Transcontinental Lives:

Intersections of Homophobia and Xenophobia in South Africa

Matthew David Beetar

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Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis has not been and will not be submitted in whole or in part to another University for the award of any other degree.

Matthew Beetar

Summary of Thesis

This thesis focuses on prejudice located at the intersections of sexuality and nationality. Drawing on mixed qualitative research sessions involving men who are 'LGBTI migrants' from African countries, and who are living in South Africa, the thesis offers three overarching points of focus. Firstly, it contextualises and critiques historical state structures and attitudes which shape understandings of identity in South Africa. Secondly, it analyses everyday experiences of xenophobia and homophobia, as experienced by 'LGBTI' people who have migrated to the country for a variety of reasons. Finally, it locates these experiences within the structures identified and, based on participant-led discussions, offers a framework for understanding and suggestions for meaningful intervention.

Using an overarching critical perspective of intersectionality and queer necropolitics I argue that contemporary South Africa fosters an image of inclusivity and exceptionalism that is vastly at odds with reality. In everyday spaces 'LGBTI migrants' are often forced to 'switch' between being either African *or* LGBTI. However, I argue that through journey-derived questioning of both Africanness and Queerness these processes of switching foreground hope and action. These are rooted in values of solidarity and community which extend, for fleeting moments, beyond labels and beyond geographic boundaries. Through a reconciled merging of these seemingly opposed subjectivities I argue that insight is offered into life beyond, yet within, national structures.

In this way the participants exhibit an 'African Queerness/Queer Africanness' which shifts them beyond necropolitical death and towards transcontinental life. I ultimately argue that this may be harnessed as a tool to intellectually, and practically, render Africa as a site of (African) queer potentiality. I suggest that LGBTI migrants, through their embodiment of a specific transcontinental future, are pioneers in revealing this potentiality.

Key words: intersectionality; South Africa; queer theory; necropolitics; migration; prejudice

Acknowledgements

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[1] Unless, of course, I happen to bump into Matt Bomer and he realises that I am in fact the love of his life, prompting him to leave his husband and children, elope with me, and subsequently introduce me to Ryan Murphy – at which point I am offered a part in season 87 of American Horror Story, shooting me to fame (and friendship with Lady Gaga – I can finally show her my MA about her), and resulting in me landing a leading role in the latest M. Night Shyamalan film, allowing me to both showcase my talent *and* redeem him as a director (it's really time). The Academy Award will follow. Too specific? Not specific enough, I say. It came to me in a prophetic dream.

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Introduction

This thesis explores experiences of homophobia, xenophobia and migration in contemporary South Africa. Drawing on qualitative research methods involving workshops with men who are LGBTI migrants from African countries, and who are living in South Africa (I discuss these terms below), this thesis focuses on prejudice located at the intersections of sexuality and nationality. It offers three overarching points of focus. Firstly, it contextualises and critiques historical structures (including state institutions, legislature and media) and attitudes that shape understandings of identity in South Africa. Secondly, it analyses everyday experiences of homo-/xenophobia, as experienced by 'LGBTI' people who have migrated to South Africa for a variety of reasons. Finally, it locates these experiences within the structures identified and offers a framework for understanding, providing modes of meaningful intervention, rooted in participant-led discussion.

Throughout this project, and as a means to critically engage with these foci, I draw on queer theory, necropolitics, and theories and methodologies associated with politics of intersectionality. These critical approaches are employed as overlapping 'lenses' to assist in understanding experiences of life in South Africa. Through this I also offer a critique of the concepts themselves. This project is therefore a consideration of multiple overlapping flows of structural and social power.

Through a series of discussions, supported by and understood through these lenses, I argue that contemporary South Africa fosters an image of inclusivity and exceptionalism that is vastly at odds with reality. The formulation of the 'rainbow nation' and its corresponding nationality excludes 'foreigners' and 'queers'. LGBTI migrants, however, often navigate a liminal terrain of hostility in ways which foreground action-driven hope. This enables a unique sense of Queerness and Africanness, the combination of which offers insight into life beyond, yet within, national structures. I suggest that LGBTI migrants, through their embodiment of a specific transcontinental queer future (Muñoz 2009), reveal the potentiality of Africa beyond an understanding of the nation. This thesis is thus an argument for a new perspective on being and unbeing, belonging and unbelonging, in Africa.

Journeying to Find the Thesis

I have endeavoured in both my research and my writing to be self-reflexive and to remain aware of my own subject position and privilege, which I share below. In the chapters which follow there

are headings that emphasise various 'journeys'. I have framed sections in this way for several reasons, the most obvious of which is that they are ongoing. The lives of the participants continue beyond these pages; my thought process continues beyond writing this thesis; and my own journey as researcher continues beyond this project.

I frame the sections in this way, however, for the primary reason of remaining critically aware of the journey from the *past* – the decisions and threads of influence which have enabled this project to be. This refers to the narratives of the participants, the development of democracy in South Africa since 1994, and the intellectual thought which developed my critical framework. It also refers to my own personal past – the forces which led me to choose this topic.

Throughout the chapters I weave my own reflections. And so a reader from beyond the reaches of cultural studies may feel a little perplexed at my style of engagement. This is not a psychoanalytic auto-ethnography, after all. It is crucial, however, to the intersectional ethics of this project that I remain committed to the partnership forged with my participants, the dimensions of which are discussed in chapter four. A part of this is the realisation that I asked them to expose themselves in their own narratives. They willingly did this, and the arguments I make are thanks to their openness. Their vulnerability must be my own.

Finding Inspiration

In 2008 I went for an interview to become a Mandela Rhodes Scholar. I did not know the faces of the suited people in the executive boardroom, and I argued with a man who reminded me of my grandfather. I told him that I thought he was too cynical about the role of media and cultural studies in South Africa, and that I would never describe myself as patriotic for I fundamentally disagree with the very idea of a nation. As luck had it, he was the chairperson of the Mandela Rhodes Foundation (MRF). As a close personal friend of Nelson Mandela he had played a central role in the bringing together of the legacies of Mandela and Cecil John Rhodes. Right. My scholarship journey had ended, I assumed, before it had begun: one does not criticise the 'Rainbow Nation' to the face of one of its liberators. I was wrong: to my ongoing surprise I was selected as one of the 2008 scholars. At the time I did not quite realise the profound impact this moment would have on me. In many ways the start of that journey was the start of my PhD journey. In a space forged by uniting what is widely regarded as two fundamentally opposing legacies (continental hero and brutal colonialist), through the welcoming of a critique of nationalism, the tentative tendrils of this thesis found support.

My topic did not take form then. Intense group discussions were held with my 'cohort' of scholars on the leadership development courses run by the MRF. These conversations with 22 other Africans, all sharing an equal commitment to education, leadership and reconciliation on the continent, implicitly introduced me to the perspectives and critical approaches which have given this project shape. The transcontinental solidarity, temporary and unstable as it was in these spaces, fed a sense of belonging wilfully constructed beyond the boundaries of national identity. It was a rare space in which I felt connections. This environment also enabled me to publicly 'come out' for the first time. Although my own sexual subjectivity was something I had privately reconciled (to varying degrees) within myself for several years, and although I was 'out' (a marker of 'authentic' gayness, within the ideology of Gay International[2]), the forums created by the MRF played a role in overcoming internalised anxiety. Reflecting on this, I inevitably sutured a sense of sexual being to the politics of these spaces. The moments of reconciling my own 'geographical-ness' with my sexuality in spaces intentionally built as non-judgemental and re-affirming sketched the outline of my future research goals.

Subjective Reflections

In connecting the influence of this personal history to the ethics of this thesis, I seek to remain conscious of my own social power and privilege, and to avoid imposing assumptions which carry the tint of such a position. In chapter three I discuss the concept of intersectionality as an 'analytic sensibility' (particularly Crenshaw 2014, 2000, 1991, 1989; Cho *et al* 2013; Yuval-Davis 2011), and this frames both my research and my approach. An awareness of my position requires self-reflection, and it requires a sharing with the reader. This is a step towards remaining accountable, but also towards being an agent in potential change. I share my own journey and position here to resist pre-empted calls of bias or intellectual colonisation: in stating my own subject position and narrative I position myself as a partner. Yet I do not claim shared experiences with the participants, and I do not claim victimhood. I instead offer respectful solidarity.

This is a point of tension that is increasingly visiblised in both research and social activism. Memes demanding you 'check your privilege', hashtags to name and shame 'mansplainers', and anger over 'cis-white-men' acting as spokespeople for disadvantaged groups can be traced to virtually any event of identity-related engagement. I have read countless

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[2] Massad (2007). See chapter one.

popular blogs and magazine articles about calling out privilege, creating or decimating 'safe spaces', and how to avoid 'cultural appropriation'.

All good things in theory, but intersectionality (as I discuss) is now a buzzword (Carastathis 2013: 942) – and in the last three years of writing I have seen it increasingly flung about in equal parts sincerity and misappropriation. It is a tool being wielded as a weapon – a dangerous one, too, for where it was forged to assist in revealing the complexities of social interactions it is increasingly used to simplify and dismiss. I have already had (academic) questions asked of me: *why are **you** doing this research, and not one of your target participants? How can you, as a cis-gay-middle-class-white-male, research this topic? Why are you researching it in the United Kingdom rather than staying home in Africa?*

Of course it is important to state subject positions and remain accountable. At some point, however, collaboration must be allowed: intersectionality is fundamentally connected to action, utilising self-aware privilege and power to correct imbalances. The alternative is isolation and stagnation.

And so I may state I am, and am read as, a 'cisgendered, gay, white, middle-class, male'.

But what of the intersecting forces which I choose to keep invisible? What of the fact that the family of my middle-eastern grandfather migrated to South Africa and, due to illiteracy, mistakenly stated the family profession as our surname (which wiped away the traditional Arabic surname, but in the process enabled the family to 'pass' as white according to the apartheid government)? What of the impoverished conditions my father grew up in and removed himself from? What of religious traumas rendered silent? What of sexualities and genders explored as fluid? What of personal migration and unknown belonging? We may only ever share *aspects* of our subjective positions and narratives. To demand 'full disclosure' is quite impossible. At some point a shift must occur from talking to taking action (whilst remaining mindful). Reflection upon my own journey, therefore, is a part of a process to remain connected to the dynamics which *do* influence my worldviews, but also to be open to the ways I may share my social power and challenge my own privileges.

Growing up in South Africa I always struggled to understand my own sense of being. My whiteness positioned me as oppressor, yet my family's personal journey did not always feel privileged. My sexuality rendered me as an undesirable deviant according to the state and my community, and so I never felt connected to South Africanness. I also never felt a part of a 'gay community', for the practices in which I was 'meant' to partake never occurred in conservative

KwaZulu Natal. My mixed cultural heritage (South Africa, Scotland, Lebanon, Germany) intrigued me, but it remained distant in the attempts to solidify a cohesive 'South Africanness'. In this way, this PhD is really an exploration of myself.

However, I explicitly and fundamentally reject a positioning of myself as 'of similar experience' to the participants in this project. Instead, my journey has enabled an empathetic awareness of structural and social *un*belonging (Probyn 1996), and in this lies the potential for informed solidarity. It is a conscious step beyond relying on identity politics. Stating my subject position is not a knee-jerk reaction, but rather an integral part of the overarching critical approach I have adopted in this thesis.

These threads of thought – my own processes of questioning, the Mandela Rhodes influence, my own frustrations and anxieties – led me to choosing this particular topic. In discussions about decolonising school curricula, decolonising mindsets, righting the wrongs of the past and tackling racism in South Africa there have been fragmented consideration of prejudice beyond race and gender. Obviously these sites of struggle remain real and valid, particularly given the history of the country. Yet the lack of engagement with common, broader structures of oppression is problematic. A single-axis approach to prejudice falls back on identity politics and exacerbates tensions within society. It fosters further disprivilege and disempowerment by visiblising certain realities while invisiblising others. Based on exposure to governmental and social attitudes, I sat for several years with my thoughts on the general lack of consideration for LGBTI people by the government of South Africa. After discussions with other Mandela Rhodes scholars in 2012 I became aware of the ongoing disdain the state seems to have for 'foreigners' (which I discuss in chapter two). These discussions were follow-ups to ones held in 2008, when the media portrayed a 'wave' of xenophobia sweeping across the country. In these dialogues I noticed a distinct absence of narratives from LGBTI voices.

The Journey within the Thesis: Changes and Decisions

The lack of research done into the intersection of homo-/xenophobia at the commencement of this project in 2013 spoke to a need for a fresh perspective on sexual and national politics, particularly in the wake of increasingly publicised hate crimes in South Africa. Since 2013, however, the journey and shape of this topic has evolved and shifted. Originally, I sought to balance media and cultural studies equally, arguably giving more attention to the media and globalisation than to cultural studies.

As I worked with my supervisors, and as I read about queer politics and national tensions, I noticed a shift in the direction of the thesis. Where I once located the media at the centre of the project I now locate it as one institutional agent, one flow amongst many, influencing the *daily lives* of the participants. Daily life has become my focus. I have approached this as a Cultural Studies immersion: a weighing of human experience and social structures in an effort to understand the relations between power, politics, the past and the future.

Yet I have not expunged the role of the media in shaping the everyday. The South African context requires the recognition that contemporary understandings of sexuality are subject to, and are results of, systems of social and economic commodification and commercialisation. The media, as a part of such systems, aids in the construction and perpetuation of social understandings and attitudes, as well as the potential ossification of misunderstandings and prejudices (Hall 1997: 21). Recognising the continuing role that the media has in "educating us how to behave and what to think, feel, believe, fear, and desire" (Kellner 2003: 9) contextualises the role that the media potentially plays in perpetuating processes of stigmatisation – both in relation to sexual orientation and nationality. The media can thus operate as a site of support. This may take the form of facilitating shared (imagined?) understandings of experience, or by media technologies being used in more practical ways (though one should endeavour to avoid ungrounded essentialised claims about the liberatory potential of the media). From originally considering the media as the key determinant of experience the project evolved to locate it as being connected to other social structures whilst remaining a site for potential intervention.

This project thus shifted to locate itself within a complex consideration of subjectivities, belonging, prejudice, and mediated support. It is within this that I tentatively open new ways of imagining and offer a collaborative perspective on life in South Africa.

The processes of reflection and self-analysis which led to this imagining and collaboration also shaped a sensitivity towards an immersed understanding of identities and subjectivities as held by potential participants. Conversations about 'gay rights' and 'migrant rights' are commonplace: I have read numerous opinion pieces and reports (for example, Allison 2015; Gasnolar 2015; Evans 2014; Paelo 2014; Mdletshe 2012; Human Rights Watch 2011, 1998; Smith 2014; Smith 2011; Subramany 2011; Khoabane 2010; Neocosmos 2010, 2008; ActionAid 2009; Cameron 2007; Gevisser 2000; Nyar No Date) and had uncountable discussions about these topics (stemming, for example, from Beetar 2015, 2014). A danger in approaching the intersection of sexuality/nationality (as with any intersection) is a homogenisation of familiar categories of analysis. It is, frankly, quite exhausting to continually reflect and question – to

interrogate 'what do you *mean* by 'gay man' or 'refugee''? This sort of intellectual fatigue is frustrating for those who would rather focus on 'doing' rather than 'speaking' (something I have been guilty of at times), but entirely necessary in order to avoid reproducing discursive power dynamics. As such, it was important for me to frame from the onset an awareness of and potential for fluidity between identity categories and subjective labels. I did not want to impose a monolithic understanding.

Chapters one and two are dedicated to prying open structures and attitudes which assume homogeneity. Although the initial spark for this project was my own questioning of what it is like for 'gay migrants in South Africa', I set out to explicitly interrogate the very meanings of these markers. In forming my research questions I was mindful of a broad openness to experience, and thus sharpened focus on an engagement with the experiences of *socially and/or economically marginalised men from other African countries who express same-sex desires or subjectivities and who live or work in South African urban spaces*.

A definite mouthful. It would be far easier to consider it a project about 'gay migrants in cities'. However, as chapters five through eight reveal, subjective salience is fluid. And a vision for change is located within this very fluidity. The tension between imposed identity categories and subjective fluidity is a part of the struggles which shape everyday life, and I do not shy away from this. I elaborate on this in chapters three and four (as well as on my justifications for limiting the research focus), but I signpost it here so as to introduce my decisions regarding the structural presentation of this thesis.

Research Questions and Thesis Structure

I set out to explore the following:

Question 1

> What are the everyday experiences of prejudice and belonging for socially and/or economically marginalised men from other African countries who express same-sex desires or subjectivities, and how do these contradict or undermine the ideals of equality and acceptance framed by the South African legal context and the men's legal status?

Question 2

> How do contemporary South African structures, including the media, engage with 'gay' and/or 'foreign African' identities, and in turn how does the 'consumption' of these identities support or disrupt a sense of belonging amongst socially and/or economically marginalised men from other African countries who express same-sex desires or subjectivities?

Question 3

> In what ways might existing social structures be used to intervene, and in what ways may we intervene in existing social structures, to increase the understanding of the experiences and identities of socially and/or economically marginalised men from other African countries who express same-sex desires or subjectivities?

In order to explore these questions the research that underpins this thesis draws upon mixed qualitative methods. My intention is not to quantify homophobia and xenophobia – and any attempts to do so would be to disregard the complex diversities of lived experience. Rather, my aim is to offer a snapshot understanding of this intersection, with a wider goal of providing insight into the ongoing structural and social prejudice festering in South Africa. I say 'snapshot understanding' to acknowledge that no piece of writing can fully comprehend and capture everyday life. I have endeavoured, however, to be thorough and reflexive so as to leave room for multiple future flows and insights.

The thesis thus balances an analysis of the everyday with a critique of formative histories and structures. In this, rather than a traditional 'literature review and analysis' there are two distinct moments of critical engagement. This decision emerged from the recognition that offering effective solidarity geared towards social change needs to be linked to a winder contextual understanding. The first half of this thesis thus forms the first aspect of critical engagement, focusing on a *macro* appreciation of key discourses which shape reality in South Africa.

The second half of the thesis scales down from the macro to the *micro* and is rooted in qualitative engagement and narrative analysis. Working with two NGOs – *PASSOP* in Cape Town and *Access Chapter 2* in Pretoria – I held two workshops for identified participants. These are discussed in chapter four as a combination of focus-group and interview techniques and creative methods geared towards producing personal narratives. This facilitated the collection of stories about life from an inspiring group of economic migrants and refugees. These narratives are discussed and connected to active suggestions about points of intervention in this half of the project. These two components are obviously connected and complementary. The first half informs the second, and the second feeds back into a critique of the first.

