

KWAZULU-NATAL ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Interview conducted with Cassius Lubisi by Ruth Lundie on 24 July 1995

(‘R’ shall indicate Ruth Lundie, Interviewer and ‘L’ shall indicate C Lubisi, Interviewee).

R: ...at the University of Natal on the 24th of July 1995. Cassius, when you came to ‘Maritzburg, what was your introduction to the South African Communist Party and also, inevitably, to Mr Harry Gwala.

L: Well I first came to Pietermaritzburg, actually ten years ago. My aim of coming to ‘Maritzburg was to join the University of Natal as a student. I got involved and stood in politics. I became a member of the Azanian Students’ Organisation, AZASO, which, at that time, was an affiliate of the United Democratic Front. At that time AZASO was very much up in front with the question of political education because we wanted to build a very strong comradeship. And it is through AZASO that I first encountered literature of the South African Communist Party because the Communist Party at that time was to me, the only organisation that was giving perception, good perceptive arguments and direction about what was happening in South Africa in the - of the 1980s. We read articles from uMsibenzi, the African Communist, which was at that time was published in very, very small print. I think it was something like 10cm by 8cm figures - a very small booklet which we could throw around for everyone to read and we could blow up and photocopy and leave in students’ rooms, unannounced type of thing. That’s the first time I came to touch with the Communist Party. And as one went on I - initially I actually the first organisation I joined was the African National Congress. I joined the African National Congress not in South Africa actually, I joined the African National Congress in Harare, Zimbabwe. When I had gone to meet some of the comrades from the political military council of the ANC, in the Harare region, I joined - was recruited into the ANC actually by ^{Ngoako} Nako Ramahlodi?, who today is the Premier of Northern Transvaal. He - then we established good links with Nako, of monitoring the situation in South Africa, in terms of literature and all that. And he ^T of course, he’s of the

NGOAKO

1 Communist Party and initially, and of course, his approach was a class approach, was a class
 2 approach. And from him I further gained a lot of insight into the South African Communist
 3 Party. And then I read also lots of stuff written by Mzala - outside the country, which was
 4 not published in South Africa. There's one particular book, little booklet that he wrote about
 5 AZAPO and Black Consciousness. I've never since seen it in South Africa. It is a core book,
 6 it's written in quite colloquium, colloquial language but it is a very powerful analysis of the
 7 Black Consciousness Movement as it existed in AZAPO. Different from what Steve Biko and
 8 them had thought it would be. So with that I became even more interested in Communist
 9 Party literature. But whilst working in the ANC underground and then I ^{FORMBO}phoned here on this
 10 campus, an underground reading group of the ANC. Although members of the group did not
 11 know that that was an underground political group of the ANC, until I told people, when I
 12 recognised that they'd moved politically to a great extent and they were politically mature,
 13 and then I will tell them "This is the ANC". Although our study group was not really reading
 14 nationalist literature, we were reading socialist literature. We structured our discussions
 15 around books written by what's his name again? I've forgotten his name from England, one
 16 of the .

17 R: A British writer?

18 L: That's right. He wrote three volumes on an introduction to dialectical materialism Marius'
 19 Conforth?

20 R: Oh yes. Yes, I know the name.

21 L: That's right. He - we read those as an introduction to give people a class analysis of the
 22 South African situation and that even brought me very close to the South African Communist
 23 Party although I was not a member of the Communist Party and in fact I joined the
 24 Communist Party when it was unbanned in South Africa. I was approached by Comrade
 25 Gwala, in 1991, 1990, he told me to facilitate the formation of the Communist Party in the
 26 Natal Midlands because at that time there was conflict within the Communist Party about its
 27 structure. The Nationalist Office of the Communist Party wanted a Provincial structure which
 28 Gwala opposed, he wanted Natal to be separated according to regions, and I supported him
 29 in this and I was given the duty to organise the Communist Party in the Natal Midlands to set

