. They were like their *Kgosi*. Every time there was a function here in the village, *Kgosi* of Lekubu would be there, involved in people's lives. He did not want not to know how his people were getting on. If you were not well, *Kgosi* knew that there was a person who was not well. If you were at a particular place, he would be the kind of person who would be having a good time with you. If he came to your house, he would say "just give me a plate" and he would sit happily and eat food in your house.

TM: So it means he was a people's person?

JM: Even with children, he would get along with them

TM: Young children?

JM: Even the age of those who cry

[TIMECODE - 15m: 54s]

JM: He would be at their house and, I mean, they would play house-house together. He would sit next to them, put up his feet and play with them. It would be a very good time. He would go from there to the farms of *Maburu*. He would go there and ask for milk. When he left this village and these children were eating, he would pour milk for them and they would enjoy! Children loved him. It wasn't that he would walk right past us adults either. If there was something he had left over, he would say that he had kept some of it for his old lady. So it was that *Kgosi* had a letter...he gave me a letter. There was a man who was the author of the letter. I was still working in Gauteng.

TM: You were working in Gauteng

JM: I was working in Gauteng

TM: What was your job in Gauteng?

JM: I worked at Steel Motors. The jobs ran out, then I went to go work at a garage again. I forgot which garage that was. So I worked there in Maraisburg for Steel Motors. That *leburu* – I mean the white man. He actually sells guns now in Maraisburg. His name was Jack Zennerman. Then I went to go work in De La Rey. Then I worked at garages as a driver. So as I left Gauteng, that was when my father passed away, then I said to my mother that it was difficult for me to work in Gauteng. I said that it would be important for me not to be far from home in case there was an issue. I said to my mother that whatever I would say to you and my father, now I have to answer. That is when I came to Lekubung.

TM: What was the reason for you not to want to settle in Mosibodole?

JM: It was because of the government of Bophuthatswana. When you are a man, you were not meant to get into a house and not go to your own home. When just to your house to...when you get home, you had to wake up early in the morning with a pick and a spade. They would have to go out and pick something that he would make people pick out in the village

TM: Really?

JM: They used to mill at his place. At this place you could not just not do work. You had to go to his house and mill, you had to tend to his cattle. Even these women here would have to go and collect his seeds.

Koko: We would be working for *Kgosi*

JM: They were working for *Kgosi*. These times were the times that women would get off from working in his fields

TM: Oh my goodness. And that was from the morning?

JM: Yes, that was from the morning – early. I did not want to stay in a place like that. As we speak, all those people who were in that village have since died in places like Brakaal. Some died in Nokana. Some people died elsewhere and other people died in Gauteng. What happened was that in '57, the conflicts in Van Roy, we became criminals.

Koko: That's right

[TIMECODE – 21m: 56s]

JM: We were fighting the passbooks. Our brothers, because they were working in Gauteng and we were at home, we were the support systems for our older people. You know how many of us there were. You see the thing is as the old men got older, you would say that you are RraManyane. Mangope was called Manyane. Mangope. If you said you were a supporter of Manyane, we would talk to our older brothers and say this is a supporter of Manyane, this one is a supporter of...they were just saying these things but what they didn't know is that we were –

Koko: Eavesdropping

JM: Eavesdropping. That was when they went to torch Motswedi's house. The offices of the *Kgosi*. They were torched by fire. At the point, the young people of the committee of the *Kgosi* were still carrying canes. They used to carry around canes. You know when it was Sunday, you would not be able to church either at Metswedeng or at Masibodole. What was going on there was what I didn't like. It was what I didn't want. Sometimes during church, a man from the committee of the *Kgosi* would be in the church so that the men would have to go with the picks and spades. Women would go with tins, maybe and take rocks and collect them. The priest for that congregation, priest Thebe Kotswane, I think that was the one

Koko: Yes, it was him.

JM: They said "Thebe, don't forget that even though these people are in church they have to work. They have to go and work. That was Manyane!

TM: Oh okay!

JM: Manyane. This Mangope.

TM: All right

JM: Yes, sir. He would say things to the priest, like for example "you should know that these people are mine. They are not yours. You have only put them in a church. If they have to sing, they can only sing a little bit. As you are preaching just say a few words

[Laughter]

JM: The men of the committee of the *Kgosi* were there. Even so, it was to make sure that this man did not say anything untoward about the *Kgosi*. Priest Kotswane then preached about kings. I forget which king it was in the city of Babylon. As priest Kotswane Thebe was preaching, he says the Lord was telling him that if you do not change, you are going to eat dirt just like the animals. You will not know how to walk. You will walk just like an animal. He would have to eat food from the wild like an animal. Then the men of the *Kgosi* went and told that Kotswane said that *Kgosi* was going to eat wild grass like an animal. You see this came from a religious church and they really didn't want religious churches.