Following this introduction, therefore, **chapter one** ("Sexuality in South Africa: History, Homophobia and Queer Theory") initiates a macro analysis, and it frames the South African context in relation to sexual politics. Here I offer a conceptual lens of queer theory to understand the broader flows of power. I also critique queer theory, suggesting the need to locate it in specific African realities. In this discussion I raise key points of tension and contradiction,

specifically introducing the discourse that 'homosexuality is unAfrican', and arguing that such nodes of influence are fundamental in shaping sexuality-related (un)belonging in the country. I go on to link these points to sites of homophobia, contrasting the legal structures of the country with the social dynamics.

Extending this contextualisation, **chapter two** ("Nationality and South Africa: A Case Study of Xenophobia") engages with structural and social forces which frame the country in relation to nationality and nationalism. I argue here that the image of the country as a 'Rainbow Nation' has fuelled discourses of exclusion, exceptionalism and xenophobia denialism. Through this argument I begin to introduce an awareness that understandings of belonging based on nationality are fundamentally flawed in that they do not allow room for liminality.

I note, however, that despite a linear structure these macro perspectives cannot be read as discrete. As individuals embody both sexual and national subjectivities, I offer in **chapter three** ("Intersectionality: A Critical Intervention") a way to 'pull' these components together and to begin focusing on narratives of daily life. After critiquing the academic development of intersectionality-as-framework I discuss how the concept underlies the approach to research in this project, and I argue for its adoption as a key 'tool' in deconstructing existing structures and attitudes. As the central 'thread' of the thesis the chapter synthesises how one may connect multi-directional influences and histories to the narratives of the participants. In this, it offers queer necropolitics (Haritaworn *et al* 2014; Mbembe 2003) as an intersectional *lens* through which one may scrutinise the everyday; to 'scale down' from the macro to the micro. This is a pivotal frame for moving beyond a binary of inclusion and exclusion, and the chapter signposts how queer-necropolitics-as-intersectionality is a 'critical intervention' for linking violence, trauma and triumph to the discourses and rhetoric identified in chapters one and two.

Chapter four ("Methods") acts as a transition point into the micro analysis component of the thesis. The chapter discusses my overarching approach to operationalising an intersectional investigation of the topic. Framing the ethics which directed my engagement with the participants, the chapter discusses how I went about collecting information. Introducing the strategies undertaken to facilitate fieldwork 'serendipity' whilst ensuring my own accountability, I 'set the stage' for a narrative analysis of my qualitative research.

This narrative analysis reveals itself initially in my focus on 'lived' experiences of the participants. This theme is first introduced in **chapter five** ("Lived Journeys: Encounters with the State"). However, there is a necessary but artificial 'cleaving' of the everyday. My critique locates homophobia and xenophobia as a daily component of life, and this is 'cleaved' in relation to

encounters with the state, and encounters with society. Naturally these overlap, but for the sake of readability and focus I present chapter five as a specific engagement with state structures. By reading Home Affairs, the legal system and the police force through a queer necropolitical lens I introduce the argument that 'LGBTI migrants' occupy a space of living death, where the threat they pose to the national project renders them as death-bound. I note how state structures 'enforce' an oscillation between 'being' LGBTI *or* African, and how these categories carry with them constrictive meanings specific to the histories framed in chapters one and two.

This argument is extended in **chapter six** ("Journeys through the Social"), which traces lived journeys through South African *society*. I suggest that the oscillation of being regarded as either/or LGBTI/African manifests socially as practices of switching and concealment. This, in turn, normalises homophobia and xenophobia in everyday spaces. As a component of living death, I connect this subjective tension to the role that the media plays. I suggest that mainstream and social media use contributes to the invisibilising of complexity, rendering violence in everyday spaces as somewhat inevitable. However, media use also plays a role in enabling a questioning of subjectivity. This acts as a point of transition into the next chapter.

Chapter seven ("Imagined Journeys") focuses on how the participants imaginatively grappled with being both LGBTI and African. Although differentiating between 'lived' and 'imagined' journeys is another artificial cleaving, it is necessary here as it enables me to foreground processes of psychological negotiation. The chapter engages with the ways in which the participants imagined their subjectivities and identities as they related to their own journeys – to, from, and within South Africa. I argue that despite structural pressure to categorise oneself, through practices of switching and encounters with prejudice, everyday subjectivities are given new personal meanings and resonance. Through a melding of being both 'LGBTI' and 'African' the participants exposed a form of being located *beyond* the bounds of the nation. This, I argue, reveals how homosexuality *is* African. I identify that a distinctive form of hope underpinned their narratives, and this is rooted in an interplay between transcontinental Africanness *and* Queerness. In redefining Africanness to include Queerness, and in redefining Queerness to include fluid solidarity- and community-driven transcontinentality, the participants offered a glimpse of new life.

Framing this as a 'gift', I name this life-driven potential as African Queerness/Queer Africanness. This is extended in **chapter eight** ("Reflection and Action: Collaborative Interventions and Future Journeys"), where I reconnect with the commitment to 'doing something', established in chapter three. A somewhat unconventional chapter, it functions as

an action space, suggesting points of practical and intellectual intervention. Emphasising that the journey is ongoing, and based on suggestions from the participants, it offers sites of practical involvement in the future. These are extended to reach some of the structures previously identified. Drawing on these suggestions and the argument made in chapter seven, it also offers a future-oriented conceptual development. In weaving together intersectionality, Africanness, necropolitics and Queerness the chapter offers an imagined path to an alternative future in which Africa is a site of potentiality.

A Brief Note on Language

As highlighted, this project focuses on 'socially and/or economically marginalised men from other African countries who express same-sex desires or subjectivities'. This phrasing frames the open-endedness of my approach to identity, subjectivities and experiences. However, I also make explicit reference – particularly in chapter seven – to personal resonance with existing categories of analysis (such as gay, bisexual, homosexual). Yet the meaning attached to these categories is never taken as a given: each use is contextualised and interrogated to reveal underlying power dynamics. Although I flag this phrasing as a guiding thought process, I do, throughout the thesis, rely on some existing labels and categories.

I do this for reasons dictated to by the overarching context of the situation under analysis. The preferred phrasing by many activists in Africa – in relation to sexual rights – is LGBTI (Ekine and Abbas 2013). This was echoed in discussions with the participants, many of whom described themselves as "LGBTI members" (which I explore in chapter seven). As a part of connecting to localised forms of activism, therefore, I rely on the descriptor of LGBTI at certain moments. What distinguishes this from a homogenised category of analysis, however, is the explicit *fluidity* and *malleability* of the term-in-action in the minds of the participants. What it *means* to 'be' LGBTI fluctuates, and what the 'definition' of gay is within this shifts.

This similarly applies to the labels of 'asylum seeker'[3], 'refugee'[4], and 'economic migrant', where the elected term of convenience is 'migrant'. Rather than signifying a monolithic narrative of engagement with the state, the term instead speaks to the underlying journeys across geographic borders that each participant has undertaken, and the fluidity of identification

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[3] Defined in South Africa as "seeking recognition and protection as a refugee" and whose "application is still under consideration" (http://www.dha.gov.za/index.php/refugee-status-asylum).
[4] A person "who has been granted asylum status" (http://www.dha.gov.za/index.php/refugee-status-asylum).

within these. I remain cognisant of this flexibility and endeavour to avoid implicitly reinforcing discourses of disempowerment.

The intangibility of subjective categories (and how they may or may not be regarded as identities) in this way speaks to queer theory and queerness. I engage with this in chapter one, but refrain from framing the participants as 'queers'. This stems from a conscious decision to avoid importing theoretical perspectives in an uncritical manner. I re-engage with the 'appropriateness' of meshing queerness with necropolitics and intersectionality in South Africa after extensive critique and reflection upon the lived narratives of the participants (chapter eight). The moments I do use the term 'queer' or 'queerness' I do so with a conscious awareness of its political history and connotations. In other words, this note flags my explicit rejection of any view that essentialises identity and subjectivity labels and any attempts to render their meanings as neutral.

A Brief Note on Unexplored Journeys

Sexuality and nationality are held as primary points of engagement in this project. Yet I caution against reading these as the most important descriptors to the participants, and against the assumption that they are the most pressing categories of analysis. Intersectionality is concerned with multiple powers, flows and subjectivities. One could very easily speak to the same participants and interrogate everyday life in terms of questioning gender dynamics: what role, for example, does hegemonic masculinity play in shaping ideas of belonging and unbelonging? In turn this may lead one to ask how hegemonic masculinity and gender sit with ideas of Africanness and race, specifically blackness and whiteness. This may be pried further by making links between class and power and geographic movement. The combinations seem endless – and of course they cannot all be acknowledged, dealt with, or even foreseen within this piece of writing. My standpoint/privilege inevitably blinds me to certain dynamics.

For this reason I have endeavoured in the project to disrupt linear understandings and to offer a perspective that remains open to other moments of connection. This project may undoubtedly be critiqued from a feminist perspective. It may be questioned from a non-South African race studies perspective: why does South Africa seemingly conflate ethnicity with race? How can we pry open ethnic categories of analysis? In future projects I would encourage such interrogation. Yet these are not the immediate questions of *this* thesis. This thesis is concerned with a particular combination; and yet the arguments I make about solidarity, hope and reflexivity may be conceptually extended to those other evolving (and as real) intersections.

Moving Forward: Beyond Necropolitical Death, Towards Transcontinental Life

This is, therefore, a project based on a Cultural Studies analysis of the balance of power, politics and experience. It is not a post-colonial project, but it obviously draws on works influenced by post-colonial theory. However, it has never been about revising or revisiting or re-applying post-colonial thought to South Africa. Neither is it a political economy project, nor an anthropological investigation, though of course all of these perspectives may be adopted to offer varied input. It is a reflexive cultural cartography of liminality – a navigation in the form of a new perspective on familiar issues and realities. It is a project of in-betweenness. It is a critique of key structures and dynamics which shape day-to-day life, and it is a fresh exploration of everyday experiences, struggles and hopes.

Through all of this I am able to argue that LGBTI migrants are suspended in a space of living death. The project of South African nationalism and its history has created multiple 'sources' of xenophobia and homophobia. These share common structures of oppression, but existing institutions – including the media – fail to address the experiences of those who encounter *both* forms of prejudice (as well as multiple other forms of prejudice beyond the scope of this thesis). I am able to argue that LGBTI migrants are often forced to 'switch' between Africanness and LGBTIness, as South African structures and society rarely enable them to simultaneously embody both. However, in these processes of switching, aided by available (transnational and local) resources, the migrants retain enormous hope. This hope stems from a journey-derived questioning of both Africanness and Queerness, and a reconciled merging of these seemingly opposed subjectivities. Hope is rooted in values of solidarity and community which extend, for fleeting moments, beyond labels and beyond geographic boundaries. I argue that in this way the participants exhibit an African Queerness/Queer Africanness which shifts them beyond necropolitical death and towards transcontinental life. I ultimately argue that the concept may be harnessed as a tool for journeying forward to intellectually, and practically, render Africa as a site of (African) queer potentiality. In this space LGBTI migrants are transgressive harbingers of death-defying reconciliation.

Chapter One

Sexuality in South Africa: History, Homophobia and Queer Theory

[T]he mark of a true democracy is not in the rule of its majority but in the protection of its minority ... [T]he truth of our human condition is that we are a diverse, multi-faceted species. The measure of our humanity lies, in part, in how we think of those different from us. We cannot – should not – have empathy only for people who are like us.

> (Adichie 2014, writing in protest of President Goodluck Jonathan's signing of the Same Sex Marriage (Prohibition) Bill)

There was South Africa, who we turned to in expectant anticipation, because of our clung-to memories of a liberation party led by principle, waiting for the party to speak out boldly, but whose long silence left us with heads hung in shame.

> (Ekine and Abbas 2013: 2)

This chapter is the first component of a macro contextualisation of contemporary South Africa, specifically in relation to sexual subjectivities.[5] It is concerned with articulating the disconnect between the epigraphs above. The first captures the spirit of the South African constitution, and the myth of the *de jure* reality for those living in the country. The second, however, speaks to a sense of abandonment felt in the silence of South Africa's ruling party, the African National Congress (ANC), on 'anti-gay' laws being passed in other countries on the continent. This chapter thus focuses on the tension between the *image* of South Africa as legally progressive, and the *realities* of underlying histories and contemporary attitudes in relation to sexuality.

This is achieved through a critical approach of reflection consideration. In part one, initially noting a formative discourse of the 'unAfricanness of homosexuality', the chapter introduces queer theory as a conceptual tool to question normative understandings of sexuality and belonging, identifying forces which may shape homophobia.[6] Queer theory is presented here as a means to scrutinise the power dynamics of everyday life, which is actualised within the broader framework of intersectionality (configured in the next chapter). The ways in which

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[5]Despite this thesis being presented in a linear format, I do not offer a complete explanatory overview of what may (mistakenly) be read as a linear journey from oppression to inclusivity. This chapter should instead be considered as 'making visible' some key points of interest as they relate to the lived experiences of the participants in this project.

[6] Throughout this thesis I use 'homophobia' as a generic umbrella term to infer prejudice directed towards individuals, specifically the participants, as a result of (perceived) sexuality. In my use of the term I remain mindful of the multi-sited manifestations and causes of it. Authors such as Thoreson (2014) have advocated the use of alternative phrases (such as 'anti-queer-animus'). However, I have elected to use 'homophobia', as this is the term which resonated with the narrated *experiences* of the participants. This chapter may suggest key sites of tension which contribute to homophobic attitudes, but the thesis is concerned with experience.

different oppressions "intersect in complex embodiments" (Sedgwick 1990: 33) speaks to the need to balance a consideration of broad structural influence with an engagement with the everyday (Butler 2010: 109). Wielding queer theory as an extension of the intersectional analytic (Duong 2013) discussed in chapter three, this chapter begins to introduce the political potential of focusing on values over categorisation. Beyond this, part one also frames the need for a queer perspective specifically linked to local (African) experiences (forming the foundation for chapter seven). This need becomes apparent in part two, where I engage with historical attitudes towards homosexuality. These attitudes are linked, in part three, to contemporary factors of everyday life, foregrounding sites of tension. In this, the chapter challenges a linear understanding of South Africa as a space of democratic achievement by 'signposting' key points of friction.

This ultimately que(e)ries approaches to of sexual subjectivity. In doing so the chapter begins to argue that, in a rhetoric of 'the unAfricanness of homosexuality', identity is essentialised. As this chapter begins to show, an (African) national identity, and in turn a continental identity, are discursively at odds with LGBTI subjectivities.

Part 1 – Conceptual Scaffolding

A Note on 'unAfricanness': Insight into Complexities

The discourse of human rights has gained popularity in activism in Africa, with the legal protection of individual rights hailed as the mark of an active democracy. Certainly the shift in South Africa, from a context of criminalisation of sodomy to constitutional equality and legalised same-sex marriages in the space of thirteen years, is a legal triumph, and the legal framework currently in place undoubtedly acts as an "enabling tool" (Van Zyl 2005b: 235) for many citizens. An emphasis on rights is explicitly understandable given South Africa's centuries-long history of consistent violations. Although this chapter will go on to critique such an emphasis, the desire for legal protections in relation to sexuality is equally understandable within the wider African context, considering formative nationalist discourses which brand 'homosexuality' as 'unAfrican'.

An increasingly popular rhetoric in both the political and social spheres, the argument that 'homosexuality is unAfrican' draws on the shaky assumption that same-sex sexual activity and identities are a colonial import. Within the project of nation-building in Africa, facilitated through legislative processes, heterosexuality has largely been "consolidated as the only acceptable basis for citizenship", with the effect that what is termed by Western media as

'homophobic legislation' is an extension of the "'civilising mission' of colonialism" (Ekine 2013: 81; also Wahab 2015; Hoad 2007). The focus in other countries on combating the unAfrican trend in the form of legislation is often a way of "distracting the populace from more urgent needs" (Ekine 2013: 84), with the effective scapegoating of homosexuality as the root of society's ills. The emphasis on the apparent difference between 'homosexuals' and 'real Africans' has "been deployed [by various leaders] to divert society's anger when economies did not favour the majority" (Ossome 2013: 40).

This discourse relies on the "essentialist notion of an 'authentic Africanness', based on the belief that there is something intrinsic to Africa called 'African culture and African traditions'" (Ekine 2013: 80). A part of the 'activism' in response to this discourse is the "search for 'anthropological proof' of pre-colonial sexual utopias" to "place the blame for homophobia [...] on colonial laws" (85). Ekine notes that whether this quest for 'proof' is for "the benefit of us Africans" or simply a means to justify international involvement and the transposition of approaches to subjectivities is secondary to the realisation that such a narrative "obscure[s] the diversity and contextual specificity of queer African formations, past and present, which are shaped by multiple factors" (*ibid*).

Such 'contextual specificity' emphasises the fact that a legal framework of identity-based protection exists parallel to social attitudes which regard sexual diversity as the antithesis of Africanness. As I discuss below, homosexuality as 'unAfrican' did not grow to be a dominant political and legal discourse in South Africa as it did in other African countries (Leatt and Hendricks 2005: 312; Hoad 1998: 41). However, it frequently emerges as a popular social discourse (Vincent and Howell 2014), speaking to forms of nationalism which are evident in other African states.

'UnAfricanness' thus sits as a formative entry point for contextualising everyday life, signposting tensions between the structural and the social. Queer theory is flagged by Ekine (2013) as a conceptual strategy for engaging with such discordant attitudes. It is framed as a critical lens capable of scrutinising contextualised subjective African formations. The continental discourse of 'unAfricanness' speaks to broad social complexities. Although this chapter is not concerned with fully dismantling or tracing the unAfrican discourse, it is concerned with how the discourse draws attention to multiple lived disconnects which cannot be understood through a trajectory of legal protection. A contextualisation of South Africa, therefore, may

benefit from employing queer theory[7] as a guiding framework for disrupting assumptions of sexual (un)belonging.

<u>Conceptual Approach: Queer Theory</u>

Shifting from being a pejorative term relating to sexual orientation, 'queer' has been "reclaimed in recent decades with anger and pride to signal an activist insurgence against homophobia and other forms of oppression, especially those relating to gender and sexuality" (Giffney 2009: 2). However, reminiscing about a joke made by Teresa de Lauretis, Halperin writes that the phrase 'queer theory' first emerged at a conference in 1990 to provoke and disrupt familiar patterns of thought and research (2003: 339). The long-term goal of *queering* theory was enmeshed with a broader political reclamation of dignity in the face of widespread prejudice: the notion of 'queer theory' was effectively, at the time, a "placeholder for a hypothetical knowledge-practice not yet in existence, but whose consummation was devoutly to be wished" (340). Berlant and Warner (1995) cautioned in the mid-1990s that "queer is hot" (343) – that multi-directional and interdisciplinary provocations and disruptions of thought during this decade were heralded as 'queer' sometimes to "supply the demand" of an invocation of 'queer theory' (Halperin 2003: 341). Indeed, a broad unifying concern of radical anticipation (Berlant and Warner 1995: 343) and an ultimate "desire to create new contexts" (347) suggests that, at least initially, "no-one knew what it was" (Halperin 2003: 340).