1 the first structures to talk to people, the Unions, and Youth Organisations, Womens'
2 Organisations, to try and draw people from that. That's how I became involved in the
3 formation of the Communist Party structures in Natal. Although I got - I knew Gwala, at a
4 distance, through my involvement in the 'Release Mandela' campaign. Because I was the
5 National Assistant Publicity Secretary of the 'Release Mandela' campaign, and It first heard
6 of Gwala in the campaign. Because people who had come out of the island were reciting
7 stories of how there was - sometimes ~~in~~ the island, serious conflict between Gwala and
8 Govan Mbeki on one hand, and Mandela on the other - I got very interested to find out who
9 is this Harry Gwala who is giving Mandela such a tough time, in the Robben Island. And I
10 started to enquire who was this person is who had told these hard-line Communist, who
11 introduced political education along the socialist lines on the Robben Island and all that. As
12 people came out one began to find lots of information about Gwala and of course when he
13 became ill, the arms he decided we are going public with this illness because at that time he
14 had use of one hand - fully operational, but the other hand was half numb. So we decided we
15 are going international, let's take a campaign too for the release of Gwala. And we went to
16 Embassies and briefed them about the condition of Harry Gwala in the Island and we
17 smuggled letters from Harry Gwala in the Island, where he was describing his condition and
18 the last letter we smuggled was we smuggled through a lawyer, ^{KWENZA} ~~Ganinja~~ Mlaba? In Durban,
19 where Gwala was saying basically he wants to go out. He - that was the letter that was
20 written to the Commissioner of Prisons, saying he wants to go out and die at home. It
21 became a very, very sad letter that we received and that give us even greater ammunition to
22 go to Embassies and say this is the state in which Mr Gwala is in and put pressure on this
23 National Party Government to release him and of course we established very good links with
24 his family, particularly his daughter, Lulu. Lulu was with us throughout the campaign. She
25 was the family representative when we went to Embassies, when we went to press
26 conferences, when we produced t-shirts and all those tings. She was basically bearing the
27 family torch. So through Lulu I became very, very close to the Gwala family. Does Ben
28 Martin hinted that to you... ? Now and then I used to stay at the Gwala's ? even before he
29 came out. And when he was brought to Pietermaritzburg, I used to communicate, although

1 he didn't know me. I used to communicate with him through Lulu about ideological issues
 2 that were confronting us outside here. So in that way one got very close to Harry Gwala as
 3 a person, so when he came out, when he came out from prison, through Maritzburg Prison
 4 He came through because they took him from Robben Island, they took him to
 5 Pietermaritzburg and they took him to Westville. So when they came out of Westville he
 6 already knew me and we talked quite a lot. The first, in fact the very first day of Gwala's
 7 release, the first thing we discussed was not really much personal matters, we discussed the
 8 national democratic struggle from a socialist perspective and it was a very, very enlightening
 9 discussion that I had with Gwala. And from then on, I think relations between Gwala and
 10 myself became very good in terms of personal and in terms of the political.

11 R I was present at his de-briefing in the Colenso Hall - that would have been December '89, I
 12 think.

13 L That is correct, yes. That, ja, you know I like the tone that Gwala took and I think that that
 14 actually showed the argument that Gwala was inherently a bad person who was a war monger
 15 - he did - at that press conference anyone who was at that press conference should have seen
 16 or heard Gwala speak at that press conference. To me that person would have heard what
 17 sort of reasonable line Gwala was pushing at that conference. And in fact I remember one
 18 of the questions that came out was 'Mr Gwala do you believe that the National Party
 19 Government deliberately poisoned you? To have the motor neuron disease?' Any person who
 20 was angry, who had just emerged from a second term in prison would have said 'Yes, well,
 21 the National party is responsible for this, they are bad chaps.' But Gwala didn't say that, he
 22 actually said 'Well I actually don't believe that.' He said he thinks the conditions in the Island
 23 overpowered him and he thinks that's a natural thing to happen. He doesn't want to go into
 24 the past and say the National Party did this and this. It - to me, I think that was a very
 25 powerful response and it showed that the person is not - was not really going to waste time
 26 on petty little issues. Although, to us, the reason why Mr Gwala's - lost the use of his arms,
 27 was seriously, a serious blow to us. But he didn't see it that way, when he was released.