TM: Really?

JM: That was the last of those. After that we started seeing churches called "Back to God"

TM: Back to God?

[TIMECODE – 27m:29]

JM: Back to God

[Laughter]

JM: He was saying that people should go to that church.

TM: And they should return to God?

JM: And that they should go back to God. Then he went to Kotswane and said that he had a church that was on his land

TM: His church?

JM: His church was on his land. Kotswane had to leave. He said that he did not want Kotswane there anymore. He said he must get out. That poor man went out and died out in the middle of nowhere. It got to the point where when he was very frail, that was when he left Lekubung. He was kicked out by those people from Lekubung. Even though he was a priest from Lekubung. So then it was that things went on in Lekubung. And then in '89, that was when the conflict in Lekubung really started.

Koko: They began in '86

JM: In '86. That was when the conflict started. That was when the *Kgosi*, Moilwa, wanted people who were here to move out of here and go that way to Driefontein

Koko: At Mokgwepeng

JM: At Mokgwepeng. What they had done is made people stands there. When people arrived there, they would simply be thrown there and you would really just make a plan about where you would build yourself a shack and so on. The people from Lekubu said no matter where you want to take us, you will not succeed. We are not going there.

TM: And how do they tell him that? Was it at a meeting?

JM: Honestly, it was that there was coercion. This man really had nobody who, when he would call him, would go straight to him. We did not regard at all. We regarded our *Kgosi* in Sebogodi as the real one, as the real *Kgosi*. He was the one that could call us. As the trumpet sounded, we would go to the *Kgosi* immediately. With this other one, when it sounded...well actually he didn't have a trumpet...he paid no attention to it. We pretended that it was just children playing.

[Laughter]

JM: When it came to...I used to go around with another man called Theta. The other was Polo, Ramodise's

Koko: Ramodise's, yes

JM: Yes, Jacob. We used to travel altogether. People used to follow us. If there was a young man who didn't go to *Kgosi*, we would catch him and undress him and hit him!

[TIMECODE - 32m: 28s]



TM: And that was the three of you?

JM: Yes, the 3 of us

TM: And you were mistreating him using what?

JM: Oh we were just hitting him. We were taking to *Kgosi*

TM: Oh so you were taking him to *Kgosi*?

JM: Yes. Then we get to the place and we poke him and ask where he thought he was going.

[Laughter]

JM: Right here, man. This is the *Kgosi*. Even the others from Reole, we would snatch them. We would beat them! But we would beat them right on the road. We would hit them with sticks. Then it became that I was a bad person. It was not that they were afraid of me, my peers. They were the children of the village. They considered me an outsider. They were hitting me because I was an outsider. They said I was the one who was making people fight amongst themselves.

TM: And were those words from the people?

JM: That is what came from the *Kgosi*'s office

TM: Oh!

JM: Then it came that – and I forget the date, but what happened was *Kgosi* Sebogodi was being chased away. They wanted all his supporters to leave. They even wanted even that *Kgosi* to leave.

TM: And who was chasing them away?

JM: They were being chased away by the Moilwa's. They wanted a *Kgosi* with his stamps. Remotsusi had already gone that other side

Koko: Yes

JM: There was another child called Phiri

Koko: Oh yes, Dimakatso

JM: Yes, Dimakatso. She was the one in the office. They came and *Kgosi* from Nokana was there. When they got there they found that we had already crowded together. At Phitso. We were protecting our *Kgosi*, by the way. *Kgosi* did not want conflicts.

TM: So Sebogosi did not want conflicts?

JM: In a way we were saying we wanted them to take us to the place they wanted us to go. The old man said "my children, I do not get involved in conflicts". Leave those people to detriment themselves.

[TIMECODE – 35m: 50s]

JM: He said that he could not have defeated *Maburu* only to be arrested here by Mangope. The police were all over the office. Then they said this *Kgosi*...they said they wanted a stamp

TM: Oh so they had also come to the *Kgosi*

JM: They had also come to the *Kgosi*, yes.

TM: To the office?

JM: Yes, to the office of the *Kgosi*. Right at that office other there. They had come to look for stamps. When they got in they threw their weight around and took them using force. They took them; the stamps. They are there with the police. They get to the meeting place. There was a lot of singing. There they went, singing, to where they came from. We were singing all our songs

TM: And how did those songs go?

JM: [sings "forget about the government"]

[Laughter]

TM: And who are the people who are singing? Were you one of the people singing?

JM: Yes! There was this young person called Kgosinkwe. Those were really the people of the committee of the *Kgosi*. We went on singing until we eventually arrived at their *Kgosi*. There in Motatsila. At his meeting place

TM: His meeting place. Had he given you the stamps at this point?