Halperin cautions against historical revisionism: texts which are now hailed as 'founders' of queer theory were "written well before anyone had ever heard of it" (2003: 341). Instead, it is important to simultaneously acknowledge the extensive theoretical influences which shaped initial contributions to the 'field', and avoid the potential 'normalization' of queer theory – and queer perspectives – by "find[ing] ways of renewing its radical potential [… by] reinventing its capacity to startle, to surprise, to help us think what has not yet been thought" (343) (which is, as I argue below, a key undertaking of this project).

The various academic approaches and perspectives which have been grouped to form 'queer theory' may be tentatively linked through a shared concern with "unsettling" (Berlant and Warner 1995: 348) existing "assumptions about sex and sexual being and doing" (Spargo 1999: 40). This, in the context of this project, has direct relevance for understanding the relationship between identity and power embedded in labels such as 'gay'. Interest in

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[7] Some of this theoretical overview develops research undertaken during a Master's Degree (UKZN 2011, Cheryl Stobie).

'unsettling' stems from the premise that "common sense" as it relates to "modern sexual definition" is "internally incoherent" (Sedgwick 1990: 1). Arguing this, Sedgwick's *Epistemology of the Closet* (a text which post-publication is hailed as a seminal work of queer theory) explores how modern Western societies and institutions have evolved from the "radical condensation of sexual categories" (1990: 9). As an effect of the historical "world-mapping by which every given person" is "considered necessarily assignable" to a homo-/heterosexuality (2), the establishment of a (false) binary between homosexual and heterosexual has produced a "chronic modern crisis" (11). Unpacking the contradictions embedded in this cultural binary, Sedgwick argues that ideas of 'homosexual' are "subordinated" to those of 'heterosexual' in ways which reinforce an unequal relation of power, and in ways which render 'heterosexual' as dependent on the "simultaneous subsumption and exclusion of homosexual" for its very meaning (10).

In this core critique Sedgwick suggests that historical analyses and classifications of sexuality may unwittingly reproduce this dynamic rather than show how issues of "modern homo/heterosexual definition are structured, not by the supersession of one model and the consequent withering away of another, but instead by the relations enabled by the unrationalized coexistence of different models during the times they do coexist" (1990: 47). A key axiom that "gender and sexuality represent two analytic axes that may be productively imagined as being distinct from one another" (30) speaks to the early potential of what-is-now-regarded-as-queer-theory to disrupt normative approaches to understanding subjectivities, emphasising the inconsistencies of cultural categorisation and experience (33) and the "centrality" of "homophobic oppression" in "modern Western culture at large" (34).

Emerging at the same period, Butler's *Gender Trouble* (1990 originally, here 2007) has also come to be regarded as a founding text of queer theory. Where Sedgwick pries open a 'common sense' assumption of a heterosexual/homosexual dichotomy, Butler disrupts familiar notions of gender, sex and desire. Originally a critique of a "pervasive heterosexual assumption" in critical theory (viii), Butler's work partly challenges an "immutable" understanding of sex as a naturally occurring binary upon which an 'obvious' two-gender system, and in turn society, is based (9). Drawing on the work of Witting and Rich, Butler coins the phrase 'heterosexual matrix' to "designate that grid of cultural intelligibility through which bodies, genders, and desires are naturalized" (208, n.6). This shapes a "hegemonic discursive/epistemic model" of social life in which the coherence and acceptability of bodies is predicated on a "stable sex expressed through a stable gender (masculine expresses male, feminine expresses female) that is

oppositionally and hierarchically defined through the compulsory practice of heterosexuality" (*ibid*). Within this framework, Butler deconstructs the assumption that gender is the realm of culture, superimposed upon the biological, by arguing that gender is the mechanism for 'reading' and producing sex and sexed bodies.

This radical rethinking of the link between sex, gender and sexuality shaped queer theory in its argument that the "institution of heterosexuality both requires and produces the univocity of each of the gendered terms that constitute the limit of gendered possibilities within an oppositional, binary gender system" (Butler 2007: 31). Thus, society functions not through heterosexual desire as a result of gender as a result of two binary 'natural' sexes, but rather that a "compulsory and naturalized heterosexuality requires and regulates gender as a binary relation in which the masculine term is differentiated from a feminine term" which is achieved through manufacturing heterosexual desire (*ibid*). Butler, reflecting on a decade of her contributions to queer theory, observes how this analytic may be used to distinguish "between gender and sexuality" to the point of refusing that there is "a causal or structural link between them" (xiv) – but notes that this should not be extended to suggest that "there is no sexual regulation of gender" (*ibid*).

This positions queer theory as being explicitly concerned with crises of ontology (Butler 2007: xi). Central to the deconstruction of the heterosexual matrix is Butler's thesis of performativity, the definition of which has evolved since its initial conception (xv). Interested in the "terror and anxiety that some people suffer" through the "fear of losing one's place in gender" (xi), Butler argues that gender development is not an internalised 'essence'. Rather, gender is performative in that it is "manufactured through a sustained set of acts, posited through the gendered stylization of the body" (xv). This is rooted in the ways in which the "anticipation of a gendered essence produces that which it posits as outside itself" (*ibid*): the ritualised acts ascribed to a cultural construction become naturalized in relation to the body.

The development of this work has contributed to the perspective that the norm of heterosexuality is the result of various social hegemonies that support binaries that enforce notions of the "naturalness of gender" (Bloodsworth 2000: 487; see Warner 1993). Sex, gender and desire are bound to subjective discourses that serve to regulate identity in the interests of dominant ideologies – in particular an ideology of patriarchal heteronormativity (Morrison 2000: 491). Queer theory has, through this intellectual development,[8] come to be critical of the

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[8] Though, of course, this is by no means an extensive engagement with key queer theorists. This section is intended to give a reader unfamiliar with the critical framework a 'snapshot' of formative ideas relevant

heterosexual matrix and the ways in which heterosexuality is understood to be a 'natural' orientation for desire. It engages with the ways in which gender and sexuality are policed and regulated as a way of "securing heterosexuality" (Butler 2007: xii). Building on intellectual contributions from numerous other fields (ix), Butler's contributions steer queer theory to a commitment to "undermin[ing] any and all efforts to wield a discourse of truth to delegitimate minority gendered and sexual practices" (viii).

Queer theory thus comes to be concerned with essentialised notions of sexuality and sexual orientation. Within multiple flows of disruption, queer theory engages with various patterns of thought, all built on the disruption of a "heterosexual-homosexual dichotomy by being ambiguously situated outside of such frameworks" (Bloodsworth 2000: 487). Reflecting on the use of language in relation to describing and engaging with the South African context, the label "gay" often serves as an umbrella term for those 'queer identities' and 'queer subjectivities' that fall outside the heteropatriarchal norm – such as "gay rights". However, "gay" also popularly refers to those who are sexually attracted to the same sex. This basic definition is problematic, as it ignores the discursive histories bound to the term and the category of self-identification which some may consciously choose to adopt. The hegemonic power distribution in society dictates that in order to challenge dominant discourses and ideologies the politicisation of identity is inevitable, and thus a tangible identity with which one can oppose is necessary – as is reflected by the expectations of the legal framework of South Africa. Yet utilising 'gay' and 'gayness' as an umbrella term risks obscuring the complexities of reality and risks condemning less-easily-understood subjectivities to futures of invisibility. It similarly perpetuates a notion of a singular 'gay' (male) identity that is, by default, white, middle-class and aspirational (see, for example, Gevisser and Cameron 1995).

Intrinsic to this idea is the concept of "choice", which is seen by Cock as "politically dangerous" (2005: 202) when considered to be at the centre of a 'gay identity'. Sexual 'preference' may "self-evidently [be] the marker of gay and lesbian identity" (Spargo 1999: 33), but this politicised understanding is "not inevitably the crucial factor in everyone's perception of their sexuality" (34). Queer theory re-politicises this fractured nature of identity politics by

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to this project. As Halperin (2003: 341) offers, a "survey" of queer theorists is difficult to compile, but could additionally include the foundational/initially influential work of "Monique Wittig, Gayle Rubin, Michel Foucault, D.A. Miller, Leo Bersani, and Simon Watney, and extending through the work of de Lauretis, Diana Fuss, Douglas Crimp, Lee Edelman, Earl Jackson, Biddy Martin, Sue-Ellen Case, Michael Warner" and Jack Halberstam. However, as this section later critiques, this list is notably short on non-Western theorists – and would undoubtedly be added to and edited by any scholar approaching queer theory from their respective field.

being "perpetually at odds with the normal, the norm" (40). Edelman reflects that "queerness can never define an identity, it can only ever disturb one" (2004: 17): it "demands self-reflexivity and personal engagement" in that it "refers beyond and outside itself" (Giffney 2009: 2).

The liberation of 'the other', from a queer perspective, can only be achieved by destabilising gender and identity in itself. In relation to the concerns of this project, the pursuit of an 'essence' of gayness or lesbianism or bisexuality merely "replicates the regulatory, exclusionary norms of the existing power structures" (Morrison 2000: 491). Queer theory has been employed to critique the ways in which such categories of sexuality and gender are "instrumentalized" within a reconfigured matrix to "establish a specific cultural grounding" (Butler 2010: 106). Scrutinising the Dutch civic integration tests from 2008, Butler notes how the concepts of freedom and liberation have become politicised in relation to an 'enlightened' surface embrace of sexual diversity. In this instance, new immigration applicants were shown images of men kissing and asked to "report on whether the photos are offensive, whether they are understood to express personal liberties" and whether those being interviewed were "willing to live in a democracy that values the rights of gay people" (2010: 105). The lack of universal application of this policy (it was not extended to EU migrants and skilled workers of a certain economic bracket, nor migrants from the USA, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Japan or Switzerland) suggests that the "coercive mechanisms" (110) of existing power structures may go unchecked without a thorough intersectional (109) destabilisation of gender/sexuality.

In this example a set of cultural norms are used as a tool to establish a binary of modern/pre-modern (see Weber 2016), in which 'sexual rights' are used as an assault weapon against minority groups (such as Islamic immigrants) and a justification of policies of exclusion (complete with profound structural implications). Here, then, one may trace an original purpose of a queer *perspective* in signifying a "disidentification from the rigidity with which [conventional] identity categories continue to be enforced and from beliefs that such categories are immovable" (Giffney 2009: 2-3). It seeks to subvert dominant discourses of essential and absolute labelling by self-consciously undermining gender and sexual stereotypes, with a connection to a greater political consciousness.

In this, queer theory is ultimately positioned as useful concept to explore the lived cultural experiences of subjectivity. In a "move toward the inclusion of all nonheterosexualities" (Pigg 2000: 724) 'queer' has the conceptual potential to challenge boundaries. Thomas emphasises that queer theory is "less personal, more political" and "politicizes sexuality in a new way" (1995: 90). Although this chapter does not offer a re-imagined understanding of all sexual

subjects in South Africa, it does utilise queer *thinking* to fragment expectations of unity and reflect on suppositions of social acceptance and integration in the wake of comparative legal progress. Queer theory and queer strategy may be used to question assumptions of socio-legal stability.

Queer Theory in (South) Africa?

However, despite a general queer mindset being useful for analysis in this project, full dependence on it as an intellectual strategy to question the fluidity of meaning is problematic. In the quest for understanding African subjectivities (Ekine 2013: 85), a reliance on a concept which emerged from Western thought potentially reinforces impressions *unAfricanness* – of both the theory and the subject matter.

Similarly, in relation to the underlying concerns and intentions of this project, the emphasis of queer theory on the social construction of sexuality and gender has added to the "blurriness" surrounding labels for sexuality and sexual identity (Pigg 2000: 724), which has resulted in the "continual preoccupation with definitions" (*ibid*). Particularly within the current South African climate, how can we begin to understand the local *African* intersections of power which shape subjectivities whilst simultaneously trying to find the words to fairly describe and engage with local manifestations of subjectivity? This concern stems from criticism levelled at queer theory, in that it "actually elides differences and becomes a meaningless melange of competing aims and beliefs in the process" (Giffney 2009: 5). In a context of an 'exceptional' legal framework in South Africa (to draw on the discourse of exceptionalism raised in chapter two) how is queerness useful for understanding local dynamics and manifestations of identity/subjectivity, without resorting to essentialist language?

In relation to the broad African context the argument has been made that there is a "distinct lack of consideration for African same-sex desiring culture" in Western queer theory, with the effect that "African-ness and African-centred homosexuality" is erased from intellectual thought (Clarke 2013: 173). Clarke argues that queer theory is "firmly rooted in the West's historic and popular notions of what it is to be African and Afro-homosexual" (2013: 173). Despite intellectual considerations and explorations of queerness in Africa (see, for example, Blessol 2013: 224-5; Lind 2005: 344; Stobie 2003; Epprecht 1998), Clarke argues that within the scope of queer theory such explorations largely remain invisible (2013: 174). He summarises the problematic trends of queer theory in relation to Africa, noting traditions of anthropologically positioning Africa as 'primitive', over sexualised, and thoroughly heterosexual (175-6). The

emphasis here is that "Western queer theory has overlooked the multi-ethnic aspects of identity creation" (176; also Lind 2005: 344).

There is a strong argument to be made for a link between an intellectual domination of an understanding of "homosexual experience" in Africa (Clarke 2013: 177) and the activist actions and views of 'Gay International'[9], discussed below. In relation to both academic conceptualisations of subjectivity/identity and Western activism in Africa there is little room for manoeuvrability in terms of self-expression and self-empowerment: one needs to either adopt an identity of "Western style or fit yourself into prearranged categories of Western fabrication" (Clarke 2013: 177). Indeed, Weber traces how a discourse of international human rights has shaped the structural integration of a particular *kind* of 'homosexual' as being indicative of civilized sovereignty (2016, especially 104-142). Within this imagining of development and progress (rooted in notions of neoliberal nationalism), the identifiable (and 'universally' understandable) figure of a 'gay rights holder' is held as a yardstick for determining whether a state is "normal" or "pathological" (105). This emerges from, and reproduces, notions of homonormativity (which I explore in chapter seven) – in turn reinforcing the political (and moral) authority of a Western configuration of identity and individuality (70).

This can, in the South African context, lead to "continual preoccupation" with labels to describe the mélange of experiences, subjectivities and identities in the country (Pigg 2000: 724). The difficulty in overcoming such a preoccupation is, of course, the recognition that the law in many ways relies on categorisation for purposes of social organisation and interpretation. One should begin questioning, therefore, what an *African Queer Theory* may look like – if it is even possible. Indeed, the inherent questioning 'nature' of queerness sits at odds with a desire *for* inclusivity and social assimilation. Reflecting on the history of the Pride movement in South Africa, De Waal and Manion suggest that the "whole battle is about inclusiveness, within the [gay rights] movement and within society at large" (2006: 6).

Where queer theory may be employed in other contexts to challenge and question social structures, attitudes and behaviours in an effort to constantly situate subjectivities outside of a homosexual-heterosexual dichotomy, queer theory in South Africa needs to find relevance in doing this *as well as* reconciling with normative, assimilationist inclusiveness. The realities of extreme violence, prejudice and institutional discrimination (all empirically explored

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[9] As explored under the signposted section *Shared Gayness*, 'Gay International' is the term Massad (2007) dubs to describe the increasing presence of white, global-north-based, LGBT activist individuals and organisations focused on identifying and 'rooting out' homophobia (Ekine 2013: 85).

in chapters five, six and seven) make individual claims to self-determined subjectivities an imposed, and even undesirable, state of being for many (and for others, perhaps an unrealistic luxury).

To make queer theory relevant in the African context Clarke argues for a "decolonisation of thought" (2013: 178-84) through the perspective of an (African) understanding of the complex intersections of identity coupled with "the spirit of queer theory in general", without adhering to Western structures of thinking (180). Clarke's strategy for this is for Africans to 'take responsibility of their sexuality' by 'letting go' of previous theorisations, recognising that Africa "can take responsibility ... [for its history without] taking responsibility for causing it" (180), and translating this to a personal responsibility of "being heard and removing oneself from the margins" (181). He summarises that if "sexuality is something that can be taken charge of and an individual can be responsible for all the phenomena that go with it, then it can be epistemically decolonised by theorising counter to the imposed ideas" (181) in an effort for Africans to "decolonise their thought and react with theories and identities of their own" (183), a view echoed by Blessol (2013: 227).

In order to do this, and in emphasising the value of queer theory in (South) Africa, Stobie argues that:

> instead of the fixities of identity politics, queer theory posits fluid spaces of *possibility*. Queer strategy attempts to disrupt dominant discourses by means of performativity, the performance of self-conscious, stylised acts which expose the social structuring of gender and sexuality, and hold out the *possibility of change and diversity*. (2007: 16, emphasis added)

Stobie argues that the importance of queer theory in the African context is that it "can disrupt heteronormative discourse" by being inclusive of intersecting subjectivities not necessarily bound to Western form (2007: 17). Key to this is the utilisation of "coalition politics" (*ibid*) when adopting a queer perspective. In this, a multitude of different viewpoints are considered whilst investigating "the simultaneously specific and global subjecthood of dissidents in terms of their own national contexts and the wider global discourse" (*ibid*). By "highlighting distinctions between various cultures or subcultures" (*ibid*) queer theory has the potential to be both inclusive *and* resistant.

The potential of queerness thus lies in its "critical examination of difference" (Stobie 2007: 64). Such examination, without adhering to predetermined categories of resistance, is a challenge, as South Africa is a space shaped by a "complex mix of the dominant western

discourses" and the "tensions in postcolonial African heteropatriarchies as they formulate re-imagined African national identities" (Steyn and van Zyl 2009: 4). A queer critique may be at odds with such a space, as the deconstructive 'tradition' of queerness resists the processes of identity formation that are integral parts of the post-apartheid project. A primary task, therefore, is conceptually and practically holding both integration and divergence in the same frame. In examining difference Steyn and van Zyl emphasise a need to "de-essentialise sexualities beyond the well-established line of writing on gender and homo/heterosexualities" (2009: 9).

In what is perhaps a more realistic consideration of strategies for incorporating queer theory to the (South) African context, Cock argues for a melding of queerness with a politics of "recognition and redistribution" (2005: 206). Drawing on Fraser (1997), Cock argues that politics of subjectivity and identity need to include the "upwardly revaluing [of] disrespected identities and the cultural products of maligned groups" (Cock 2005: 206) whilst "changing access to income, power and resources" (206). Beyond adopting a framework of empowerment, queerness in South Africa needs to remain focused on the politics of redistribution in relation to the assertion of rights (Botha in Cock: 206). Through this, empowerment amongst those who inhabit non-normative subjectivities may be achieved whilst maintaining a conscious connection to a general location within the broader system of South African society, complete with shared challenges and circumstances (Nel 2005: 285).