28 R I was impressed by two things, the fact that someone had to stand at his shoulder to take off
 29 his glasses, wipe them and put them on. That reminded one constantly of the disability, but

1 more than that, the astute intelligence came across

2 L: Ja. ~~I~~ think, ja. Gwala was an amazing person in terms of intelligence. I think. I mean I don't
3 want to be judgmental on the general leadership of the country, the ANC or any other
4 movement but I think Gwala stood as one of the most intelligent people in the country, at
5 least in the political sphere. His mind was really perceptive and I think that's one of the
6 complaints that we continuously heard from comrades who were detained by Security Police
7 in Maritzburg, we had some very hard line comrades and they were always tortured very
8 badly and the Security Police used to say "Your head is as hard as Gwala, you are like Gwala
9 - he is finished - he doesn't have hands - but he is still messing us up in prison, although he
10 is grey?"

11 R: What an excellent tribute.

12 L: Yes, because I thought the police knew that the person is disabled physically, but mentally he
13 is still the sharpest person in the country that you could find. I think it's - Gwala's
14 intelligence stems largely from his political cone in the SACP, his achievements, and the fact
15 that of course he was a teacher, a very critical teacher, because ~~I~~ don't know whether people
16 know why, one of the reasons why Gwala left teaching. He told me that one of the reasons
17 he left teaching was - you know, he had to teach children who come from very poor
18 backgrounds, he had to teach them that they must, every morning, they have to open their
19 windows at home so that fresh air could come in - in the evening they must also open the
20 windows so that fresh air should come in - they must not lock the - close their windows,
21 which Gwala said is nonsense. You know, mosquitoes will have a field day, the cold will have
22 a field day if they open their windows and then he said he used to tell children "According to
23 the textbook - you must eat at least one egg a day, cheese, and drink at least one cup of milk
24 a day." And he thought, he found this very ridiculous - he thought: there is no ways I'm
25 going to tell children to do that. He himself, as a teacher, could not afford that and he just
26 could not stand telling children they must drink one glass of milk a day and eat cheese and
27 eggs a day because they don't have them.

28 R: It was the unthinking imposition of a White culture

29 L: Precisely, and Gwala rejected this, he said "No, I'm not teaching this at all." And I think that

- 1 brought him into serious with authorities, education authorities, he became completely
 2 frustrated and he felt 'This is not my work.' The he left
- 3 R Is this when he was teaching at Slangspruit?
- 4 L That's correct, he was teaching in the very, very poor area like Slangspruit so his - I mean a
 5 teacher in the forties speaking perceptively as that, to me, shows a great mind, because in
 6 teaching at that time - only very few people think about those things that are problematic
 7 because they are told 'You simply teach this syllabus' But Gwala was very critical he said
 8 'This doesn't apply to us, and I'm not going to teach it at all. It's completely out.' It shows
 9 a critical mind and I think it continued throughout his readings, his writings, they're also of
 10 a very, very critical nature
- 11 R Yes, he didn't just accept the colonial mind set, never
- 12 L Not at all. I think Gwala was very, very clear. He - as I said I know, I think his class analysis
 13 made him much, much sharper than your average ANC leader. He was able to see things not
 14 at the surface level, because you know the average ANC leader at that time used to see things
 15 in terms of Black and White, which Gwala - yes, Gwala saw them like that, but he had a class
 16 reason to explain why the racial form was more dominant. Gwala's most - he used to like a
 17 slogan which says 'You must be able to differentiate between form and substance.' He used
 18 to like that. He says 'In all your analysis, you must use what form the phenomenon takes.
 19 In South Africa, in the South African situation,' he says 'racism, I mean, oppression, takes
 20 the racial form, bu^t, he say 'that's not the key. Look at the substance - what exactly is the
 21 substance, why is it taking a racial form. That - if you move into the why question then you
 22 are moving to substance and you will be able to analyse.' And that's - I found amusing that
 23 .
- 24 R That philosophical terminology, because it is medieval philosophy. That's interesting that he
 25 analysed in those ways, and - as you say - how many leaders did?
- 26 L: Yes, very, very few
- 27 R: He was probably the only one
- 28 L: Ja, no, as I say, you know, Gwala was, in terms of intelligence, ...
- 29 R: Intellectually he attracted you