JM: He gave me the stamps. He said that Sebogodi, that *Kgosi* was nothing. Then it was that the police were all over here. We thought to ourselves what they were saying "about these people who are with the *Kgosi*," we are going to kill them. Eventually, we got out. It was only really at that point that the cars started coming in. the police cars of Bophuthatswana. The Hippos. That was when they came in and they took people. Some of them were taken in the night

TM: Really?

JM: They were being chased just there and being picked up by those Hippos. They were going to Metsweding. They got there and were beaten! As it was night time and I was going around this village, you know we had learned to fear keeping still. Even where I was staying, I was too afraid to go there during the day. Then I would come from that village right to *Rre Loseua*. As I look, there are the people from *Ramarungwane* they are following the crowd. As a crowd they were playing instruments and they were selling alcohol. As I turned, I thought that these people who have filled up the streets- like this is where a person must disappear. So then I went into the house. I was wearing brown overalls. "Knock knock" I tried to change my voice so that they were not sure of who it was. Then I say "were you already sleeping? Let me rather leave. It is fine, I will see you in the morning. I had only brought money to your house".

[TIMECODE – 41m: 00s]

[Laughter]

JM: After saying this, I go around to the back and I jump the fence. As I get back to our place, to our meeting place, I notice that the Hippos had even gone through the cemetery. These older people, people like *Mme Ethel*, they are sitting right there at the *Kgosi's*. They are not going anywhere. They waiting there guard so that if indeed they are trying to arrest an old lady and the *Kgosi*, they should rather take them all. Then I got there to the *Kgosi* and I sat just like this. The Hippos came and made a noise and then they went to *Rre Moilwa's*. I think that is where they would be parked. They even had tents there that they would sleep under, the sergeants. Oh! In the morning, they took some of our people. They had pelted them! As they were coming to me, I could hear them saying "and this devil, we want to know where he is. If we find him, his head is going to go to Metsweding. We are going to cut his neck and his neck will go to Metsweding. Because people in Lekubu feel strong because of him".

TM: Was this at night?

JM: This was late at night, although with the grace of God, they did not succeed. They went back. I had a sack with me and there was a tank. I would wake up in the night and run away. So I went to Gauteng. I stayed there at Gauteng's place- where does she live now? I am living there with the people of the township in Dobsonville. They knew that there was conflict going on here in Lekubung. So I ended up staying and I stayed for a while. Then a message came that said that *Mme Eva* had been arrested. A school of how many children? This teacher taught at Malibelli.

TM: Malibelli at Nokaneng?

JM: Oh no, this one right here. Right now she teaches at Bosoga Kubo?

Koko: Yes, at Bosoga Kubo. Teachers at the schools were separated. They said children in Lekubu should not attend school.

TM: Oh!

JM: Yes

TM: And that was –

Koko: That was Mangope's law. I worried about that because I wondered why the schools were all in Bophuthatswana.

TM: Oh!

JM: Yes

TM: So here there were no schools

Koko: No there were none

TM: And when were they separated, *Mma*?

[TIMECODE – 45m: 15s]

Koko: I think it was June. I don't really remember which month it was

TM: But still in '86?

Koko: '89

TM: '89, yes. So when they came to separate you, what did they do? Did they make an announcement?

Koko: Yes. They had also told the schools that some of you in Lekubung would be separated and some of you would go to Bofurusi. The principals were being sent far away, somewhere like Taung.

TM: Oh!

JM: So when I heard that this *Mme* had been arrested, I was enraged. I decided that it actually didn't matter anymore. I could even be arrested.

TM: How did the message get to you?

JM: Those at home had been left behind from those who were in the township. So the people who had run away to the townships were too afraid of Mangope's police force. They were afraid that they would be captured and arrested there. They were afraid that there would be fights that were even worse.

TM: Was the township Ikageng?

Koko: You are still talking about Dobsonville, right?

JM: No I was talking about the people we left in the township in Ikageng

Koko: Oh that time of -

JM: That time of the camps.

Koko: Ja!

JM: That was when I left the township. Or let me rather say Dobsonville. I came home and checked if this poor woman had really been arrested. As I got nearer, I hid here in Zeerust. There were some that we got onto, and some that we did not

TM: The taxis?

JM: Yes, the taxis

TM: Really?

JM: There were Magoga [a colloquial name given to Moilwa's people]. They were for the regime that we didn't like so we called hem Magoga

Koko: Magogela took

[TIMECODE - 47m: 42s]

JM: When I arrived, I would get off at Zutlwane, up there. We would come down this way on the path. I would go there where I first stayed.

TM: At Masebodole?

JM: No, no! I went to the village. Where we went to church...where –

TM: Where you had rented?

JM: Yes!

TM: Was that at Rasegakwe's?

Koko: That was when we were close to the other homes but he was close to the Anglican Church.