A strategy for empowerment-through-queerness, then, is enabling queer theory to shape "a shared framework of values", rather than identity/subjectivity categories, to "grapple with issues of inequality and diversity in citizenship" (Van Zyl 2009: 366). This is what should define an African Queerness, or a Queer Africanness. I take up this challenge in chapters seven and eight. For this current moment, however, the disruptive quality of a general queer approach is employed as lens to view the formative intersecting forces in the South African socio-legal context. The next section begins a critical analysis of the discourses and tensions which shape everyday experiences on a macro level for the participants of this project.

Part 2 – Pre-1994 Contextualisation: Journey to Begrudged Equality

Section 9 of chapter 2 (The Bill of Rights) of The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 1996 reads as follows:[10]

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[10] Available from http://www.gov.za/documents/constitution/1996/96cons2.htm

(3) The state may not unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone on one or more grounds, including race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social origin, colour, *sexual orientation*, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language and birth. (Emphasis added)

(4) No person may unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone on one or more grounds in terms of subsection (3). National legislation must be enacted to prevent or prohibit unfair discrimination.

The inclusion of this Equality Clause in the constitution is widely celebrated as an international benchmark for the recognition of gays and lesbians by the South African state as equal citizens, and is hailed as a world first (Hattingh 2005: 195). It frames an impression of South Africa as a relative legal safe-haven, certainly when compared with many other countries in Africa which are less legally tolerant of 'homosexuality' or same-sex sexual activity. This is a useful starting point: the struggle against the oppressively racist apartheid regime was underpinned by a (Western rights-based) "master narrative of equality" based on non-discrimination (Cock 2005: 193) which, although at odds with some competing ideologies of nation and Africanness, fundamentally shaped the dominant liberation movement's 'late entry' into the postcolonial moment (Hoad 2005: 20). Ekine highlights that a wider continental struggle has been defined by attempts to shed colonial control with minimal disturbance to Western economic and political structures (2013: 81), and South Africa's liberation leadership self-consciously sought to "learn from the failures of prior liberation movements" by, in part, incorporating "the most recent, 'advanced' form of human rights" (Hoad 2005: 20).

This process was by no means simple and the inclusion of the Equality Clause by no means certain (Hoad *et al* (1998) trace in detail the complexities of the debates and anxieties surrounding its inclusion). The clause, however, as a key component in the legal and structural protection afforded to citizens on the basis of non-discrimination in respect of sexual orientation, symbolises a desire to enter a post-apartheid African-centric phase whilst adhering to (Western) principles of rights and individuality. Its underlying history speaks directly to the contemporary disconnect between official positions of State and the individual views of government representatives. The Equality Clause is embedded in a history of an idealistic desire to move away from a state which was "deeply [...] invested in questions of reproductive heterosexual sexuality" (Hoad 2005: 15-16) towards an egalitarian state, using decolonising processes which are committed to causing "minimal disturbance to [...] heteropatriarchal structures" (Ekine 2013: 81).

Through the use of such processes the contemporary South African context, while undeniably transformed compared to the draconian pre-1994 context, mobilises an overarching

discourse of constitutional unity whilst enabling resistant discourses committed to the continued heteropatriarchal regulation and monitoring of sexuality and subjectivity. These become evident when one regards the attitudes of political representatives, experiences with the South African Police Service (Cock 2005: 200), and the country's broader connections to the populist homophobia sweeping the rest of the continent.

<u>Historical Context</u>

The complexity of the current context has roots deeply embedded in historical structures and movements. The apartheid government of South Africa, elected in a 'whites-only' election in 1948, saw sexual control as a core component of a successful implementation of its policies (Hoad 2005: 16). Although the government "asserted the privacy of the patriarchal domestic arena" (Van Zyl 2009: 365) and understood sexual 'rights' within a public/private divide, the regime undertook a strict policing of (private) sexual acts which were perceived to violate the sanctity of white heteropatriarchy. The government introduced a series of legislation to police sexual interactions, including the 1927 Immorality Act, which criminalised sexual interactions between members of different race groups, and the Sexual Offences Act of 1957, which prohibited prostitution and other 'sex offences'. Writing about gay "co-culture" and gay language in South Africa, Ken Cage reflects that "that the government's obsession with the *swartgevaar* left gays unharassed on the streets and in bars and clubs" up until the 1960s (2003: 12).[11]

Common-law provisions had long criminalised sodomy and "unnatural sex acts" as a result of Dutch colonisation in 1652 (Louw 2005: 145). However, the government's attention turned to the 'threat' of homosexuality following a raid of a private party in Johannesburg in 1966, during which police caught "[m]ales dancing with males to the strains of music, kissing and cuddling each other in the most vulgar fashion imaginable" (report submitted to the South African Police in 1968, in Cage 2003: 12). Building upon the existing common-law framework, the government introduced the 1969 amendment to the Immorality Act (as insertion of section 20A to Act 23 of 1957) to "combat the emergence of gay subculture" (Hoad 2005: 17), viewed

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[11] *Swartgevaar* translates to "black threat", and was used to refer to the perceived cultural, social and security threat that the majority black population posed to white South Africans during apartheid.

It should also be noted that up until the 1960s South Africa was, by no means, a 'gay paradise'. Cage argues that the post-Second-World-War migration of workers into larger cities facilitated the emergence of co-cultural spaces "not bound by conservative beliefs" (2003:11). Similarly, Gevisser and Cameron (1995) engage with apartheid-period of histories of sexual diversity. However, Cage notes that through colonial and Roman-Dutch law gay men were "routinely stigmatised and relegated to outsider status" (2003: 17) in the aggressively patriarchal society of the time.

as the *pienkgevaar* (Cage 2003: 17).[12] Referring to "any occasion where more than two persons [were] present" the Act specified an offence for "a male person who commits with another male person [...] an act which is calculated to stimulate sexual passion or to give sexual gratification".[13] Through these categories of criminalisation the legislation had the effect of creating a context of state-encouraged and state-facilitated prejudice (Hattingh 2005: 195; Cameron 1993).[14]

The government's abhorrence of homosexuality, seen as the "opposite of civic-republic norms of good citizenship" (Conway 2012: 141), was explicitly articulated in the 1985-1988 parliamentary processes of investigating the Immorality Act. These processes resulted in the decriminalisation of interracial sex, but *also* carried with it suggestions for queer 'correction' in the form of official committee recommendations that "rehabilitation programmes or other desirable forms of punishment for gays and lesbians" be developed (Johnson in Hoad *et al* 2005: 18).

This history of state-facilitated prejudice underlies many contemporary social attitudes of homophobia. The policing of both race and sexuality by the apartheid government fundamentally linked these aspects of identity within the South African legal and social discourse, creating potential for self-identification through the creation of (abject) categories of experience and being, as well as creating potential for a liberation movement unified in its addressing of the common enemy. One of the most significant effects of the Nationalist government's race- and sex-based policies, however, was the resulting development of "parallel histories" of sexuality (Cage 2003: 11). Enforced segregation resulted in "cleavages of massive class and racial privilege" (Hoad 2005: 17), and the experiences of white, middle-class gay men, perceived to be the quintessential 'gay identity' (Gevisser and Cameron 1995: 3) partly due to the focus of the government on white homosexuality, differed greatly from 'other'

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[12] Pink threat. Both *swartgevaar* and *pienkgevaar* conflate ideas of sexuality, ethnicity, and threat. 'Non-whiteness' and 'non-heterosexualness' are perceived as dangers to the society and nation, with the latter converging discourses of queerness and terror (Puar 2007: xxiii). The discourse of 'queers as terrorists' is still evident when one considers comments such as those made by Kenya's Aden Duale (Macharia 2014), who referred to "gayism and lesbianism" as social evils requiring immediate state intervention. See Puar for investigations into the "correspondence between nonnormative sexualities, race, and pathologized nationality" (2007: xiv).

[13] The Immorality Amendment Act of 1969 – available from http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Immorality_Amendment_Act,_1969

[14] This prejudice gained corporeal significance in the South African Defence Force, in which all young white men were required to serve for two years. Homosexuality was seen as a "disease" in need of "medical treatment" (van Zyl 2009: v). See Van Zyl *et al* (1999). Conway (2012) explores the End Conscription Campaign – of interest here is the way in which homosexuality was used as a smear tactic to discredit the movement (Conway 2012: 142; Nicol 2005: 77; van Zyl 2005c: 102).

disenfranchised sexual subjectivities who largely remained invisible from the (white) mainstream, policed under the category of race.

The policing of (white) urban gay men and the creation of (abject) categories arguably facilitated processes of self- and group-identification, furthering racial divides between individuals who, in other contexts, may have been regarded as a dynamic 'community' of non-normative sexual subjectivities. This is not to suggest, of course, that there is not a rich history of sexualities and subjectivities outside of the narrow scope of white/middle-class/gay.[15] What is significant for contemporary South Africa, however, is that the enforced legal, social, economic and political divides played a role in entrenching a disconnect between various sexual communities, resulting, firstly, in a lack of a coherent 'gay community' as is understood within the Western discourse of gay rights;[16] secondly, in no real emergence of "multiracial lesbian and gay organisations that attempted to cross these divides and affiliate with the wider liberation struggle" until the 1980s (Hoad 2005: 17); and thirdly, in the reproduction and 'legitimisation' of homosexuality being seen as a specifically white man's issue.

<u>The Struggle and Sexuality: unAfricanness and Liberation</u>

The view that homosexuality is a 'white' or Western issue – that it is *unAfrican* – existed within the liberation movement itself. After the banning of the ANC in the 1960s, the party which would go on to be elected to power in the first democratic elections in 1994, the struggle for liberation increasingly relied on international support and local mobilisation (SAHistory no date). During the period of a "struggle for people's power" in the 1980s (ANC 2011a), the ANC "elite", based in offices across the globe, had "a utopian social progressive ideology, influenced largely by the social-democratic movements in the countries that supported it during its struggle" (Gevisser 2000: 118). Despite this progressive ideology there existed the view, held by some activists in favour of recognising 'gay rights' as an integral part of a wider liberation struggle, that "the anti-apartheid movement was as much the enemy as was the Establishment, because both were equally homophobic" (Nicol 2005: 73).

The support for gender- and sexuality-based rights by the ANC and the anti-apartheid movement during this time was "far from evident" (Rydström 2005: 41). Indeed, the ANC "sublimated" gender-based debate to "the intrinsic logic of the strategy for liberation: the first struggle was for liberation of the nation; the second for the liberation of the working class; and

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[15] See, for example, van Zyl and Steyn (2005), Murray and Roscoe (1998), Gevisser and Cameron (1995).
[16] Without assuming, of course, that 'community' is fully coherent and universally inclusive in Western contexts.

at best third down the line might come" gender-based struggles (Kraak 2005: 125). There was very little opposition to (often explicit) homophobia and sexism in the ANC leadership, with historical reports of party victimisation of gay and lesbian ANC members abroad (Tatchell 2005: 140-1).

Many gay and lesbian activists who 'came out' in later years, either of their own accord or through processes of historical outings "hid their homosexuality – not only from the authorities but also from their comrades – for fear of marginalisation or oppression, even while committed to the liberation of others" (Kraak 2005: 118). The inclusion of the Equality Clause was, during this period of transition, far from certain. Reflecting on discussions with leaders and members of the ANC during the 1980s in London, Kraak notes how homosexuality was openly seen as "decadent, a bourgeois deviation of Western capitalism that would disappear under socialism" and a phenomenon "alien to African culture" which existed only due to "contamination" by the West (2005: 125), mirroring the racial coding by the apartheid government of homosexuality-as-white.

This is the discourse of the unAfricanness of homosexuality. Familiar in contemporary African contexts, it is important to recognise this as a dominant historical attitude *within* the ANC as it sits in stark contrast with the popular rhetoric of the ANC as a broad liberation movement and South Africa as a space of political and legal tolerance.

Indeed, when questioned in 1987 about the ANC's position on gay rights, the party representative in London responded with the view that gay rights presented a diversion from 'real' issues: gays and lesbians were "in the minority" and "the majority must rule" (in Kraak 2005: 132). Peter Tatchell's 1987 interview with ANC executive member Ruth Mompati captures the thoroughly dismissive sentiment at the heart of the liberation movement. Responding to questions about the ANC and homophobia, Mompati replied that "I hope that in a liberated South Africa people will live a normal life. [...] I emphasise the word normal ... Tell me, are lesbians and gays normal? No, it is not normal", and that "[t]he gays have no problems. They have nice houses and plenty to eat. I don't see them suffering. No one is persecuting them ... we haven't heard about this problem in South Africa until recently. It seems to be fashionable in the West" (Tatchell 2005: 142). Mompati, projecting a dominant view of the ANC, emphasised that gay rights were "red herrings", representing a people who did not have specific needs to be addressed, and a minority who did not exist in the ANC (*ibid*).

Unlike many Western contexts, therefore, where social liberation movements garnered wider popular support in efforts to bring about legal change, the policies of segregation and the

strict policing of activity meant that a cohesive and wide-spread 'gay rights' movement did not emerge. The open homophobia of key ANC leaders also meant that those organisations and individuals which did lobby for the inclusion of gay rights within the liberation movement were met with hostility and violence (Kraak 2005: 126). Kraak reflects that "[t]he white gay community was racist. There was very little sense of a black gay community. So for white gay political activists the spheres of political and gay identities just did not come together as they might have in a Western country" (2005: 123).

Although it would be a mistake to regard the Western gay rights movement as a racially inclusive utopia, one may gain from this recollection a sense of the 'success' of the apartheid efforts to instil a mind-set of segregation amongst those who would even work towards achieving 'equality' which, coupled with the homophobia of the ANC, presented deep challenges to forming a large-scale unified rights movement.[17] The overall effect of structural differentiation was that no true mass movement dedicated to gay rights emerged in South Africa at this period.[18] Small local organisations did come into existence,[19] but attempts by them to promote gay rights within the liberation movement were met with "accusations [...] that we were hijacking the anti-apartheid struggle for our own partisan ends" (Nicol 2005: 72). Homosexuality was ultimately seen as a "disruptive political positioning" (van Zyl 2005c: 107), a non-urgent struggle (99).

However, between 1985 and 1988 the Delmas trial,[20] one of the longest-running political trials in the country, saw notable anti-apartheid activist Simon Nkoli charged with treason. Nkoli was a prominent UDF activist, but was also a member of the Gay Association of South Africa.[21] During the trial Nkoli made the decision to come out, to incredibly diverse reactions. Many ANC and apartheid activists "felt that his homosexuality tarnished the good name of the Struggle" (Reid 2005a: 29). Through a trying process Nkoli ultimately gained respect and acceptance from struggle leaders, as reflected by his co-trialist Mosiuia 'Terror' Lekota, who said at Nkoli's memorial service in 1998 that he "helped me understand that within the broad struggle [we had] to make sure that our society recognised and accepted the humanity of all of

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[17] Attempts were made in the 1980s to create formal alliances – see Nicol (2005); Rydström (2005).

[18] A small group of activists in Cape Town formed the Organisation for Lesbian and Gay Activists/Action (OLGA). Although it gained support internationally, it remained fractured on a local level, and fraught with racial tensions. See Nicol (2005).

[19] See van Zyl (2005c) for an overview of other local organisations which developed and were active during this period. Also see Nicol (2005: 81).

[20] The case was an attempt to suppress the United Democratic Front (UDF), formed in 1983 as an anti-apartheid coalition of hundreds of organisations and individuals.

[21] A small local organisation – see van Zyl (2005c).

its people" and that struggles not explicitly visible "were being waged and had to be waged" (Lekota 2005: 152-153).

Nkoli's trial and coming-out had a significant impact upon "the inclusion of gay and lesbian issues on the political agenda of the mass democratic movement in South Africa" (Reid 2005a: 29), not because of an increased support at a grass-roots level, but rather due to the attention his position drew to the disjuncture between the ANC's opposition to gay rights and its ideal of an equal and democratic society. Upon his release from detention, Simon Nkoli founded the Gay and Lesbian Organisation of the Witwatersrand (GLOW) in 1988, which – in contrast with previous attempts to garner support for gay rights in South Africa – was "at home in the anti-apartheid movement" through membership of "politically savvy activists who combined a strong-anti-apartheid agenda with public assertiveness around lesbian and gay identity" (Reid 2005a: 31).

The combination of the attention that Simon Nkoli drew in terms of the presence of gay and lesbian individuals within the anti-apartheid movement, and the attention garnered from Peter Tatchell's published exposition on the ANC's attitudes towards gay rights, led to an ideological acknowledgement and, in subsequent years, legal embrace of a "commitment to a democratic, and above all, constitutional state" (Jones 2005: 138). In the wake of increased publicity, Thabo Mbeki, then ANC Director of Information, commented that "[a]s a movement, we are of the view that the sexual preferences of an individual are a private matter. We would not wish to compromise anybody's right to privacy" (in Tatchell 2005: 145).

I wish to signpost this discourse of privacy, which I discuss below, as it is fundamental to understanding the contemporary tension between a structurally encouraged individual declaration of identification, and the ideological expectation to keep one's habits and orientation 'in the bedroom'. The basis for the ANC's "official opposition to homophobic discrimination" (Tatchell 2005: 146) was not a direct embrace of 'equality for all', but rather the recognition of the right to privacy.[22] This can arguably be interpreted as a response to the excessive regulation of the private (sexual) lives of citizens by the apartheid government, and it stands as a significant point of contrast to what, within a Western discourse of gay rights, translates as a popular affirmation of the desired end-point agency to be 'out and proud'.

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[22] Similar strategies have been employed in other previously colonised contexts. See, for example, Haldar and Kant (2011).

Following the unbanning of the ANC in 1990, OLGA submitted a motivation for the inclusion of protection for gay and lesbian rights to the Constitution Committee of the ANC. The public declaration of a commitment to democracy and the right to privacy, coupled with the intensive lobbying by, and support of, key individuals and organisations (including Albie Sachs, Edwin Cameron and Kevan Botha) ultimately led to the inclusion of a draft gender-rights clause. Julia Nicol reflects that when deliberating about the inclusion of the clause, ANC policymakers were influenced by the knowledge that "comrades [in the liberation struggle] were being affected by gay oppression", speaking to the importance of the key moments of visibility in shifting the ANC's position (2005: 82).

Ultimately, however, the tenuous "rights-based cohering rhetoric of the 1980s dissolved after the democratisation of the 1990s" (Van Zyl 2005c: 114). In effect, rather than the rhetoric of 'gay rights as human rights' being adopted in the 1980s by leaders and members of the ANC and a large social movement of support, the consistent lobbying by certain key figures and small key groups led to the important intellectual (and not necessarily broadly social) recognition that "three centuries" of "systematised inequality" instilled a desire to emphasise idealistic equality as a "political necessity" on a long-term journey to a fully democratic state (Jones 2005: 137-8).