1. Ja, intellectually he did, very, very, very much. As I say we used to discuss with Gwala many issues. I remember we argued with him, Blade Nzimande and myself, quoting on - we knew that he was going to push a very hard line, following? And all the national question and we used to - after the ANC was unbanned, in the first office of the ANC, in Church Street - there's Scotts - and what's that building there? The Alexander Building

R. Davis Alexander - I remember.

I. We talked to Comrade Gwala and said we must organise classes for the staff so that we should train politically the ANC staff so that they would be able to know how to deal with the things. And while the classes, a group, a series of classes was on nationalism on the national struggle and you know, we knew that Gwala is falling very closely to the 1913 document, written by Stalin, on Marxism and the National question and Blade and myself thought we'd just 'lets' take Gwala up on this one. Because we disagreed with some of the things that Stalin was saying and Stalin's document was basically not a theoretical, deeply theoretical document, it was basically part of the an argument that was going on there during the time in the Soviet Union and in the socialist international. So we thought lets' take Gwala on that one and we argued -he kept quiet. You know Gwala had this trick of pretending he is sleeping when you are talking. If you know him you don't get fooled, and he wants you to get careless. When you get careless and talk thinking he is asleep now, he will crush you - when he wakes up he will respond to those things which you said when you thought he was asleep. So when you saw he pretended he was sleeping but you continued to be very, very careful on our argument, he heard that all, then he came back and give a stunning argument in favour of the Stalin document. It was - we knew that there was something wrong, but we - in his argument, but we couldn't find what it was. He put it in such a manner that it was very difficult to argue against it and you know we had studied this - Blade and myself had studied this 'An Alternative Document' before, written by a person from Costa Rica, called James Hunt? His book is entitled 'The National Question.' Do you recognise the theory of nationalism. And you know it was very difficult. In fact the meeting ended in deadlock because no one could convince the other person what the correct position is about nationalism in the world and in South Africa in particular. That site was the mental capacity of Harry

1 Gwala

2 R Oh, yes, even to my mind when he spoke, he was accentless. Somehow or other he had
3 picked up a universal English - you noticed that?

4 L Definitely, ja, he spoke an English that was completely different to us and I think one of the
5 saddest things in his later history when most of us disappeared from the scene around him.
6 I think one of the saddest things, I think he also actually reflected it in the interview that was
7 posthumously released by the Sunday Times: not actually by the Sunday Times, by Khaba
8 Mkhize, in the Witness, he reflected on this question that as people around him disappeared
9 he knew what he was talking about the people who were next to him did not know what he
10 was talking about and understand the language he was speaking. They didn't understand the
11 concepts he was speaking and he got increasingly discouraged from writing. You - we should
12 check, during the period 1990 to round about '92, early '92, Gwala was writing almost every
13 week, because we forced him to. We said "It's not good for you to only talk at political
14 rallies, political rallies are emotional issues, people forget about them as soon as they get out
15 of the hall, but when you write, your writings will be there even if you are dead - you won't
16 be able to dispute things said by people." "no hold on ... this is not what Gwala said, this is
17 what Gwala said, in his own writing" So you must write, and we will help you - dictate - we
18 will write". And he did that freely because he knew he could learn us, he could - we knew
19 exactly what he was saying - we could put down on paper and say "read". But increasingly
20 as the normal academically minded people disappeared from Gwala's surroundings, he
21 became increasingly frustrated, and in fact almost stopped writing. He hinted that with the
22 interview with Khaba Mkhize - it was, I think, a very sad part of it because later he basically
23 stopped contributing intellectually out and

24 R It is a sad part - you know when I remember the Edendale War of 1990, this man who could
25 use neither arm, who couldn't shut a car door himself, this is the one thing you can tell me
26 better than I know, was his personal courage in directing the youth when they were fighting
27 the impis in Edendale.