TM: Okay

JM: Where the church was being built we would still go in there to attend church. Then eventually, I got there. As we saw *Mme* I said "hello *Mme*". I just asked how she was. I did not ask if they had taken and detained her. They said "hey!" and she told me that they interrogated her but that they did not detain her. I said that I would stay and the following day I would spend the day at home. That second day, I went to Masebodole. I was going there, right? As the clock struck 3 o'clock, she was awake and checking that yard. There were policemen everywhere. Just next door that was a young man that I was afraid of because he also worked in the office. His name is Obed. So then I jumped up with all my might. I went around like this. I went through the overgrowth and finally got to Ranoga. We trusted the people of Mokgora.

Koko: A lot. We even fought with them.

JM: Yes, we fought with them. When you were at Mokgoleng you knew that it didn't matter, you could just go in and out asking for help. When I left there, they asked where I was going and I said that I was running away. I was going to Masebodole

TM: Ja

JM: And they said that I shouldn't walk along the road because the hippos are walking along there and are looking for people. They had even seen them stopping Mankanisa cars. They would collect rocks from Masebodole. One of the Mankanisa cars gave me a lift and dropped me off. They did that so the people in the hippos wouldn't see me because they were Mangope's people. If they were to reveal that I was there, they would say that I had run away and kill the people at Lekubung. So then I slept at home. Early in the morning, I went out of Rustenburg. I was going to spend time in Katnaar. In the morning the bus stopped right where I was and I got on board. I knew that while I was in Rustenburg, I would not have anything to fear. I would only just move around a bit. The bus went to the train station. I got onto the bus. When I was at the railway, I knew that I was okay. Then –

TM: Where were you going at this stage?

JM: I was going back to Dobsonville.

[TIMECODE – 53m: 00s]

JM: Then while was in Dobsonville, then I hear that they had attacked my mother. When I go there, I thought “no ways”. It turns out that they were watching me now. Even Obed. They were watching me. It was at night and I thought to myself that there was no place I would be able to go. As I was looking out, there were the people from the hippo! They had gone around on feet.

TM: They had surrounded it?

Koko: That is what they did, yes!

TM: They were making sure that you would not come out?

JM: So then I asked who they were! I asked if they were the police. I said they couldn't just come as in the night as we were sleeping. They told me to open up. They asked who else was there. I said that I was alone.

Koko: That was so rude!

JM: Then they said “open up”. As they entered, they were in this small kitchen area here. They asked me who I was with and I told them that I was alone and they asked me if I was telling the truth. The others said they should search the place. As they were searching they asked me if I was alone, who was this person?

Koko: Oh we have really struggled

JM: The person had left.

TM: So they even knew you?

JM: Yes, they knew me! They asked me what I was doing there. They asked me where I came from. I went to Gauteng. At that time the police were coming out. People were getting shot

TM: And so the person who was shot, who shot them?

JM: They were the comrades

Koko: Those were the ones I told you were chasing people out of cars even as the cars –

TM: Oh!

Koko: Then the people in the car threw eggs at them

TM: Oh, it was at that time

Koko: Ja!

JM: Yes. They just said to me “ah just pass here”. They asked if I didn't notice what was being a bother. They said they had been looking for me. They told me that if I moved just a little bit, they were going to shoot me. I hadn't gotten out. I was just holding on to the wall. They asked my mother if she said she was alone, why she was hiding such a criminal. She wanted to know where they were going to take me. They told her just to keep quiet

[TIMECODE – 57m: 19s]

JM: They said that I was going to jail. "Pass!" I was sitting like this. There are some sitting on this side and there are some sitting on the other side. They all have guns.

Koko: That is what they do

JM: Others on the other side of me were pointing at me with guns.

TM: So they had put you in the middle? Had you just put your hands up?

JM: I put my hands up. They said that if I were to drop my arms, they were going to shoot me. They told me that that night there were some people who had been killed. When we got to their *Kgosi* they were shouting! There was a whole group of policemen crowded in the tent. They were pointing at me with big guns. They asked me if I was Muzukweni. I said yes I was. I was not caught by Mogadime. Again they asked if I was Muzukweni so I said yes, *Mma*, I am Muzukweni. They asked "when are you going back to your familial home?" I told them that this was where I was from. They accused me of bringing conflict to the area of Lekubu.

TM: Ah!

JM: I explained that "*Mma*, it was not me". Then the *Kgosi* came out and said "well, you must kill this man".

Koko: He just said it like that

JM: He said "kill him". He said that if it wasn't for me, policemen would not have died.

TM: Wow, so he was blaming you?

JM: Yes, I was getting the blame. He was saying that when I was not there, there was no conflict. He said I was the one who created the conflict. I was the thief! He said that I was the one fuelling the fights about this new government theta they wanted. He was the one telling people that Ramanyane is not a *Kgosi*. I am also not the *Kgosi*. Then he asked me "Muzukweni, when were you on your way?" I said that was on my way at about 7 in the evening. I refused to say that I was there at about 9.