Jones pointedly emphasises that it is a mistake to view South Africa's transition in relation to gay rights as a 'miracle', warning against attributing the journey solely to key individuals such as Nkoli (2005: 137). I highlight these individual moments not out of a desire to reframe history, but rather to draw attention to attitudes which underlie contemporary dynamics. Although individuals certainly played key roles in shifting attitudes, a key point needs to be acknowledged: the legal framework of equality in South Africa did not arise from mobilisation within a grassroots movement dedicated to gay rights. Rather than the trajectory of a decade-long accumulation of social support that marks understandings of a 'gay rights movements' in other socio-economic contexts, it was the (somewhat begrudgingly) recognised ideal of equality within a broader struggle for liberation, rather than a mass social movement, that ultimately led to the inclusion of the Equality Clause in the constitution.

Part 3 – Post-1994 Contextualisation: Signposting Contemporary Tensions

In effect, the intellectual political recognition of systematised inequality led to the Equality Clause being included as a "logical and inevitable outcome" (Jones 2005: 138). Indeed, on public consultation – largely a symbolic factor in the broader promulgation of the constitution (Cock 2005: 194) – a significant portion of the population were wholly opposed to the inclusion of sexual orientation in the clause (Cock 2005: 194; Nel 2005: 287), and many key members of the

ANC leadership remained opposed to it (Van Zyl 2005c: 110). Rather than achieve equality through a process of public support and mobilisation, of rendering 'gay rights' as a part of a new (South) African agenda, democracy and equality became, and remain, rooted in the legal sphere "in a conception of rights rather than a simple majoritarianism" (Cock 2005: 194-5).

These disconnects have profound implications for understanding day-to-day life in contemporary South Africa. This section therefore shifts to highlight four formative perspectives which may be linked to the historical complexities framed above: issues of leadership; the ways in which mediated homophobia as spectacle reinforces Western paradigms; developing the enabling conditions promised by the constitution; and the ways in which the legal structures erase complexity of life.

<u>Leadership</u>

Diverse attitudes within a democratic state are to be expected. However, in friction with the historical ideal of social progressivism are the conservative social values amongst many of the key leaders of the ANC, to which many constituents turn for moral guidance and leadership (as articulated in chapters six, seven and eight). The attitudes of the leadership elite seem to translate to policies and practices which have a direct bearing on the day-to-day life of citizens. Although the constitution projects a climate of acceptance and tolerance, key institutions – such as the South African Police Service (Underhill 2014), the South African National Defence Force (Cock 2005: 199), and occasionally universities (DeBarros 2014) – continue to display deeply homophobic attitudes, which gain ideological legitimacy through the attitudes and actions of key political and public figures.

Included among these figures is the current President of South Africa, Jacob Zuma, who infamously declared in 2006 that same-sex marriages were "a disgrace to the nation and to God", and that as a young man he would have "knocked down any homosexual person he met" (BBC 2006). Speaking on stage with President Zuma, Zulu Monarch King Goodwill Zwelithini years later declared that gay people are "rotten" and that "traditionally, there were no people who engaged in same-sex relationships" (Mdletshe 2012). At the opening of a 2010 exhibition, which featured photographs of nude lesbian couples by celebrated artist Zanele Muholi, then Minister of Arts and Culture Lulama Xingwana (who is now dubiously-named 'Minister of Women, Children and Persons with Disabilities') left saying the photographs were "immoral, offensive and going against nation-building" (Smith 2010) – an argument which explicitly shapes official attitudes towards the media, as explored in chapter six.

These may be linked to wider attitudes of some prominent continental leaders.[23] Africa, since Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe's public denouncement of homosexuality in the mid-1990s (Murungi 2013: 230), has seen an increasingly vocal opposition from leaders to any manifestation of gay rights activism often on the grounds of its perceived unAfricanness. This opposition includes Yahya Jammeh's attack on homosexuality at the UN General Assembly meeting in 2013, where he named homosexuality as "more deadly than all natural disasters put together", building on his 2008 threat of beheading gays and lesbians (Huffington Post 2013); the signing of the Same Sex Marriage (Prohibition) Bill by Nigeria's President Goodluck Jonathan, outlawing any LGBT-related organisation or involvement as well as any public same-sex affection (Tatchell 2014); and the signing of the highly contested Anti-Homosexual Act by Uganda's President Yoweri Museveni, which allows for "repeat homosexuality offenders" to be jailed for life (SAHRC 2014). One would expect the South African government, with an idealistic commitment to equality and deep links to colonial liberation on the continent, to be vocal critics of prejudicial policies and discriminatory practices. Certainly the first epigraph of this chapter highlights this view.

However, despite a legal framework of acceptance, a history of liberation and calls from other political parties to voice criticism, the policies of the South African government have been to adopt a "diplomatic and non-public approach" to state-sanctioned homophobia (MambaOnline 2014). It was only in February 2014, after a wave of condemnation from organisations including the South African Human Rights Commission (SAPA 2014b) and the General Council of the Bar of South Africa (Evans 2014) that the government responded to concerns about the implications of legislation which regulates sexuality (SAPA 2014a). In this, however, the response ventured nowhere near criticism and merely "noted the recent global issues" with the reaffirmation that "no persons should be subjected to discrimination" according to the constitution and the vague reassurance that the government would "seek clarification from various countries about their laws" (*ibid*).

Yet following this proclamation, President Zuma stated that "South Africa respects the sovereign rights of other countries to adopt their own legislation", effectively condoning the legislative discrimination and persecution (SAPA 2014c). Similarly, the South African government has been criticised by Human Rights Watch for not playing a decisive enough role in relation to human rights since 2011, when it introduced a "precedent-setting" resolution at the United

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[23] Though, importantly and as I note elsewhere in the thesis, this is not an articulation of 'Africa as a place of unbridled and constant homophobia'. Instead, I draw focus to the attitudes of *leaders*, and how they offer site for scrutiny.

Nation Human Rights Council involving a commitment to "combating violence and discrimination against people on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity" (Evans 2014).

It could potentially be argued that South Africa is being positioned as the (failing?) 'caretaker' of the continent, which in turn may create scope for other nations to play a less-active role in helping combat violence and prejudice. Indeed, the history and legal culture seem to have placed the current government in a position of begrudging (or perhaps, less-harshly, adapting) gatekeeper. However, the disconnect between the legal structures in place and the explicit (lack of) governmental support of equality in relation to sexual orientation is even more evident when one considers the consistent legal triumphs in South Africa, speaking to a history of the pursuit for social equality and a lingering desire for ongoing 'transformation'.

Reddy (2006: 147) offers a summarised overview of the key court cases which further entrenched legal equality, including the abolishment of the crime of sodomy in 1998,[24] the 2002 ruling that same-sex couples should be allowed to adopt children,[25] and the declaration that the common-law definition of marriage was unconstitutional in 2004,[26] which in turn facilitated the promulgation of The Civil Union Act of 2006, legalising same-sex marriage. The signing of the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act in 2000 furthered the legal protection of citizens by prohibiting hate speech and harassment on the grounds of the categories identified in the Equality Clause, and the 'Policy Framework on Combating Hate Crimes, Hate Speech and Unfair Discrimination' currently forms "the foundation for what will later become law" to create a separate criminal category for hate crimes (Bendix 2014; McCormick 2013).

These legal triumphs which contribute towards giving South Africa the veneer of a legal ideal have, of course, been achieved underneath the administration of four ANC governments, one of which established the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (which I discuss in chapter two) to help shape the future of a constitutional democracy. That such progress towards equality has been made under the overarching executive guidance of a party with questionable historical and contemporary attitudes towards gay rights is a discursive curiosity and a constitutional fissure.[27] The disconnect between structures emanating from an ideal of social progressivism

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[24] National Coalition for Gay and Lesbian Equality and another v Minister of Justice and others
[25] Du Toit and another v the Minister of Welfare and Population Development and others
[26] Fourie v Minister of Home Affairs
[27] Perhaps best explored in a project on party politics (for example, Southall 2012).

and the conservative and homophobic opinions and attitudes of those leaders explicitly involved in the creation and maintenance of such structures is but one facet of reality.

Speaking to this, life in contemporary South Africa reflects the "deep social cleavages" of the past (Cock 2005: 204). The combination of a lack of public support for gay rights, historical homophobia as a part of the legacy of apartheid, and the lack of a cohesively visible pro-gay stance from the government often translates to a "grim reality" (AFP 2014) for many. The inversion of the Western gay rights narrative (Nel 2005: 290; Lind 2005: 335) has resulted in the fact that LGBTI communities in the country remain "relatively disempowered" (Nel 2005: 291). Although some parts of the country see a willingness to embrace inclusivity (see, for example, Tucker 2009; Leap 2005), "public opinion in South Africa is overwhelmingly against homosexuality", arguably stemming from, at least in part, the legitimisation of homophobia by leaders (Leatt and Hendricks 2005: 303). This public opinion manifests as extreme forms of violence, including the 1999 bombing of a popular gay bar in Cape Town (Leatt and Hendricks 2005: 304); frequent hate crimes; and the increasingly publicised 'trend' of 'curative rape' (Matebeni 2013; Muthien 2013; Mkhize *et al* 2010). Although acts of prejudice are hardly unique to South Africa they do sit in stark contrast with the legal 'promises' of protection.

Reinforcing Western Paradigms

This complexity is exacerbated by the ways in which homophobia is represented and mediated. Publications in South Africa, such as Jon Qwelane's infamous 2008 article *Call me names, but gay is NOT ok*[28] and the Ugandan tabloid *Rolling Stone*'s published 'outing' of "alleged 'homosexuals'" (Mwikya 2013: 141) reflect prejudicial social attitudes, including the idea of the unAfricanness of homosexuality.

However, in their sensationalism, they also point towards a dominant discourse of a global *spectacle* of mediated homophobia. Referring specifically to the Ugandan context, Mwikya argues that local and international media often use homosexuality-as-controversy to increase readership, and that we should not underestimate the complexities of media representation and response (2013: 141). In cases such as the *Rolling Stone* tabloid, local

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[28] Available from http://cdn.mg.co.za/uploads/sundaysunsmall.pdf. This opinion piece, published in the biggest daily newspaper in the country, likened homosexuality to bestiality and decried it as unnatural and ungodly (see Vincent and Howell 2014). It called for a re-writing of the constitution on the grounds that "wrong is wrong". Following its publication, Qwelane was prosecuted for and found guilty of hate speech. In a move lambasted by activists, the government appointed Qwelane as the Ambassador to Uganda. See Subramany (2011).

readership ordinarily amounted to approximately 3000 people, but the furore in international media inadvertently increased visibility, with real-world consequences for LGBTI activists (143).

While the media plays an undoubtedly important role in relation to sexual subjectivities – indeed, one component of this project is to consider ways in which the media can be used to intervene against experiences of prejudice – Mwikya frames the "over-reliance on Western media for news and reportage about African affairs" (2013: 146), the "spectacularisation" of homophobia (147), and the increasing adoption of "Western paradigms" of thinking in relation to representation, journalism, and activism (148) as intrinsically problematic. There is a tension between the international attention such reports bring to the African context and the leverage such attention gives to local rights-organisations, and the extent to which the reports simplify or de-contextualise local situations.

Mwikya argues that through the processes of sensationalised and simplified Western representations of the African context, "intellectual thought and analysis [of homophobia in Africa] have been scant" (2013: 145). Mwikya accuses both Western and African media of "serv[ing] the needs of their consumer bases" to "evoke passionate responses about how 'homophobic' Africa is" (146) to the effect that media and blogs dedicated to 'gay rights in Africa' have positioned themselves as the necessary heroes, dedicated to exposing homophobia and framing queer activism on the continent how they want it to be, and not necessarily how it should be (147). This plays out in South Africa in two distinct ways.

Firstly, through the media perpetuating a spectacle of homophobia, gay-rights campaigners often instil a decontextualised value of equality in the form of legal reform.[29] Certainly this is understandable given history. However, reducing Africa to a site of constant and 'simple' homophobia reinforces the impression that a framework of individual rights should be pursued as the only rational ideal (Ndashe 2013: 163). In this narrative South Africa is problematically positioned as an exceptional safe-haven – the example of a 'successful' democracy in Africa. This, in turn, has become a defining feature of the country's image and sense of nationalism – as I discuss in chapter two.

However, as the above section demonstrates, legal reform is by no means a linear indicator of social equality. Homophobia-as-spectacle thus plays out in South Africa in a second way: through prioritising a measurement of social progress by a Western standard of legal rights

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[29] As reflected by the website Equaldex, a collaborative knowledge base which equates social acceptance of homosexuality with laws in each country in the world. See http://equaldex.com.

and achievements it draws attention away from the nuanced social realities of day-to-day existence, and diverts focus away from local strategies of activism and empowerment. Thus, although South Africa may be regarded as homophobic in many ways, mediating such homophobia as a *spectacle* risks reinforcing a reliance on simplistic strategies of reform. The single homogenous narrative of '(South) Africa as homophobic' "disregards local processes and context" (Ndashe 2013: 158). The mediated transposition of a Western dynamic poses a real threat of irreparable damage: it risks eliminating the recognition that there are local "social forces within and outside ... [South Africa and other African countries] that have the power to control, mitigate and negate the homophobia of individual politicians" (Ndashe 2013: 158; see Weber 2016).

This discourse risks obscuring that pressure groups as well as homophobic individuals exist in South African society. In understanding the homophobia found in South Africa it is, therefore, important to recognise and re-present the local struggles of individuals and organisations who challenge prejudice – without resorting to spectacle. So, while we may critique Jacob Zuma for his homophobic remarks it is important to recognise the apology which was issued following his statement in 2006 (Ndashe 2013: 157). Although we may identify other key moral leaders as fostering unconstitutional attitudes and perpetuating negative stereotypes we must acknowledge the crucial roles that other forms of moral leadership plays, such as that of the church, with Archbishop Desmond Tutu as a vocal supporter of gay rights and the acceptance of homosexual identities as African identities (Reid 2005b:176).

I flag this tension here, therefore, to emphasise that an inaccurate reduction of the South African context to 'simply' a legal ideal, a homophobic government, and an intolerant society fatally ignores the constant, complex intersectional everyday struggles on a legal, executive, and social level. As Mwikya reflects, "[t]he totality with which Western paradigms are used in activism in Africa should be suspect given that the feasibility of such strategies in Africa is in question and that even in the spaces in which they were previously employed, the results were wide-ranging and not always positive" (Mwikya 2013: 148)

<u>Privacy versus Identifying</u>

This speaks to another consideration: the discursive tension between a 'traditional' emphasis on privacy, as reflected by Mbeki's official 1980s standing on 'gay rights', and a more contemporary emphasis on individual declarations of identity. As indicated, rights enshrined in South African law are fundamentally linked to individualistic understandings of sexuality and belonging (Van Zyl 2005: 31; Leatt and Hendricks 2005; Lind 2003: 336), which in turn has

implications for how one perceives – or how one is forced to perceive – oneself in relation to the legal structures in place.

The Equality Clause and existing legal structure in the country plays an integral part in promoting a sense of citizenship amongst "gays and lesbians" (Reid in Cock 2005: 195), with the symbolic and practical effect of a validation of once-legally-marginalised orientations by the state (Leatt and Hendricks 2005: 303). Constitutional Court Justice Edwin Cameron, who helped secure the inclusion of 'sexual orientation' in the Equality Clause, emphasises that it is "not only a Constitution on paper" as it has assisted in the "[appropriation] of that sense of citizenship and [...] that sense of equality. That sense of constitutional equality infuses the sense of self of LGBT people in South Africa" (MambaOnline 2013).

Yet activist and lobbyist Kevan Botha argues that "the clause is meaningless unless you're "out". In order to claim rights you have to acknowledge and own the identity of being gay" (in Cock 2005: 195). Self-identification with an definable/relatable category of sexual orientation is thus a prerequisite for openly claiming legal protection (202). Murray and Roscoe note that although there has been significant legal and political recognition of the 'right' to claim protection on the basis of one's sexuality, "the rationale for these developments appears to draw more on Western ideals of social justice and human rights than on claims about traditional acceptance and social roles for same-sex patterns" (1998: 278), and the problematic privileging of one identity over another within a relatively rigid structural framework (Cock 2005: 195).

In noting "claims about traditional acceptance" Murray and Roscoe draw attention to the ways in which there has existed a strong cultural emphasis, in many contexts and traditions, on a "policy" to "tolerate homosexual activity so long as it was kept behind closed doors" (Clarke 2013: 175; also Mason-John 2013: 209; Leatt and Hendricks 2005: 314-15; Epprecht 1998: 645). Lind suggests that many local African societies have "appear[ed] to be less unsettled by human sexuality than Western societies" have historically been (2005: 346), and recognises the importance of privacy and "homosexual activity" not "disrupt[ing] the performance of necessary [wider] social roles" (347). Such attitudes are often explored in analyses of reconfigured gendered systems and local constructions of sexuality (see, for example, Rankhotha 2005; Gevisser and Cameron 1995; Moodie 1988).

Crucially, this is not to suggest a re-writing of Africa, a romantic glorification of pre-colonial Africa, or a homogenisation of all African traditions. Rather, it flags an important lived contradiction. The ANC's original adoption of a tolerance towards gay rights was on the premise of the right to privacy – that in contrast with the apartheid state the government had no right

to legislate people's intimate lives (Cock 2005: 196). An emphasis on private lives remaining private so long as they did not disrupt the (heteropatriarchal) norms of a culture is evident when one considers the attitude of the ANC in the 1980s, or in personal accounts such as that of Paddy Nhlapo (2005: 69). Yet, the structural pressure to self-identify as having a specific sexual orientation if you desire constitutional protection marks a significant *departure* from this premise of privacy, rooted in historical observations of keeping things 'behind closed doors'.

'Visibility' is thus broadly a part of the ideological shift since 1994, with sex in general moving away from strict regulated private spaces to very visible (mediated) manifestations (Crawhall 2005: 268). This is complicated further by the reality that "[t]he assertion of a public gay identity" (Cock 2005: 202) may not be useful in understanding the complexities of existence and the intersections of desire, belonging, and identification, as well as other local issues (Ossome 2013: 36). A preconceived categorisation of subjectivity denies the "shifting boundaries of identities and internal power differences of interest" (*ibid*) and assumes the ability of individuals to access, express and enjoy rights" (39).

Instances of homophobia in South Africa may thus occasionally link to the tension between asserting an identity protected by the constitution and the disturbance of "gendered relations of reproduction, and systems of the social regulation of reproduction" which results from such an assertion (Van Zyl 2005a: 32). The country is marked in many ways by an expectation to behave privately, but within a framework that calls for making one's sexual identity (and thus one's position in relation to wider social structures) very public.

Within the social context, the result is often that "privileged mostly white, mostly middle-class, mostly urbanised lesbians and gays, who are safe enough to come out and identify as lesbian and gay, fight for their rights under the Constitution" (Van Zyl 2005a: 31). Similarly, the real-world significance of the necessity of claiming a visible identity category lies in the social dangers of 'coming out' in a hostile social environment, as well as senses of subjective absence, and potential unbelonging, which may arise through not finding such categories subjectively salient (chapter five).