28 L Ja, Gwala, as his brother, the Archbishop said at his memorial service at the City Hall, was
29 an amazingly brave person, his bravery defied logic. I - you know - sometimes it frustrated

1 as who were next to him - it really frustrated us. I remember we had gone to a funeral in
 2 Estcourt and we arrived after the funeral had happened because we got lost and then we went
 3 to the bereaved family to - you know - to pay tribute to the deceased person, you know, and
 4 soon after we arrived, these Inkatha chaps from the area, there was a chap called 'Mbanjwa'
 5 came on in two cars and they fired in our direction. In the house - you know those people
 6 had just come back from the cemetery and all that, they fired all sorts of bullets at us, you
 7 know, we went for Gwala, you know, to try to pull him down. Gwala simply said 'No, no,
 8 don't worry - let's see what they are doing.' And he didn't duck, and you really battling,
 9 trying to pull him down so that we could see, at least from a safe position, that what was
 10 happening and get a briefing from people in the area of why they had these bullets all of a
 11 sudden and - you know - he simply said 'No, wait, wait a minute.' And I suspect that actually
 12 scared the other chaps because they retreated.

13 R. It may well have done. In the face of such courage.

14 L. You know because we - we too, we all went for cover and he simply said 'No, I'm not going
 15 for any cover.' And you know it frustrated us very, very much.

16 R. But then you would have had to answer to someone if he had got killed.

17 L. True! But he simply carried on as if nothing had happened and he said 'No, if you want to
 18 understand people, you must see what they are doing and then only on that basis can you be
 19 able to plan a counter offensive.' That was amazing, and also, as he said, during the Seven
 20 Day War, we used to talk to Gwala and say 'You are old, you can't run, you don't have arms,
 21 so don't, don't go around during the Seven Day War, sit at your place here - we will tell you
 22 what is happening outside.' Not Gwala, he went out. I remember one of the closest shaves
 23 that Gwala came, faced during the Seven Day War in Ashdown, which he nearly got killed
 24 there - as the Inkatha impis were approaching from the - there opposite Ashdown - they were
 25 coming in quite huge droves and they were armed you know and the Ashdown Youth Group
 26 had not or two guards there trying to repel them you know to cross the stream down there.
 27 Gwala was there and I mean quite a few bullets went past him - there he had to physically,
 28 personally manhandled and be told 'You go.' But he was there he was saying 'No, lets' not
 29 go. If we die - let's all die here.' And you know to us it was - it was a serious point of worry.