Koko: Oh my! Oh Lekubu.

JM: Then they took me to the tent. The women are sitting in chairs. They asked "is this the Muzukweni?" Yes, they say that it's him. The sergeants were there and they were writing my name down. They asked me where I stayed and then I told them I lived right there in Lekubung. They asked me what I was running from in Masebodole and I said I was a person from Masebodole. I told them that I was from Lekubung, which is where my father was from. They asked me how I knew Lekubu and I said I came to know it through *Rre* Sebogodi. That was my *Kgosi*. So they asked me if Ramanyane was not a *Kgosi* to which I responded "if he was my *Kgosi* he would not be killing people and beating them up. I told them that Sebogodi was the one I supported because he is a real *Kgosi*. Then I got into his van. There I found Papiki.

Koko: Yes, Papiki. I remember

[TIMECODE – 01h: 03m: 09s]

JM: They found him with a newspaper called Black Saturday. The poor man didn't know how to read. He was just holding it not knowing what that newspaper was.

TM: Was Black Saturday about the boycott?

Koko: I don't know it either

JM: Black Saturday was a publication that came from outside that they had brought into Lekubung

TM: Oh you mean from elsewhere?

JM: Yes, they had made those newspapers and they had named it Black Saturday. So you see they were just being strewn across –

Koko: Just everywhere

JM: The idea was so that everyone could see them. So the car went out and we went to the cemetery. Then it crossed the cemetery. I had forgotten about the tyre. A tyre full of blood. Some others came to catch Papiki. They caught him and put him in that car. “Black Saturday! Black Saturday!” we went around the taxi rank. As we were coming back, people are being dropped off. The bosinki's are holding weapons. They packed us into another car. We were just being forced in there.

TM: How many were there of you at this point?

JM: At this point there were a lot of us. They were the ones from Lekubu. It was being filled to the point where they were pushing people in using their shoes.

TM: Oh my goodness

JM: They were sealed so people would not be able to know who was inside. It was going to Motswedi. When we get to Motswedi, as we are –

TM: At Motswedi are they taking you to the police station?

JM: They are taking us to the police station

Koko: Just outside Mangope's house.

JM: A young man slapped me with his hand. He said “jou moeskond” [Derogatory term in Afrikaans]. I want to shoot you. Remember that he is holding a weapon. I tried to get away. So we actually get from theHippo to the jail cell.

Koko: In the jail cell

JM: There came another young man called Moalawa. There was another one called Darkie. So they say “Muzukweni, we looked for you and we found you. Where did you think you were going to end up?” When we found you we wanted to shoot the tank. Once we shot the shot the tank, it was going to make bombs.

[TIMECODE – 01h: 07m: 36s]



JM: So then the sergeant came in

Koko: The captain

JM: Captain. The one from the police. So then he said he wanted to shoot this thing. You see right there, that was a scar. Dube, he hit me with his hand that had a ring. It was just over here

Koko: Yes, it was just there. He has a scar here. I know that one.

JM: I was bleeding. When I finally fell in their office...you see, as I facing that office, it was this ceiling but there was also a place that looked like once they had beaten a person there and they fell there. It was...

Koko: It had residue?

JM: Yes, there was residue. I thought to myself that...

Koko: That person would not stop. They were at the station near Mogwase.

JM: I thought to myself that there was something fishy about these people. Dube came to me and said "Muzukweni, are you trying to hang on so that you can kill us?" I asked him and who else? He asked if I was resisting the government of Bophuthatswana and I said no ways. I was here right by Manyane

Koko: Yes, remember that is was close to the police station.

JM: He said "don't you agree with *Kgosi* is Ramanyane. I said no way, my *Kgosi* was Sebogodi. Even to this day I said I would be Mandela's supporter. Remember that I am just sitting on this chair in the office where they asked people questions. Another person asked "did you just say you are a supporter of Mandela? If Mandela were to come here, we were going to kill him".

TM: Was Mandela already out of jail at this point?

JM: No, he was not out yet.

TM: Oh really?

JM: At that stage he was quite close to being released. They said "Man, Muzukweni". I told them that if they killed me, they would be killing me for what I believe in. they attacked me there in the office on the side. Those were the police of Bophuthatswana. They even turned off the lights. I looked and looked and looked and saw that this is the kind of place that could be switched on and off. And as I was there -

TM: Off?

JM: I am lights out. What I didn't know was that there was a woman coming. And when she arrives -

TM: That was Mrs Bruitenbach

[TIMECODE - 01h: 12m: 42s]

TM: Who was Ms Bruitenbach?

Koko: Magrita Bruitenbach. She was the one who was working hand-in-hand with the lawyers

TM: Oh so she was a lawyer?