'Shared Gayness': The Erasure of Complexity

Finally, connected to this, and linking back to the narrative of 'Africa as homophobic', is the assumption of unifying homogenous experiences. Ekine notes that "[a]longside the increasing visibility [of LGBTI subjectivities in African countries] there has been a growing presence of [...] 'LGBT', white, Northern-based NGOs and activists with an almost obsessive

interest in searching for homophobia across the global south" (2013: 85). Dubbed "Gay International" by Massad (2007), this presence emphasises the notion of a "shared gayness" (Ekine 2013: 85) based on the goals of gay rights liberation movements and mediates homophobia on the continent as "a unique geographical phenomenon" with no consideration of the interconnecting and competing local discourses and histories (85).[30]

As Isaacs and McKendrick write, "[i]nternational literature, particularly that from Northern America, consistently emphasises the rise of an activist gay liberation movement as a critical force in establishing the validity of a gay identity" (1992: xii). The reality of South Africa instead is that it is "notoriously uncohesive politically" (Cameron 1993: 451). The overall social disempowerment of this 'community' (Nel 2005: 291) is exacerbated by the scant availability of social support systems in equal measure across rural and urban spaces of the country (290). Thus, attempts to find a 'shared gayness' will lead one to recognise the increasingly fragmented social terrain marked by the "increasingly Americanised gay subculture" of developed urban areas (Leatt and Hendricks 2005: 304) and the marginalised experiences of those who do not have the cultural or economic capital to be included in this narrow understanding of sexual diversity (see, for example, Reid 2012; Steyn and van Zyl 2009; Gevisser and Cameron 1995).

A danger of 'shared gayness' is, as Matebeni notes, potential structural erasure of the complexities of everyday existence for those whose identities or subjectivities do not form a part of the dominant heteropatriarchal culture (2013). This echoes concerns with the effects of mediated spectacle of homophobia. Citing the publicised case of Eudy Simelane, a national football player who was murdered in what activists insist was a hate crime, Matebeni notes how the Judge overseeing the case dismissed the "well-known" community recognition that Simelane was a lesbian (2013: 350). The dismissal of Simelane's identity "made sexual orientation and identity" insignificant, "silencing it as a motivating factor for the murder" (350). Within the South African context of one being able to claim legal protection on the provision

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[30] Connected to this, Cynthia Weber (2016) explores the ways in which the formation of a sense of 'shared gayness' is wielded as a political tool to justify development-related decisions both domestically and abroad. In this argument certain figures are assimilated as examples of the 'normal homosexual', which "both relies upon and disavows" the construction of "the 'perverse homosexual' and its various figurations" (140). "Perversion" here extends to those (queer) subjectivities, actions, affiliations or potential beliefs which may – within a wider societal rendering of "sovereign man" as "'(neo)imperial man' and as '(civilizationally) developed man'" (104) – cast individuals as anything other than a (grateful and understandable) "gay rights holder" or "gay patriot" (*ibid*). Protection afforded by a state thus becomes conditional (106), and political interest in 'normal homosexuals' is connected to the ways in which the figure may be "mobilized explicitly on behalf of the 'nation' and against threatening anarchical, pathological, national and international 'others'" (105).

that one openly identifies as 'non-heterosexual', such open self-identification can effectively translate to a process of rendering one's broader intersections of identity and wider social challenges structurally and socially invisible (see Kohn 2001).

The universalisation of rights continues to be a primary point of activism and understanding on an international level (Ekine 2013: 88; see Clinton 2011 – and Weber 2016 discussing this trend), and violations of 'gay rights' are increasingly being met with decisions to withdraw aid (Ndashe 2013: 159-60; Sokari 2011). But framing a struggle for equality and justice these factors generate "tensions with other civil society and social movements" in that "Queer Africans are not just queers, they are people who live their lives in the same way as everyone else" (Ekine 2013: 89; also Ossome 2013: 43). This is an important site of intersectional reflection. One should exercise caution in rigidly applying either a queer or a Gay International reading of rights and 'shared gayness', as this may lead one to discount personal *resonance* with familiar understandings of sexual identity. Ultimately, and as I explore in chapter seven, attention must be given to *how* such categories are used.

Moving Forward in unAfricanness

Through these points it becomes clear that to understand South Africa wholly within the narrative of the protecting individual rights as an ultimate endpoint (Clarke 2013; Mason-John 2013; Lind 2005: 336) risks disregarding the need for constant reflection and understanding in a project of social reconciliation and empowerment. An emphasis on rights such as 'freedom of expression' and 'freedom of association', and the right not to be discriminated against on the basis of one's sexual orientation perpetuates the assumption that "LGBTI Africans live in silos, not as complete Africans, but outside national and international political and economic realities" (Ekine 2013: 83). It perpetuates a disregard for the intersection of local understandings of subjectivities (Blessol 2013: 226).

Pulling together these tensions, despite a legal premise of equality and protection, homosexuality, and its unAfricanness, remains at the heart of a contemporary "moral panic" in South Africa (Vincent and Howell 2014: 479). [31] I do not suggest that the unAfrican discourse

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[31]Despite the status of 'enshrined protections', 'gay rights' became an issue in the 2014 general election. In April 2014 News24 offered an online "Know Your Party" quiz (http://www.news24.com/elections/knowyourparty/), which detailed the policies of various political parties as they relate to such 'conscience issues'. The positioning of 'gay rights' alongside issues such as corruption, land reform, youth unemployment and service delivery – all highly emotional and volatile points of discussion in South Africa – arguably speaks to the increased mediated visibility of questions of sexual belonging and citizenship in Africa.

underpins all of the issues framed above. However, as a formative discourse it draws attention to the need to have an open-ended and multi-sited contextualisation of power as it relates to everyday life. The tensions highlighted in this chapter speak to the need to recognise that the broader struggle "is not only directed at changing existing legislation; it is a struggle in which we seek to reassert our own narrative and reclaim our humanity" (Ekine 2013: 87).

Linking this back to questions of an 'African queer theory', the disconnects discussed here suggest that although "the values of gender equality and sexual rights were established in a powerful enabling tool" in the form of The Equality Clause in the Constitution, "the enabling conditions are more difficult to develop" (van Zyl 2009: 376). In a broader quest to relate (a reworked?) queerness to ideas of continental and national belonging, the development of a "shared framework of values" becomes appealing (van Zyl 2009). Queer theory has the potential (through a suturing to a local relevance) for a constant reflection on the intersection of various discourses of power and how these, as well as local histories, shape experiences and manifestations of subjectivity and belonging. In turn, this builds a *portion* of a scaffolding for a value-based understanding of everyday reality in South Africa.

To further unmask the material inequalities of subjects (van Zyl 2009: 365) it is necessary to continue to consider the everyday unAfricanness of queerness. 'UnAfrican' implies the existence of an essential continental and national identity. Within this, then, one must choose either sexual citizenship or nationhood. Of course, an individual may simultaneously embody both identifications or affiliations. In order to consider this interplay a contextual investigation of *nationality* – and the prejudices which accompany it – must be undertaken. The next chapter will form the second component of a macro overview, specifically in relation to formative discourses of nationhood.

In summary, this chapter foregrounds the disconnect between the image of legal inclusivity and the realities of everyday life. Drawing attention to discourses of sexuality, including that of the 'unAfricanness' of homosexuality, the chapter critically engages with queer theory to disrupt the histories, social attitudes and structural pressures which shape contemporary South Africa. By signposting sites of conflict and homophobia, rooted in parallel historical tensions which flow into contemporary structures, the chapter emphasises the importance of a non-linear understanding, and frames the need for an African perspective on queer theory. This lays the foundation for critique in chapters five through eight. Through discussing themes of leadership, mediated homophobia, privacy, and homogeneity, I identify a formative tension between same-sex sexuality and belonging in Africa.

Chapter Two

Nationality and South Africa: A Case Study of Xenophobia

We, the people of South Africa,
Recognise the injustices of our past;
Honour those who suffered for justice and freedom in our land;
Respect those who have worked to build and develop our country; and
Believe that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, united in our diversity
      (Preamble to the Constitution of South Africa[32])

Just as chapter one was dedicated to framing discourses of sexual subjectivity to appreciate potential intersecting factors of experiential (un)belonging amongst 'LGBTI migrants', this chapter works to unpack overarching factors which contribute to everyday reality in relation to (trans)national subjectivity. Focusing specifically on questions of nationalism and national identity, it prioritises a multi-sited understanding of underlying structures and attitudes which play a role in shaping everyday encounters with xenophobia. This chapter thus forms the second key macro analytic component of the thesis as it relates to the South African context, and helps lay a foundation for narrative engagement in chapters five, six and seven.

Importantly, therefore, the chapter does not set out to critique a history of the philosophies of citizenship and nationhood, nor does it seek to link xenophobic attacks to a thorough reading of policies of migration. Rather, it offers an analysis of the friction between a historical *legitimisation* of intolerance, and a contemporary *denial* and repression of it. This is done to cement a vision of fragile (nationalistic) unity (at least on the surface).

To argue this, I present two key case studies: the widespread and well-publicised series of attacks against nationals from other countries in Africa in May 2008, and again in April 2015. I introduce the focus point of xenophobia in relation to the 2008 attacks, and I then move on to trace and analyse factors which contributed to their enabling conditions, both historical and immediate. I hold this alongside responses to the attacks by exploring how government and societal reactions speak to deeply embedded attitudes of exclusion, despite messages of tolerance (exemplified, in part, by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission). I then link this intersectional engagement to the present by considering the 2015 context – the time of writing and working with participants.

The chapter thus investigates how an exclusionary nationalism which currently grips the country can, in many ways, be interpreted as the catalyst for xenophobic-motivated violence. I

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[32] Available in English from www.constitutionalcourt.org.za/site/theconstitution/english-2013.pdf

argue that the executive desire to project and create a space of national belonging has come at the expense of facilitating honest, democratic discussions about lived intersections of privilege and prejudice. This, coupled with a host of socio-economic factors, enables the percolation of xenophobia up to the surface of society from the depths of that which we choose to ignore. Within the wider thesis, these arguments provide points of access for offering empathetic solidarity in the journeys of the participants. Importantly, this chapter also lays the contextual groundwork for employing a necropolitical lens in chapter six.

Reflexive Note: Researcher Context and Key Definition

In July 2008 I visited Qunu, the small village in which Nelson Mandela grew up, with my Mandela Rhodes cohort. During a week of academic and activist training sessions and debates with 30 individuals from various African countries we revelled in our awe of being based in the place in which our Patron, with whom we had met and conversed just a few months before, grew up and began to transform into the individual who would become the pride of a nation and an international hero. In this space marked as central to the heritage of the country, earmarked by local government as key for tourism and getting a sense of 'the South African experience' we discussed the recent May[33] xenophobic attacks, which had stunned the wider public in their intensity and brutality, and what they 'meant' for the Scholarship's vision of a reconciled society.

In one particularly memorable session a well-known academic gave a presentation on the history of the country. The gist of this was that, despite our constant socialising in an illusion of the opposite, 'our' South African history is by no means unique, special, miraculous, divine, or any other such adjective encouraging a sense of superiority. In the closed reflection which followed the responses from many of the participants, most whom were South African, were largely ones of outrage. To be 'Proudly South African' was to embrace the uniqueness of 'our' situation – and to question that which made 'us' *us* was tantamount to treason. The only remedy for this resentment was to stand up and sing the national anthem. The retreat, however, was open to a cohort of individuals from across Africa. As some of the other South Africans stood and sung the anthem, scholars from Uganda, Kenya, Zambia and Zimbabwe sat looking uncomfortable. A colleague from Uganda remarked immediately after the patriotic outburst that "you South Africans are so arrogant. You think it is all about you. We are not all South African here. Your nation forgets what we, Africa, did for Mandela and the ANC and South

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[33] 62 people were killed and thousands displaced in the course of a few weeks.

Africans during apartheid. We share a history and an identity. This isn't reconciliation because you don't consider us at all."

This personal experience marked, for me, the beginnings of a continentally-influenced appreciation for the complexities of South Africanness and Africanness. What it means to 'be' a citizen and a member of the South Africa nation – the 'Rainbow Nation'[34] as it was termed in 1994 – and what it means to be excluded, implicitly or explicitly, from this project is a layered and intersectional imagining of (un)belonging. As this chapter will explore, framing any sense of 'crisis' of national identity is problematised by the realisation that for crisis to occur a shift from the stable status quo must take place (or be perceived to be taking place) – and the reality is that in the last 25 years of democratic progression there has not been a stable status quo in terms of what it means to be (and what it means to not be) South African.

Researchers and popular critics alike have pointed to attitudes of exceptionalism in South Africa (Mashele 2015; Neocosmos 2010, 2008), violent processes of othering (Everatt 2011), legislative opposition to migration (Steinberg 2012; Neocosmos 2010; Crush 2000), and open nationality-based hostility at an executive level (Vigneswaran and Landau 2012; Everatt 2011; Flockermann *et al* 2010) as contributing factors to the ongoing opposition towards 'non-nationals' in the country. These factors, which take root in a historical context of shifting understandings of nation and citizenship, manifest in South Africa, as Crush euphemistically summarises, as a "distinct aversion to Africans from elsewhere on the continent" (2000: 112). This 'aversion' frequently takes the form of legislative, discursive, social and physical violence, with the dark recognition that South Africa has become increasingly xenophobic since 1990[35] (Human Rights Watch 1998: 18).

Xenophobia in this context, therefore, "denotes a hostility toward the stranger perceived as threat" (Sanchez-Mazas and Licata 2015: 802). Racism, as this chapter acknowledges, shapes much of the landscape in South Africa. The country's history arguably conflates what may be understood as ethnicity with race, presenting readers unfamiliar with the cultural landscape with a conceptual challenge. As stated, this project does not seek to fracture formulations of race. However, for the purposes of definition and differentiation, I understand racism here to be "prejudice toward individuals or groups based on the socially constructed notion of 'race', which defines social categories on the basis of differentiating phenotypical

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[34] Perhaps an inherently doomed concept, because inclusion within a nation always signifies exclusion, otherwise it comes to signify nothing. The 'Rainbow Nation' project was, in this way, a project concerned with establishing new boundaries. See below.

[35] The year in which the dismantling of apartheid is recognised to have begun.

markers such as skin color" (*ibid*). This strategy of social categorisation defined the system of apartheid. Of course, the transformation of social understandings potentially links these two concepts – and other projects may, through the open-ended intersectional approach suggested here, offer a racism/xenophobia reading of content rather than a homophobia/xenophobia reading.[36]

Importantly, I elect not to read content as a race/xenophobia combination partly out of an awareness that discussions of race necessarily address an ideology of whiteness in South Africa. There is a dual danger in shifting focus back to questions of whiteness and white subjectivity: firstly, that whiteness may re-centre itself as a key force; and, secondly, that issues, attitudes and practices may be excused and excluded from critique by such a shift. In questions of self-representation Scott notes, "white individuals are suffering a crisis of delegitimacy" (2012: 746) and that attempts to find 'new narratives' often problematically "re-centre a now displaced white privilege" (750; also 752). Yet I maintain an intersectional awareness that failing to recognise whiteness (and the position of white individuals in South Africa) potentially reinforces privilege "even as the prerogatives" of such an ideology are challenged (Gallagher and Twine 2012: 2). Race and nation are certainly linked, and, as I explore below, the nation-building project of the post-apartheid government assimilated whiteness as a cultural and social position under the wider gambit of rainbow nation human rights.[37] However, for the purposes of this chapter and the project, I extend the scope of focus by recognising whiteness as a underlying *component*, rather than central agent, of nation-based analysis (explicitly foregrounded in my brief linking of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to the idea of the Rainbow Nation). In doing so I offer a site for future consideration without privileging the significance of white subjectivities. This allows for a crucial alternative focus on broad hostility towards 'strangers' from African countries within the wider social context (Sanchez-Mazas and Licata 2015: 803).

This chapter thus locates formative social discourses as positioning the figure of the African migrant as a threat to exceptionalism, as entrenched through South African (rainbow)

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[36] Indeed, a reading of key themes in relation to questions of whiteness, sexuality, blackness and nationality would be an interesting endeavour. Of interest would be a large-scale investigation into the racialized component of hostility towards Africans vs hostility towards white migrants; that is, how different migrant groups are racialized in different ways. This is too broad for this thesis. See, instead, Conway and Leonard (2014) and Peberdy (2009).

[37] As an identity category, therefore, 'being white' is subsumed by the combination of a government-driven non-racialism and a constitution which functions on the premise of individuality. Yet this "transmuted liberal power" (Steyn and Foster 2012: 25) operates alongside a structural maintenance of economic and cultural privilege in which various racialised discursive repertoires are maintained (see Steyn and Foster 2012; Scott 2011. For additional considerations of positionality see Conway 2017 and Steyn 2012).

nationalism – as a threat which functions as a tool of racial *unification*. Through this, the language of 'hoards', 'intruders', and 'vermin' comes to define the *fear* – manifested as aggression and intolerance – of this particular form of stranger. Xenophobia is thus "unambiguously a response to the alleged dangers a given society faces when confronted with someone who is not 'one of us'" (Sanchez-Mazas and Licata 2015: 802). Xenophobia's antonym, xenophilia, positions it as conceptually different from racism, and shapes the fear of the (threat of the) stranger as the binary opposition of hospitality (806). As this chapter will explore, there is no single reason for xenophobia. The combination of economic, social, political and cultural factors has come to shape the notion of a threat from the rest of Africa.

Part 1 – Focus Point: May 2008

Background

South Africa has only recently emerged from a long history of varying regimes of control and exclusion and is facing 'teething problems' that every young democracy has faced. The 20th century, up until 1990, was marked by different authorities stringently and violently defining what encompasses the South African nation, and who is excluded from it. This, in turn, was preceded by 400 years of colonialism, and is obviously part of a much longer world history of 'othering'. In many ways the ideological project of the 1994 government, building on values of the liberation movement, was (on the surface) to create a broadly inclusive state which welcomed all those who sought to tap into the 'limitless potential' of the country and 'build a better future together', to coin phrases popular in the South African vernacular.

The problem with creating and emphasising such a space of belonging is, of course, that it relies on delineating who does not belong, with the result that understandings of nationality and South Africanness mimic patterns of exclusion. A constant tension in South Africa is thus what it means to *be*, and this is underpinned – within a contemporary and historical rhetoric – by a dominant discourse of exceptionalism. This sense of exceptionalism sits perpetually at odds, however, with the realities of everyday social and economic disempowerment in the form of an unemployment crisis, high levels of poverty, a growing gap between rich and poor, slow development, a failed education system and a high cost of living. This is often exacerbated by poor service delivery, an over-burdened health-care system and a police service which, when not perceived to be a tool for tyranny, is over-worked to the point of absolute inefficiency. The 1994 promises of a better future for all have, for many, failed to materialise.