- 1 to us every time
- 2 R But at the same time it was inspirational
- 3 L: It was. I mean. to the youth - to the youth of Ashdown .
- 4 R They adored him
- 5 L: They thought 'Oh this is great - this is the type of leader that we want who wants to be with
6 us when we are in trouble.' And I think that's one of the things that Gwala will be
7 remembered with by the youth. And in fact from the academic side, I think Gwala's memory
8 is likely to fade because of his lack of writing in his later part of his life. But from the youths'
9 side, in terms of self-defense, I think his memory will live forever. particularly in the an
10 unstable Natal because Natal will be an unstable province - the most unstable province we
11 have in South Africa and this is going to be like this for a long, long time and the youth will
12 remember, in such a nostalgic manner how Gwala used to emphasize the self-defense -
13 children will not forget that. and that
- 14 R Especially a disabled man like that.
- 15 L: Ja. It think that memory will be there
- 16 R: I'm sure it will. Cassius. tell me - he must have hoped to get some relief for his arm
17 condition. because he went - he flew to Britain for the first time, quite soon after he came
18 back to Maritzburg. And he went to seek medical help
- 19 L.: Yes. we. he certainly thought that there could be something that could be done and in fact we
20 also thought so because we encouraged him to go to Britain. He went to Britain. during his
21 stay in Europe he also went to East Germany although it was not announced in South Africa
22 because he would have been see to when he came back. He also went to the Soviet Union
23 during that period, but there was not much help in Britain, so he came back and even when
24 he came back we still believed that something could be done so we switched our attention
25 from Western medicine to Eastern medicine - we used to go to a Chinese doctor - I don't
26 know what you call them in the east. In Johannesburg, in the Yeoville area in Johannesburg -
27 he used to do acupuncture and all those things - we used to go there twice a month - you
28 know his doctor used to put needles through Comrade Gwala's arms and the back and all
29 that.

1 R It was certainly worth a try

2 L It was certainly worth a try and in fact at once stage, we thought that this doctor is
3 succeeding because there was a time when I think the right arm - Gwala could control his part
4 of the right arm during the treatment - so we thought things are going very well, but as time
5 went on it remained that so we decided we'll give that up too. In fact I think after the
6 Chinese experience Gwala lost hope.

7 R His age was against him

8 L: Ja, truly he really lost hope - he lost hope because two years ago, in 1993, he was asked by
9 the Cuban government to come up to Cuba so that they could give a final try to this - Gwala
10 initially agreed and said 'Ah, yes, I'll come.' But later on, I think, actually a week before he
11 left he changed his mind he thought 'I'm too old, I won't use these arms anymore anyway -
12 it's not worth the trouble.' And he changed, but that that was the nature of Gwala. It was
13 his physical condition certainly inhibited him from doing many things, I mean firstly, I mean
14 some people used to say - the leadership - you must be lucky that Gwala can't use his arms.
15 Because he could have lifted the tables several times at their ' meetings and he would have
16 certainly come to blows with some of the ANC leaders because he really got frustrated at
17 times he just - left meetings - these chaps are talking nonsense, I'm not going to sit here and
18 frustrate myself whilst I can't do anything to them.

19 R: Can't we end this interview with your telling the story of the Gwala we like to remember the
20 best, which was the occasion of meeting the ANC in Lusaka, on his return journey?

21 L Ja, I mean, that's right. That was when he was coming back from London, he went through
22 Lusaka, he actually came down with Oliver Tambo, who was in England - to be introduced
23 to the National Executive Committee of the ANC, in Lusaka, so the ANC organises this
24 meeting and there is Kaunda there. Kaunda is asked to speak and says 'Thank you very much
25 for giving me this opportunity to speak,' and all that and he goes on to say 'South Africa is
26 such a lucky country that it has got people like De Klerk, President De Klerk, who has really
27 grappled with the question of change and is a serious person and he is really trying his best
28 to change South Africa, and things are really changing.' It was soon after Kaunda had met
29 De Klerk. He goes on, Kaunda goes on, on this tribute to de Klerk and all this and how

1 things have changed in South Africa. As he was speaking, Gwala is getting angrier and
 2 angrier, the ANC National Executive makes a mistake - it says Gwala must speak on behalf
 3 of the ANC, to thank Kaunda for this breakfast that he has prepared them and the speech that
 4 he has delivered - I think that's one of the mistakes that the ANC would love to forget
 5 because Gwala steps up and he says - in his biting words - he says 'The people of South
 6 Africa must be too blind to recognise any changes that are happening in their country at the
 7 moment, with all due respect, Mr President, this De Klerk of yours that you are praising here,
 8 doesn't seem to be doing much at home. At least from the eyes of our people.' I mean he
 9 really went on quite a massive attack on everything that Kaunda had said and went for the
 10 ANC about how little they had