Koko: They would ask to speak to me because I would deal with the law matters.

TM: And she stayed close by in Zeerust?

Koko: Yes

JM: And they said “oh he’s so stubborn!” There was a sort of fear within me. I thought that my agent was coming. I could hear that they were talking to her. She says that if they do not release him...what were you doing? They said that there was something they wanted me for, they would release me. So then she leaves. They were refusing to release me as she was leaving. Someone else said “kill him!” That woman was gone, then they came and say “Muzukweni, do you know that you have really made a mess here. You have really messed up. Perhaps I should kill you”. There was a young man who said “tell us, those people who have camped out – you said that you were living in Gauteng”. Those people who were in Gauteng? Where would they gather?” I said it didn’t know. I said it was all Godly things.

TM: You said they –

JM: Lenwe. That is where they used to host their meetings. I said I didn’t know them. How many did you say go to the meetings and where? They said “hey man! Don’t you know?”

TM: Where was Lenwe?

Koko: Lenwe is in Lepaflei

TM: Oh, so as you are going to Krugersdorp?

JM: Yes, as you are going to Krugersdorp.

TM: Oh! Okay.

JM: So then the young man said to me “just tell us the truth and we will leave you alone”. I told him that they had already pushed me around. “Who did you say you *Kgosi*...Who did you say you supported? I was Mandela’s person. Hey! Didn’t you say Mangope? If I had said that I was a Mangope supporter, Mangope was not going to harm me. I said there were criminals, why didn’t Mangope arrest them? He was going after Mandela’s people because he didn’t like them. “Hey! *Voetsek*” [derogatory Afrikaans word]. Leave here!” So then I went into the police station. I heard them say- you see we were detained here, the police station was the same distance as that shack over there. They said “hey, men! Here is this dog. Open up for him. Give it all its things and make sure it *Voetsek*. One of them said that they wouldn’t take me to Lekubung, because in Lekubung they were going to get killed. They gave me my watch. I was still wearing my pants because I was going to wear the prison uniform.

[TIMECODE – 01h: 18m: 12s]

JM: They asked me if I knew the way and I said yes I did know the way because everywhere we go you are looking for us and trying to kill us. That is why we know the road. So they said they should not find us around here in these shops.

TM: Was this during the day?

JM: No, it was during the day?

TM: The day? Okay

JM: I asked them for money so that I could get onto some transport and go home. They said “look, we don’t want to see you here. Just go!”

TM: They no longer wanted you? And how long was the distance from there to home?

Koko: It was quite a distance

TM: A distance? Could you estimate how many hours it would take if you were going by car? An hour? Maybe 2?

Koko: I think maybe about an hour and a half.

JM: So I get onto a taxi and ask to be taken to the school. They showed me which one it was. When I got in, I asked where Mrs Muzukweni was teaching. They said it was just over this way. They quickly ran and called her, and so she arrived. I told her that I had returned. I told her not to go and check on me in town –

Koko: At the devils place.

JM: So she came me some money to get on the taxi. So I got out of Zeerust to get on the bus. They were going to find me so I would have to get out of Zeerust. They called me to – where did they call me to? Remember that I was scared because I had already been to jail. So I sat there. I stayed there and the next day, I went to Masibodole. We took the Rustenburg route. A friend of mine had also passed away so I got off track and went to the funeral. I was arrested again, right? I was just sitting around and then they came and arrested me for the law.

TM: And when this started, was it '89?

JM: It was '89

Koko: '89

TM: Okay and so the second time was it '89, or was it '90?

Koko: It was '90

JM: It was right there and I had placed my fingers like this but I was lying down

TM: Oh the floor?

JM: On the floor. [TIMECODE – 01h: 22m: 43s]

Koko: he was lying down

JM: It was the cold. They would never forget the *Sjambok* [a whip-like instrument] though.

TM: And when they took you did they take you to Motswedi?

JM: Yes, they took me to Motswedi. They would not hit me in Lekubung. People here in Lekubu: once they saw that there was one of their own close to the *Kgosi* who had been taken, they would run off to Mrs Buitenbach to say that this person of ours has been arrested. The women who were helping us would run off to Gauteng, to where the other people were. They would report that one of our own has been captured. There was another one called Mosotwane.

Koko: I knew him and his family well

TM: Mosotwane?

Koko: Yes. They would harass people there in Motswedi. I would tell him to go back to his familial home and not to cause trouble here

JM: So you know, he was also my brother-in-law. He kicked me with his shoes in my stomach.

TM: Really?

JM: He wanted to know if I knew what he was doing and I said I didn't know. He said I am hitting you with Mandela and De Klerk.

TM: What?

JM: He said here in Bophuthatswana, Mandela has never stepped, so I am going to step like Mandela, onto you.