These have all been argued (see below) to be the underlying reasons for xenophobia, contributing to the observation that in many instances xenophobic attacks are the displaced anger of a disenfranchised and frustrated populace. Indeed, in many ways the democratic governments of South Africa have failed to facilitate an on-going dialogue of what it means to live and belong in South Africa. I signpost these factors now as an initial point of understanding for the reader to engage with how, through the coalescence of these elements with a "desperately low national mood" (Everatt 2011: 10), the country could no longer ignore xenophobia as of May 2008.

The 2008 Attacks

Between January and April 2008 several incidents of xenophobic-related violence were reported in Gauteng, the Western Cape, KwaZulu Natal, the Free State and the Eastern Cape (Nyar no date: 10). In January, the bodies of two Somalis were found burnt to death in their shops, and additional Somali shops were attacked. Spurred by community meetings calling for 'foreigners' to be removed from local areas, these attacks continued at the end of the month and into February. Violence became concentrated in Gauteng throughout March, with two Zimbabweans being beaten to death in Olievenhoutbosch at the start of the month. On 31 March seven deaths were reported as the result of a community protest over service delivery which transformed into a xenophobic 'cleansing' of the community (*ibid*). Mob violence continued in April.

This escalated on 11 May where, in the township of Alexandra in Johannesburg, what has been described in subsequent literature and analyses as a "pogrom" (Crush *et al* 2013: 1) or an "orgy of violence" (Everatt 2011: 8) erupted in the form of an armed mob attack. The immediate result of this attack included two deaths, two gang rapes, and approximately 60 injuries, but attacks continued "on the same scale" for another week (Nyar no date: 11). During this week, the violence spread throughout Gauteng and then later the rest of South Africa. The violence, as the general academic and research consensus concurs, was specifically targeted at (black) nationals from other African countries, although it claimed both South African and non-South African victims.

Throughout May mobs targeted people they perceived to be 'foreign', businesses that were owned by non-South Africans, and residential areas where non-nationals were known to live. An extensive day-by-day timeline of the reported attacks and responses is available (Nyar, no date), including media reporting that in some instances mobs were aided by the police. Between 11 and 25 May across various locations the country saw widespread targeting of

African-owned shops for looting, the petrol bombing and razing of private homes of 'foreigners', forced evictions and armed mob attacks. These two weeks of violence resulted in the deaths of 62 people, the injury of 700, and the displacement of hundreds of thousands (Everatt 2011: 8).

The attacks were noted for their "brutality and flagrant disregard for the law or for the basic humanity of the victims and survivors" (Nyar 2011: 150), and drew attention to deeply-rooted attitudes of intolerance of 'makwerekwere', a pejorative term used to describe foreigners based on mimicking the sound of their language to South African ears (Everatt 2011: 14). The mobs which gathered attacked anyone who vaguely resembled a 'foreigner', often based on how individuals responded to a quickly-asked question, in isiZulu, of "what is this?" in reference to different body parts being pointed at (8). If individuals were unable to respond they were judged to not be South African, resulting in the lives of many South Africans being taken in the process, given the fact that there are eleven official languages in the country and that fluency in isiZulu is far from universal.

President Mbeki ultimately issued an order for the South African National Defence Force to assist the South African Police Service on 21 May (Internet Archive 2008), but the overall slow response of the government and the complex factors surrounding the events of the month failed to completely quell further violence (Nyar no date; Crush *et al* 2013: 52-3). However, the intensity and ferocity of the attacks, symbolised by the widely-circulated image of Ernesto Nhamuave being 'necklaced'[38], were not repeated.

Aftermath of the Attacks

The violence, the slow responses, and the discussions which took place after the events "threw into relief many of the faultlines of South African society" (Everatt 2011: 9) – faultlines which, to date, remain as gaping threats in the everyday lives of individuals from other countries in Africa, specifically because the violence was directed at other African, rather than European, nationals (Crush *et al* 2013: 19). Nyar notes that to regard May 2008 as a "starting point" of violence is "artificial" (no date: 16): as is discussed below, xenophobic attitudes have long been prevalent in South Africa. Rather, for the purposes of this chapter, 2008 should be viewed as the year in which the attacks and their underlying reasons collided with other factors and, together, forced South Africans to confront the reality that xenophobia is a problem in their 'rainbow nation'. Such an admission is, however, still forthcoming from the government.

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[38] Execution by being bound in a petrol-filled rubber tyre and set on fire.

In the aftermath of 2008 'waves' of 'xenophobic violence' have swept over the country. A report by the Southern African Migration Programme (SAMP)[39] documents 500 incidents in 2011 with 100 foreign migrants killed, and 300 foreign migrants killed between late 2011 and late 2012 (Crush *et al* 2013: 11; also see 52-69 for an incredibly thorough timeline of all reported attacks between 2008 and 2013). However, the scale of the 2008 attacks has not been equalled.

2008 provides a central focus point for understanding the still-existing tensions in the country. The attacks did not occur in a social vacuum: although they may have been incidents of extreme intolerance and violence they were not isolated and are instead the complex results of a much longer history of prejudice. A consideration of this history and how it enables or feeds xenophobic attitudes is thus necessary, as is linking it to broader macro points of analysis – namely those of nation and identity. Through tracing these points one may glean a fundamental tension between a historic legitimisation of xenophobia and a democratic repression of it, and begin to appreciate the contemporary everyday context.

Part 2 – The Build Up to 2008: Historical Context and Enabling Conditions

The epigraph of this chapter is the preamble to the constitution of South Africa, and I emphasise the line "South Africa belongs to all who live in it, united in our diversity". The roots of this preamble, and indeed the whole constitution, lie in the 1955 Freedom Charter, widely regarded as the manifesto of the liberation struggle. Adopted at The Congress of the People, a collective of allied congresses committed to a non-racial South Africa, the Freedom Charter similarly states that "South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white" and that "all national groups shall have equal rights" in a state which respects their sovereignty (ANC 2011b). A primary goal of the liberation movement was the "enshrined" principle of creating a utopian space of tolerance (Ramutsindela 1997: 102), a "transformed, compassionate nation" for *all* people who lived in it (Stobie 2007: 3; Barber 1994: 70).

Yuval-Davis provides a useful and thorough overview of conceptual understandings of 'nation', highlighting the diverse approaches which "view nations as a concrete objective reality that can be identified" as well as those approaches which regard nation as a construct of the mind (2011: 84; also see Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1992: 23). Realisations of nation, however, are predicated on a categorisation of the self in relation to others. These diverse imaginings of nation, and considerations of who is a member and who is not, depend on the overarching

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[39] http://www.queensu.ca/samp and http://www.africaportal.org/partner/southern-african-migration-programme

political project of belonging, speaking to the recognition that within a nation "exclusionary boundaries" – such as those of biological origin, emotional attachment, or cultural values – will be, and are regularly, "constructed and imagined in different ways" (90). As Lutz *et al* reflect, "[w]herever a delineation of boundaries takes place – as is the case with every ethnic and national collectivity – processes of exclusion and inclusion are in operation. These can take place with varying degrees of intensity and with a variety of cultural, religious and state mechanisms" (1995: 4).

These boundaries of exclusion and inclusion are reinforced through what Billig terms "banal nationalism", or the constant every-day reminders of nation and nationhood in a "selective process of remembrance and forgetfulness; of hailing certain occasions, artefacts, personal attributes, particular heroes and celebrities, as well as certain territories and landscapes" (in Yuval-Davis 2011: 92). Nationalism on a macro level "presupposes the image of the nation as a manifest, latent or desired form of collective identity related to the nation-state as a co-evolving or anticipated form of political organization" (Ramutsindela 1997: 99). As a concept, it provides "a feeling of belonging, self-confidence and 'the dream of immortality' to the citizens" (Lutz *et al* 1995: 3). Of course, the manifestation of different forms of nationalism are contextually specific and may be critiqued with an evolving definition (2-5) and experiences of nationalisms may vary (for example along intersections of gender and class – see Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1992; also Lutz *et al* 1995 for a European consideration). In the case of South Africa, the historical reorganisations of ideas of nationhood and nationalism "along ethnic or 'racial' lines highlight the interconnections between nationalism and racism" (Lutz *et al* 1995: 4; also Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1992: 21-60). Historically, nationalism here has typically been "centred around claims and practices for separate political representation, territory or unification" (Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1992: 5).

Unterhalter (1995) outlines four overlapping phases in the construction of ideas of nationhood and nationalism in the geographic area of South Africa. The first, a prenational phase (up until c1750) comprised of different societies which were "not informed of notions of the supremacy of one society with regard to another" (1995: 209). The second phase, or the "establishment of national projects in African kingdoms" between c1750 and 1898 (210), saw the trend of ruling clans establishing national identities based on "ethnic differentiation" (211). The third phrase encompasses colonial rule (1652-1910), and the final phase relates to "settler

rulers establishing a national project" (222-236) from 1910-1960, and 1960-1994. Within each of these phases the idea of nations – and races – were defined differently.[40]

Although the history of the executive determination of belonging extends far beyond the last 100 years, the last century of history in South Africa offers some key points for consideration in this regard. Following the aftermath of the Second Boer War, which was preceded by three centuries of racialized colonial conflict, the Union of South Africa came into being in 1910 as a way of unifying the (white) British and Afrikaans colonies. The union explicitly marked the beginnings of a nation which venerated whiteness, and which positioned a white alliance against the racial (black) majority of the region (Ramutsindela 1997: 101; SAHO no date). The exclusion of the black majority from understandings of belonging in the Union was met by the black press of the time with "undisguised hostility" (SAHO no date) and in response to varying attempts to create race-based and language-based groupings in the Union, "African national identity became increasingly assertive" (Ramutsindela 1997: 102). This culminated in the formation of the South African Native National Congress in 1912 – later to be renamed the African National Congress (ANC) in 1923 – to, in part, respond to the discriminatory laws being passed in favour of the white minority.

As the governments of the Union of South Africa enforced policies of racial segregation and race-based control, understandings of South Africanness became, within the ruling minority and legislative structures, increasingly bound to race and exclusion. The legitimisation of racialized intolerance towards those of 'other' (black) nations became a foundational principle during this period of history. The Group Areas Act of 1950 and the Black Authorities Act of 1951 effectively created separate 'African Nations', which was a key element of "the grand apartheid plan" (Ramutsindela 1997: 102-3). The National Party government, which came into power in 1948, orchestrated the development of separate nation-states within the geographic region of South Africa, based on predetermined black ethnic groupings. These 'nations' were separate from the understanding of the nation of South Africa, and were not voluntary groupings. Rather, through the strict policing of movement and association, a white minority conceptualisation of nationality and belonging was imposed on all those who lived in the space of South Africa (*ibid*).

It is within this context of aggressive regulation and legitimised race/nation-based intolerance that the Freedom Charter developed. Though by no means a thorough imagining of the history of South Africa, these brief points frame that the very geographic borders of the

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[40] Even during apartheid the categorisations of race changed annually (Unterhalter 1995: 207). Also see Anthias and Yuval-Davis (1992: 1-20) for how processes of "relabelling and redesignation may occur" (3).

country, its very foundations as a republic, are based on an incredibly recent (intentional) *failure* to incorporate an inclusive understanding of belonging. Recent history is filled with different groups claiming and (forcibly) asserting malleable nationhood on the basis of race, language, heritage, culture and location (which may be said of many, if not all, countries). However, in the transition from apartheid to democracy, President FW De Klerk recognised in 1990 that a fundamental component in the success of a democratic state would be the remedying of this factor through the creation of a single national identity (Ramutsindela 1997: 104) and to thus shift away from what in effect was a historical legitimisation of race/nation-based prejudice.

Indeed, in 1988 the ANC Constitutional Guidelines read that it "shall be state policy to promote the growth of a single national identity and loyalty binding on all South Africans" (Barber 1994: 71). The ideological emphasis of the ANC on an "overarching non-ethnic" understanding of nationality and belonging (70) translated, on paper, into a post-1994 project of nation-building which simultaneously tried to foster a state-wide sense of inclusivity and manage "historical divisions and entrenched inequality" (Nyar 2011: 150).

The considerable challenge faced by the ANC government was to "harmonize" what in effect were (and remain) "parallel national identities" into a cohesive whole (Ramutsindela 1997: 99). It may be argued, therefore, that the constitution and Freedom Charter intentionally lack intellectual parameters to define what it means to live in South Africa and to whom South Africa belongs, given the history of institutionalised segregation and executive attempts to delineate what it meant to be (or not to be) a member of a nation. The open-endedness of this ideal of belonging is captured in the (highly constructed) metaphor of South Africa as the 'rainbow nation'.

<u>A Rainbow Nationalism</u>

A phrase associated with Archbishop Desmond Tutu and Constitutional Court Justice Albie Sachs, it refers to the newly-democratic Republic of South Africa, post-1994 elections, where the vision of the Freedom Charter seemingly began to be realised through the securing of political stability, the neutralization of conflicts, and the overall diffusion of tensions in the country (Nyar 2011: 150). 'The rainbow nation' came to symbolise a key "part of the discourse of widespread national euphoria" which denoted "equality embracing racial and ethnic diversity in the body politic" (Stobie 2007: 3). Stobie makes reference to the use of the rainbow metaphor throughout history, referring in particular to Gloria Anzaldúa's reflection on Jesse Jackson's use of it, suggesting its adoption is an apt image for a transitory moment of political hybridity –

between the storm clouds of the past and the clear skies of the future – marked by diverse people hoping for a better future (*ibid*).

How the metaphor holds 25 years after the dismantling of apartheid[41] is explored below, but it is important to note that leaders who facilitated the democratic transition were deeply embedded in a broad-based appreciation of diversity and an acute awareness of the historical suffering under decades of apartheid rule and centuries of colonial history. The project of building a 'rainbow nation' was placed "high on the agenda" of the post-1994 government (Ramutsindela 1997: 105) in response to the history of subjecting people living in the geographic region of South Africa to stringent controls about what constituted a nation and what (racially) qualified one to be a recognised part of it.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), chaired by Desmond Tutu, was established – in part – to play a role in this agenda. Although this thesis is not dedicated to the unpacking of the TRC,[42] its establishment in 1995 as the "archetypal transitional statutory body to promote a 'culture of human rights' in South Africa" (Wilson 2001: 13) emphasises a central ruling concern that not only a "state of right" should be established, but that human rights should be used "construct a new national identity" (*ibid*).[43] The force of the TRC in shaping a sense of unity and reconciliation is such that the day of its initial meeting is now an official annual public holiday in South Africa (16 December).

The TRC, as a "theatricalization of the power of the new state" (20), functioned to extend the rainbow metaphor to one of "rainbow jurisprudence" (Cockrell in Wilson 2001: 12), explicitly rejecting retribution in favour of a constitutionally-driven veneration of human rights. However, Cockrell critically notes that embedded in such a notion of rainbow inclusivity is the idea that "*all* competing values can, mysteriously, be accommodated within the embrace of a warm and fuzzy consensus" (in Wilson 2001: 12). Indeed, the establishment of the TRC implicitly functioned to incorporate a protection of white minority interests into a wider discourse of human rights. During the peace talks between 1985 and 1994, human rights – symbolised by the hopeful image of a rainbow – became "the language not of principle but of pragmatic compromise" (Wilson 2001: 6). The National Party of the apartheid government, recognising the

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[41] February 2015 marked the 25th anniversary of Nelson Mandela's release
[42] See, for example, Wilson (2001) or Amstutz (2005)
[43] The TRC was comprised of three committees: the Human Rights Violation Committee, the Reparations and Rehabilitation Committee, and the Amnesty Committee. See Wilson (2001: 21-25) for a breakdown of this structuring. These three committees sought to record statements of historic abuses, facilitate national reconciliation, and process amnesty applications. The TRC gave insights into various apartheid mechanisms and widely sought to offer justice while promoting national unity.

limitations of its negotiating position with the ANC, "turned to a strategy of individual rights with liberal 'checks and balances' to secure the interests of a white minority and protect its economic and social privileges" (*ibid*). Although the TRC was not designed as a tool to protect whiteness, the wider language of human rights as a "dominant form of ideological legitimization" for the nation-building project (4) contributed to "a classic liberal blindness to issues of race" (93) in the Amnesty Committee.[44] As such, within the TRC's mission of cementing national unity, an "accentu[ation of] the normative and moral dimensions of conflict and inequality" on a personal level enabled individuals – regardless of race – to "readily change their attitudes and join the rainbow nation, redeeming both" (93).

The intention here, as stated above, is not to position white(ness) as central – to this thesis or the broader South African context. The establishment and function of the TRC, however, should be flagged as an active contradiction of wider intellectual projects on global politics at the time which, within a Habermasian framework, pitted human rights "as the antithesis of nationalist modes of nation-building" (Wilson 2001: 1). The "allure" that rights-based strategies would offer an "antidote to ethnic nationalism" (2) fades upon recognition that, when rights are not explicitly subordinated to nation-building, they become a part of that process itself through the reinforcement (and encouragement?) of various nationalisms. Thus, beyond the monumental (destined to fail?) task of creating a single South African *identity* (represented through the mandate of the TRC), the government also faced the challenges of neutralizing (repressing) both white/Afrikaner and aggressive African nationalism, to create an inclusive (South) African *nationalism*. This had to be done while simultaneously avoiding creating the conditions for the development of a new form of explicitly exclusionary nationalism – a challenge which, on the whole, the government has met unsuccessfully.

By no means smooth or universal concepts, the perceived "internal political cultural unity" or "national solidarity" (Ramutsindela 1997: 99) of South Africa by those in positions of leadership and power have had a direct bearing on everyday life. African nationalism, which Ndluvo-Gatsheni traces through "broader global, continental and national histories, including such processes as the slave trade, mercantilism, imperialism, colonialism, migration and globalization" (2012: 72) underscores much of the ANC's historic commitment to a non-racial state of belonging, with the historic slogan of 'diverse people unite'. As an historical attempt to

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[44] This has manifested in contemporary South Africa as 'New South Africa Speak' (Steyn and Foster 2012). The "compatriotism" (24) that some white South Africans express, rooted in reconciliation and ideas of rights-based equality, may speak to an "evasive colourblindness" (25). Steyn and Foster argue that this is connected to a discourse of non-racialism driven by the ANC, and functions to both perpetuate racism and deflect accusations of racism.

"make African citizens out of colonial subjects" (78), African nationalism is a concept dedicated to self-determination within a broader focus of Pan-Africanism. Differences in the interpretation of African nationalism as a manifestation of freedom resulted in the Pan African Congress (PAC) splitting from the ANC in 1955. Where the PAC felt that a 'new South Africa' should be a nation comprised solely of black Africans working towards a 'United States of Africa', the ANC sought to adopt African nationalism as a framework of reference of a diverse, equal and socially democratic society (Barber 1994: 71).