1 R But they had to realised that

12 I. Ja. It mean, they had sort of done. So that attack was a little bit mild as compared to the
 13 closed meeting of the ANC where Gwala really almost - if he had hands - he would have
 14 turned the tables, literally on the ANC because he accused the ANC of devaluing the role of
 15 MK and said 'This MK cadres that are there now are absolutely nothing as ^{to} compared to the
 16 old MK members, they are politically bankrupt.' He says, and he says 'They are giving crash
 17 courses and they really have no political perspective.' And he then went on how the ANC
 18 leadership is at the same time stopping these young MK soldiers who want to return to South
 19 Africa to fight. They are stopping them, and I'm not sure whether Joe Modise was happy
 20 about this or he was getting angry like Gwala seems to be accusing the MK, and by
 21 implication, him, as Commander of MK, because Joe Modise literally stood up at that
 22 meeting. You could see that he was annoyed but he had support in what Gwala said 'Look,
 23 it's nothing, that's a ...' But in fact that meeting was the rude introduction of the ANC to
 24 Harry Gwala, most of him who knew him had forgotten him - that he is like that. Those who
 25 didn't know him were really introduced to him. Funny enough, Joe Slovo, after the meeting
 26 said 'How the hell do you then keep up with this chap, he criticises almost anything that's
 27 there on earth.' In fact that - I mean - if the ANC at that time - Gwala actually broke
 28 tradition, was if the ANC had listened to the MPC, asked no questions and you shall be told
 29 no lies. That's what used to be said 'Don't ask questions, follow a command.' The

organisation was organised along command lines. But Gwala says 'No Commands, we are not going to give you any command at all. I'll tell you you are wrong and I'm giving you the command to set things okay.' I think it was a dramatic turn in the old culture of the ANC, it was a really dramatic turn.

R: Oh, I'm sure. One of nature's rebels, whom we are both glad to have known.

L: Yes, that's true, ja. I think Gwala was a great person he left serious mistakes, made serious mistakes and all that but I think he's - his memory will live for a long, long time.

R: Cassius I do thank you, really, for giving this to us for posterity.

L: Great!

R: Thank you so much.

L: Yes, you're welcome, Ruth.

R: This is a record of an interview with Mr Cassius Lubisi, of the Education Department at the University of Natal, on the 24th of July 1995.

There is nothing else on this side.

1 On the second side there is no introduction. It starts as written. Note the tape label says 'E Mtshatsha
2 is the 'Interviewer', but he is the Interviewee (represented by 'E') and the Interviewer is Ruth Lundie
3 (represented by 'R')

4
5 R: ...of the University of Natal, held at the Alan Paton Centre on the 26th of July, 1995. Eric,
6 when did you come to Edendale?

7 E: When I first came here in Decemb - January, 1957. I was a boy of about twenty-two years
8 at that time.

9 R: And what was it like for you ?

10 E: When I came here at that time it was the sort of good old Edendale, which was a sort of a
11 peri-urban area, which had a mixed sort of being an urban town as well as a rural area,
12 because people were living in a sort of a free society where they could plough and rear cattle
13 and everything in the area and the people were living under the sort of tribal authority at that
14 time there was a chief in the Edendale area - towards Isigondini?, known as Chief Ngenzela,
15 who would own the urban townships here including Sobantu as well.

16 R: Yes, yes. We must include Sobantu in this interview because it is part of the peri-
17 Pietermaritzburg area, yes, yes. So, it was in fact the third largest township in Natal at that
18 time.

19 E: Well, I was ..

20 R: In the 1950s, I think.

21 E: Ja, It would presume so, because really there wasn't that sort of comparison, people of
22 Edendale were an exclusive area because that area was bought from a certain Mr Pretorius,
23 which used to be a farm in ...

24

25 Note: I have typed this interview before - the tape was not as clear, it was obviously a copy - I have
26 not continued with this though as I fear it will be duplication.

27

28

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