Koko: These people were stupid

JM: When they dropped me off right there where they had taken me, they came and dropped me off near the taxis in Lekubu. I really struggled. All over here it was really painful. Young man! Get out! Get out, get out! You *Moeskond!* You are acting as though you are struggling just because you are in Lekubu; just because you are in a place that is familiar to you! Then I left

[Laughter]

JM: I went to the *Kgosi*. I went to the *Kgosi* and I nearly did not make it. The people who say me – the people who had taken care of me. In the morning we said let us go to Mrs Buitenbach. Mrs Buitenbach took my statement and said to me “there is the taxi to Joburg” and so I went to Gauteng.

TM: Where were you going in Gauteng?

JM: I was going to Khotso House, at that time

TM: Oh! Okay

[TIMECODE – 01h:27m: 44s]

JM: Yes, sir. I was going to Khotso House. When I got to Khotso House, but I didn't know it there. There was another agent there. I think he was disabled. He was a white man. I was with Motsose. I said "Motsose, he was like Mafisa. He said, actually, you are being looked for by *Mme* Mamydia. He asked me if I had the letter and I said here it is. Then he gave it to his assistant. After that I was able to see *Mme* Mam Lydia.

TM: Oh!

JM: What was her name?

Koko: Lydia

JM: Ah yes! They said to us that the following morning, we had better be there. They were taking us to an agent. What was his name again? That agent of ours?

Koko: Who? Clive?

JM: Clive! The following day, they were taking us to Clive. Then they took us, and we went around with this agent. Then we went with Sebogodi.

TM: Oh!

JM: Yes

TM: Pupsey

JM: Yes. We went to his place but Clive we had not seen. They kept saying his offices were here. They took my papers and he even spent some time there. They said to me "tomorrow, you are taking him to the doctor. The doctors were all the way over there. When I go there, they took an x-ray. They examined me. They said they would not be able to examine me after a while

Koko: Once you were already better

JM: Before you had gotten better

Koko: Yes, that is the type of thing they do.

JM: So I stayed there a while and then we left and went back to Dobsonville, to the hostel.

TM: Where did you meet with *Rre* Pupsey?

JM: He was also in Gauteng. He had run away as well.

TM: He had also run away?

JM: Yes! He had also run away. So we stayed there. Someone of the others who were examined there stopped talking to me. On weekends, we would go to meetings.

TM: Where would you meet? There at Lenwe?

JM: No there were meetings that were held here in town

[TIMECODE - 01h: 32m: 34s]

Koko: It was at Wanderers

TM: At Wanderers?

JM: It was then that I realised that I was not going to be able to continue. I was not working, and I was unlucky. As we were looking for jobs, other people would tell the bosses that these were people who fought and resisted Mangope. The white people were not pleased with that.

TM: Really?

JM: So I said let me rather go home. I would rather go and struggle at home. When I got home, I wished I was in the township. Being back home was really difficult for me. I was anxious that if they saw any one of us...my concern was that if it was at night, I would be dragged off in the night and my head would be severed in the overgrowth.

[Indistinct talking and laughter]

TM: For how long were in the township?

JM: Which one? This one in Zeerust?

TM: Yes

JM: I completed about 4 months there. Then Mr Mandela was released and he came here to Zeerust. He came to see Braklaagte and see the villages and see the homes. That was when he said these people should go, that very moment, he wanted to see them in their birth place of Braklaagte. When the agents came to check on us, they came to check because we used to host our meetings in the Anglican Church. So then the agents came to our meeting. That is when they said we should go home. It was at that point that we came home. So then when we returned, I even got this stand.

TM: When you went back home, were the soldiers still there or had they already moved away?

JM: They had not yet moved away. They were still there in the villages.

Koko: Their main function was to protect *Kgosi*.

TM: Okay, and were they still disturbing you?

JM: They were no longer a brother, *Rre*. There was only a short time later that the man we were promised. I got a letter saying that I should go to the *Kgosi*

TM: Which *Kgosi*?

JM: *Rre* Motasene. I took that letter and took it Mrs Bruitenbach. When she read it, she said –

Koko: What happened? I think she wrote another letter.

TM: Okay, and what did *Rre* Moilwa's letter say? Did you read it?

JM: So I didn't read it

[TIMECODE – 01h: 36m: 58s]

JM: So I went straight to give this letter to our lawyer.

TM: So she wrote another one?

JM: She wrote another one. Then she said the letter must go back to the owner. So then I took the letter and gave it back.

TM: Really?

JM: That was when I built a 2-room. That was when I got home. That is when I was able to relax. I was with my comrades. There was nobody who was bothering me

TM: Mm-hmm

JM: Yes

TM: Wow, you have really come a long way, *ntate* Muzukweni. You really had a hard time. So now in '94 we had elections and we elected another government – our government

JM: Yes *ntate*

TM: You explained that when you first arrived here, people were using the land to mill. People were living off the land

JM: People were living off the land

TM: So now what was happening to that land?

JM: There was no longer...it was the older people who were the millers. People's crops had died. There was no longer any cattle. Not even the donkeys were there anymore. They had been affected by the strife

Koko: That was Mangope's doing

JM: What was because of Mangope?

TM: He killed the donkeys?

Koko: There was a person I knew who was a cripple and had donkeys. They shot and shot him and even shot his donkeys.

TM: Wow

JM: So at the end of the day, what was going to be milled? The people who lived here would need tractors and those tractors are very expensive.

TM: So, *Mme*, they had taken you and you had gone to different schools?

Other: Yes

TM: When did you return? When did they bring you back?

Other: When Morafe had no-one in the townships, then they brought us back

[TIMECODE – 01h: 39m: 29s]

Other: They didn't return us all at once, but at least bit by bit we returned.

TM: And you had also been arrested

Other: Yes, I had also been arrested over there. There was a wall that went around this other side. There was Thati and there was the letter. Then he said I was being summoned. I didn't refuse. I followed close behind. When I got there, I gave them the letter

TM: Where were you being called?

Other: Yes, there at Ramoiloa.

TM: Oh yes.

Other: When I got there, Thati was there. They said that you see this letter? You must go to Welwedag with it. I asked what would happen there and they just told me to go with the letter.

TM: And what was there in Welwedag?

Other: It was at the Magistrate's office. We were going to court there. They said that it was us who said that children should not come to school

TM: What?

Other: Then they said I should ask God for help to tell the truth. When I asked what truth? They said no, you should ask God to help you tell the truth. I said I could tell the truth, yes. So yes, they day arrived. So remember when you went to court you would only use your –

TM: Yes

Other: So the ones I spoke were being called out and called out and I just sat there. I just sat there. They did not call me in for the entire time.

TM: Really?

Other: I did not enter the court.

TM: Do you still have the letter?

Other: Yes, I still have that letter.

TM: Wow, yes. These are the issues in Braklaagte. This is history, right?

Other: This is history.

TM: So then they only took you in once?

Other: What happened was while I was there also came someone who had an interest and asked where Rre was. I said I didn't know, they were the ones who took him. How can you come and ask me if you are the ones who know where he is? They asked me where my ID was and I said it was on the man they took. At that point I we may not have been speaking well to each other.

[TIMECODE – 01h: 42m: 03s]



Other: I was just answering back

Koko: Everybody had to speak for themselves.

Other: So I told them that they were coming here asking for ID from me when they knew the person they took from here had it. I told them that they know a person doesn't keep an ID on them so I also didn't have mine on me. They told me I wasn't talking to them correctly and I said yes but neither are you talking to me correctly. I told them that I didn't not know where the person was and I had none of his possessions. So then they just left. They did not come back to me again.

TM: Were you not scared?

Other: No, I was no longer scared of anything.

TM: Really?

Koko: You know when these problems came to you, or let me say at this time of night, you would just see the vans coming. After a while then you see the Hippos coming. Maybe they would wait behind your house. After that, there would be the privates that had the senior people like the captains and the lieutenant and all those. Those privates then come into your yard. Immediately as the privates get into your yard, the people in the Hippos jump the fence and come into your house. I laughed one day when they were coming to arrest me. There were about 100 policemen. You should've seen my place. I don't even know where the captains and the lieutenants were.

Other: Those people were a bother

TM: No, it couldn't have been nice

Koko: No

TM: So for them to no longer put you under the other government: when did that end?

JM: It came to an end here in the villages when we were coming back from the townships.

TM: Oh, okay.

JM: I actually nearly forgot something else

Koko: Okay

JM: There was an agent there. They told me that they would take her to another agent who was very clever. His name is Mohammed Randera. Honestly, as I was going to him back and forth, that is when it ended. I am not sure how things were going.

Koko: Randera. He must be on pension now. I think it has been about 2 years since I was last there.

TM: I think then we have had good discussion. Thank you! We have heard the stories. I would like to thank you a lot for your time and for this information. It has been very helpful.

[TIMECODE- 01h: 45m: 55s]

TM: I think it will be very useful when we are writing our book. Children will know about this place and how it came about

JM: Yes, how it came about.

TM: And who the people were who fought for it. In '57 you mentioned thieves. You said they were thieves "neh"?

JM: Nye Nye Nye.

TM: What was that?

Koko: That is what we said with *ntate* Mogosi. When there were people – women who had taken passbooks and Morafe didn't know, they were going to find out. The men who worked in Gauteng would come. They would meet with people here and they would torch the houses of those who had taken the passbooks. If they came and asked who torched the houses, they would simply say that the house was torched by thieves "Nye Nye".

[Laughter]

TM: Oh I understand it now

[END]