However, the ANC's frantic democratic-era intellectual emphasis on an "overarching non-ethnic South African nationalism" (Barber 1994: 70), rooted in the ideals of the Freedom Charter and African nationalism and reinforced through the TRC, has no clear indication of how the nationalisms and forced nations of the past are to be fully integrated into a shared vision for social change. As Ramutsindela reflects, "the bases on which a South African nation was built has failed to produce a common national identity" (1997: 99) to the effect that South Africans remain bound to the "baggage of history" (Barber 1994: 68; also Wilson 2001: 93) through a nationalistic agenda which ultimately comes to focus more on delineating lines of exclusion than ideologies of inclusivity (Peberdy and Jara 2011: 53).

Since the move to democracy the political focus has shifted (necessarily) from liberation to unpacking this baggage, resulting in attention being given to identity politics and the abandonment of an idealistic embrace of diversity in favour of the mobilising of ethnicities to win and retain power in various political constituencies (Ndluvo-Gatsheni 2012: 82). The state ideology that shapes contemporary existence is based on ideas of nativism, "chauvinism and racism" (*ibid*) – a mutation of the Pan-Africanist vision of African nationalism in the 1960s. The move away from 'diverse people unite' towards a politics which stresses indigeneity as key to belonging (Neocosmos 2010) is the result of a "complete failure by the post-apartheid state to construct a nationalism which is firmly rooted in Africa" (Neocosmos 2008). The real, lived effects of this form of nationalism have included exclusionary legislature, aggressive policing, and a rhetoric of open hostility.

This process should not be conceptualised as a conscious shift, nor should it imply that prior to 1994 all groups were accepted and embraced within the rhetoric of the dream of the 'rainbow nation'. Indeed, in chapter one I refer to the struggle queer activists faced in the 1980s to be accepted by the liberation movement. This process should instead be conceptualised as a gradual, multi-sited testing of the ideals of equality and democracy in a context fraught with

social, economic and political difficulties, with the result that the projected boundaries of belonging have failed to provide a cohesive sense of national unity (if this is ever possible).

In many ways, then, the illusionary sense of national identity as a strategy to negate (or ignore, repress, and will into non-existence) the historical legitimisation of prejudice and exclusion forms a broad backdrop to understanding how xenophobia percolated up to the surface of everyday life in the build-up to 2008. Xenophobia and racism were in effect embedded policies of the Nationalist government that ruled from 1948 to 1994, and the regulation of black African nations was partnered with "highly selective" white immigration policies, dedicated to the survival of the white government (Crush 2000: 107). Foreign nationals have always been a large minority in South Africa, with approximately 600 000 living in the country in 1950 (50% of whom were undocumented (Steinberg 2012: 353)). However, that "everyone was black" was "more important than some were foreign and some were nationals" (Steinberg 2012: 354). In relation to the 'build up' to 2008, then, Flockermann *et al*, reflecting on Derrida, note that

> the foreigner is a destabilising presence in our midst. By his mere presence amongst us he is posing questions – questions not only of who he is and what his presence signifies, but ultimately of who 'we' are and what we signify in relation to him. (2010: 246)

The presence of 'foreigners' in 'the new South Africa' was, and arguably remains, in the minds of the executive a threat to the agenda of nation building and creating a definition of nationalism.

Thus, just as the white apartheid government used the 'threat' of blackness-as-foreignness to create an enemy of the nation, so "in the eyes of the state and the politically empowered, non-nationals are the functional equivalent of black South Africans two decades ago" (Vigneswaran and Landau 2012: 126). This has been attributed to the combination of "coding of unregulated human mobility as a threat to the economic and physical well-being of the citizenry", using a person's "immutable geographic or cultural points of origin to determine status", and the "use of the state bureaucracy and coercive power to label and separate populations" (*ibid*). Successive ANC governments have, with the aid of a largely anti-immigration press system which spreads a fear of the 'threat' of non-nationals (*ibid*: 129; Smith 2011: 117; Crush 2000: 105), cultivated a widespread popular (colonialesque) notion of "dark hordes swarming in from darkest Africa" (Everatt 2011: 18).

In relating this to the democratic project, it suggests an imaginative breaking with the ANC's history. Many ANC leaders were based in other African countries during their exile, and there was – and remains – a strong popular opinion that South Africa's liberation was a moment

to celebrate for all of Africa. These connections certainly formed the foundation of *ideas* of inclusivity in South Africa (Mbeki 1996), but in reality, given the multitude of issues and structural challenges inherited from apartheid, transcontinental integration was largely removed from the national project following 1994.

<u>Social Institutions & Exceptionalism</u>

Crush argues that since 1994 the government has been "avowedly anti-immigration" on the basis of it being "a threat to jobs for citizens" (2000: 107). Although official distinction is made between migrant workers, refugees and undocumented migrants, the political discourse on the whole became one of fear around the belief that "foreign nationals would swamp and overwhelm the country in such a way as to make the hard-won gains of the 1990s liberation irrelevant" (Neocosmos 2010: 141). Official regulation became based on attitudes of control (rather than protecting those in the country), coupled with an aggressive show of the 'success' of the deportation system, with over 600 000 "undocumented migrants" deported between 1995 and 2000 alone (Crush 2000: 104). A nationwide emphasis on deportation with minimal due process has been policy, and – although largely ineffective in tracking and coping with migration – enjoyed "wide support" from the country (Crush *et al* 2013: 37). Regulation of migration also took the form of the Aliens Control Act of 1991, which, amended in 1995, gave officials incredibly repressive powers, focusing on police control, exclusion and deportation (Neocosmos 2010: 82).

Attitudes of intolerance have been overall "key feature[s] of South Africa's immigration legislation and practice, both historically and, despite the country's transition to democracy and equality, currently" (Harris in Neocosmos 2010: 82). Neocosmos importantly highlights that these attitudes are explicitly directed at Africans: in an example from 1996, of 26 000 people from Germany, the UK and the USA, all of whom were all in the country 'illegally', only 49 were deported (82). Regulation of migration has been – in what is a frustratingly damaging understatement – a notable 'confusion' of policy amendments and supplementations (82). A summary of the governing legislation is available (77-84), and in particular the Draft White Paper on International Migration of 1999, which became a Bill in 2000, is noted. This explicitly assumed that South Africa was being "flooded by illegal immigrants", and saw clauses dedicated to giving the police "powers to stop anyone (citizen or otherwise) to prove their immigration status coupled with an encouragement of community organisations to 'root out' and report suspected 'illegals'" (83). Attempts to involve the community resulted in violence in 2000, and are explored by Steinberg (2012) as key reasons for the attacks of 2008.

Although these clauses were dropped, Neocosmos notes that the promulgation of the Bill into Act 13 of 2002 still legalised the harassment and intimidation of people on the street by the police. The Department of Home Affairs, which according to their website exists as the custodian and protector of the identities and statuses of all peoples in South Africa,[45] had its mandate adjusted from a humanitarian approach of protection to one of enforcement and monitoring (Neocosmos 2010: 84). The department has been "publicly castigated" by various judges in South Africa for not providing support and protection (Crush 2000: 104), but the "excessive powers" of the department over "extremely vulnerable people" has meant that the combination of a legal prerogative and rampant "bribery, extortion and corruption" (Steinberg 2012: 354) within the system has seen little done to change how it functions. The Act was amended in 2004, but largely out of concern for removing "impediments to immigration of skilled foreigners", and did nothing to suggest a shift in the xenophobic undertones of the administrative and legislative systems (Neocosmos 2010: 84).

On a day-to-day level, in the build-up to 2008, the police played a notorious role as corrupt enforcers of anti-immigration policy. In 2000 the Human Rights Commission expressed concern about the role of the police force in relation to xenophobia (Neocosmos 2008) and Steinberg suggests that two types of policing are simultaneously occurring in South Africa. The first focuses on "paramilitary intervention" with strategic raids, arrests, building invasions and blockades to capture 'illegal immigrants' (2012: 354). The second is "quotidian, dispersed and routine", focusing on quizzing members of the public and performing 'tests' of indigeneity, primarily "to line the pockets of police officers" (*ibid*). The failure of the police force to adequately 'protect' society, coupled with a constitutional imperative for the police to meet regularly with community members to discuss issues, resulted, Steinberg argues, in a context where mob violence is sometimes understood to be a warped sense of "security" and public protection, speaking to an embedded ideology of anti-immigration (2012: 346).

This discourse of state-based xenophobia was historically carried by the media, where right from 1994 a message that "the high rate of crime and violence – mainly gun-running, drug trafficking and armed robbery – is directly related to the rising number of illegals in SA" (statement in the Financial Mail from 09 September 1994, found in Neocosmos 2008; also see Smith 2011). This dominant discourse of state-sanctioned messages of intolerance has generated the view that the perceived integrity (and identity) of the new South Africa needs to be preserved lest the system be destroyed through illegal abuse by 'immigrants' (Steinberg

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[45] http://www.dha.gov.za/index.php/about-us

2012: 354). In effect, the positioning of (African) foreign nationals in general as a threat has had the consequence of generating *conditions* for the day-to-day realities of violence (128), as well as providing a palatable explanation for the ongoing criminal and judicial issues that plague South Africa.

Crush *et al* suggest that within surveyed understandings of what it 'means' to be South African, or in what defines national belonging, most citizens believe that, as migrants and refugees are born outside of the country, migrants can never be fully accepted (2013: 18). A nationalism based on belonging by virtue of birth has placed resistance to 'foreigners' as central to any understanding of citizenship and national identity (*ibid*). Although many nations incorporate birth within a geographic area as at least partially central to national identity, this incorporation in South Africa when held alongside a deep history of conflict and a political discourse of fear encompass the "macro- and micro-contexts and trigger moments that came together" in 2008 and which substantiate existing contexts of intolerance (Everatt 2011: 27; also Neocosmos 2010, 2008).

Considering this, Everatt emphasises that there has been a failure to address the ways in which "conquest and oppression may have injected a poison into the body politic" (2011: 10). The lack of "national dialogue" to make South Africans "open up about their perceptions and prejudices, think them through, and remember the humanity of those they are discussing" (23) contributes to a "scarred" national psyche. The readiness of South Africans to embrace apartheid-style measures of regulation (in the form of the army, electric fences and identification passes) speaks to the internalisation of apartheid language and ideology (17) and lingering psychological damage evident in a willingness to collectively dehumanise entire groups of people (19). That South Africans have expressed the view that the country is a "paradise" compared to the rest of Africa (27), and have used recycled colonial stereotypes to speak of the impending 'threat' (19), points to a pervasive attitude of elitism and *exceptionalism*.

Neocosmos indicates that the way in which the democratic history of the country has been portrayed and the manner in which the project of nation-building has been executed has produced a view that

> our country is not really in Africa and that our intellectual and cultural frame of reference is in the United States and Europe. Africa is the place of the other. Given that South Africa is industrialised, democratic, advanced in relation to other countries of the continent and also a paragon of reconciliation and political liberalism. (2008)

This discourse of exceptionalism, of situating the country outside of 'normal' belonging, is one I have personally encountered on a regular basis, as shared in the opening reflection. The

peaceful transition to democracy has been spun into a matter of national pride – and in many ways fairly so – but with the fused view that the rest of Africa, less successful in every way, is a "strange backward continent characterized by primitivism, corruption, authoritarianism, [and] poverty" and that those who come from these 'other' countries wish to enter South Africa with the sole purpose of exploiting its citizens (Neocosmos 2008). In some ways this "schizophrenic characteristic" (*ibid*) can be linked to the discourse of unAfricanness discussed in chapter one, where 'African' has a shifting, liminal meaning used to support deep attitudes of intolerance.

Exceptionalism & Indigeneity

That South Africans view themselves as arrogantly exceptional has developed into a continental stereotype (Mashele 2015)[46] and concerns about this view have surfaced in various opinion pieces.[47] A perspective of exceptionalism has produced a "homogenizing view of all non-citizens in the country" (Crush 2000: 118). This view, however, sits in tension with the conceptualisation of citizenship increasingly being based on indigeneity (Neocosmos 2010, 2008), mirroring the government's shift in rhetoric and ideological positioning. That South Africans are not like Africans has been, and is frequently, contradicted by debates about indigeneity, authenticity and historic reconciliation. Drawing on the work of Fanon, Neocosmos argues that in the context of colonial to post-colonial transition across Africa the "collapse of nationalism into chauvinism" was

> fundamentally occasioned by the new post-independence elites to grab the jobs and capital of the departing Europeans, while the popular classes only followed in their footsteps in attacking foreign Africans. This suggests that a politics of nationalism founded on stressing indigeneity lay at the root of post-colonial xenophobia. (2008)

This is applicable in South Africa in that policies of empowerment, debates about heritage and election-time politicking regularly turn to discussions of authenticity-through-indigeneity. Increasing attempts to define indigeneity based on apartheid-era groupings and strategies of classification (*ibid*) turn, as they did in the past, to justifications for inclusion and exclusion.

Political understandings of indigeneity have 'real-world' significance when one considers the 'tests' sometimes employed by xenophobic mobs in the build-up to May 2008. Just as the apartheid era saw the use of the 'pencil test', whereby the texture and thickness of

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[46] This article caused a storm on social media in South Africa, partly for its generalised reference to the 'arrogance' of all South Africans, and partly due to its emphasis on the necessity of a (European-style) education.

[47] See, for example, Gasnolar 2015; Khoabane 2010.

a person's hair determined their racial classification and thus indigeneity (the Afrikaner government went to great lengths to historically claim indigeneity for themselves and thus whiteness), so post-1994 South Africa unofficially sees indigeneity being policed by the knowledge of the names for different body parts in different languages; by the ability of a person to pronounce certain words 'correctly'; by the darkness of a person's skin; or by the visibility of vaccination marks which may have been given to an individual in another country (Everatt 2011: 13).

However, a discourse of indigeneity, embedded in self-empowerment through an attitude of exceptionalism, sits in tension with an often-overwhelming sense of powerlessness felt by those who were – and who remain –, legally and socially, considered 'indigenous'.[48] This powerlessness is often named a key factor in motivations behind xenophobia (Fin24 2014; Hickel 2014; Everatt 2011; Nyar 2011; Sinwell 2011). Factors which contributed to powerlessness in 2008 are named as including "the crisis of unemployment and poverty and failed service delivery" (Sinwell 2011: 131) as root causes; the failure of capitalism in the country (Fin24 2014; Hlatshwayo 2011: 176); and the "economic decay and uneven development as a result of structural adjustment and deindustrialization" (Hickel 2014: 106).

Powerlessness also speaks to the superficiality of exceptionalism, in that often the social capital of migrants make them appear as a threat: their often strong sense of identity, visible cultural markers, communal interactions, shared practices and entrepreneurial endeavours sit in contrast with what many South Africans experience (Everatt 2011: 20-2). This, along with other factors, often leads to people blaming migrants for a lack of employment, for disease, and poverty in general. That many South Africans felt so disempowered both economically and socially is captured by the observation that some members of society expressed preference at the idea of being housed in border refugee camps rather than in their current local situations (21).

Similarly considering powerlessness, Hickel suggests that xenophobic violence may be interpreted as being about "reestablishing the conditions for social reproduction and demarcating the precincts of moral personhood" in a broad reaction to structures of inequality (2014: 104). Poverty and economics were (and remain) important factors in creating the conditions for xenophobia, but are a part of a broader reaction to the structures which produce such social conditions (Nyar 2011: 151; Sinwell 2011: 147). There are culturally particular ways

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[48] Which, importantly, within the current scope of articulation includes a variety of race groups – though the extension of whiteness, particularly Afrikaner whiteness, remains contentious.

that groups respond to economic deprivation (Hickel 2014), often linked to social interpretations of "moral personhood" (104)[49].

Many of the economic problems facing the country are shared by both citizens and migrants (Peberdy and Jara 2011: 54) and so questions of powerless need to be linked to broader social structures and psychologies. In reference to the 2008 attacks Everatt suggests that a sense of powerlessness coincided with "a desperately low national mood" (2011: 10). The simultaneous issues of an electricity crisis; President Mbeki being ousted as leader of the ANC; rising interest rates; a lack of housing; rampant racism; broad social inequalities; and a global recession all contributed to a "volatile mix of anger and anxiety which needed a scapegoat" (16).

One needs to, therefore, hold in mind a constant flux of issues which contributed to views that migrants are "killing our nation" (Peberdy and Jara 2011: 27). The implied hope of 'the rainbow nation' has been subject to critique, with the argument offered that the metaphor has come to typify the "crisis of national self-definition" (Stobie 2007: 3). Rather than retain an aura of promise, as the practicalities of being a democratic society with deeply unreconciled subjectivities and histories became evident over 25 years of life in South Africa, it has become associated with "popular disillusionment and cynicism" (3). Although citizens and writers still invoke the metaphor to try and stir up a sense of unity-through-diversity based on a pride in a 'shared' history of peaceful revolution, in popular media it is equally invoked as point of contradiction and national failure, rooted in anger or shame at a context which is plagued by intolerance and extreme violence on several fronts.

Part 3 – 2008: Responses and Contemporary Aftermath

Thus, though the intellectual rhetoric of the ANC remains embedded in an adherence to the values of the Freedom Charter and the constitution, the enshrined principle of believing that South Africa belongs to all those who live in it sits in remarkable contrast with dominant discourses. The events of 2008 effectively "immolated any lingering, wistful hopes for the 'miracle' of the post-apartheid 'Rainbow Nation'" (Everatt 2011: 8). The attacks which spread from Alexandra explicitly contradicted "the self-congratulatory basis of the 'rainbow nation' and warned of systematic dysfunctions indicating profound volatility and instability within the democratic state" (Nyar 2011: 150).

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[49] Hickel (2014) offers a fascinating exploration of xenophobia in relation to economics, morality, witchcraft and a crisis of masculinity in Durban.

However, the attacks also galvanised civil society, with civil organisations playing a crucial role in providing support to survivors and bringing an end to the spree of violence. Authors track the influence of social organisations,[50] and despite cynicism about motives, the societal mobilisation that transpired marks a sense of national solidarity not seen since the election in 1994 (Everatt 2011: 29). Although the involvement of the civil sector is something to be celebrated, it would be deeply problematic to consider the context of South Africa as one in which a freak instance of mob violence occurred, only to be later quelled by a broader society unified in their vision of nationalist duty.

In a 2010 project to assess national responses to the 2008 violence close to half of the population "felt personally guilty" about the attacks (Crush *et al* 2013: 5), but a third of the population also felt unmoved. The overall majority felt that migrants and refugees were 'asking' for the violence and were themselves responsible (5-7). As Peberdy and Jara assess, there was "no functioning civil society coalition in operation" prior to the attacks in 2008 (2011: 47), and although to date there remains a "core" set of organisations dedicated to challenging intolerance and inequality, these organisations are largely absent on a day-to-day basis in the lives of at-risk individuals (47-53).

Similarly, any sense of unity that developed was coupled with an incredibly slow governmental response hampered by "turf battles" and "petty" politics (such as the decision by the ANC to boycott a 5000-strong civil society march against xenophobia) (Everatt 2011: 8). Although a state of emergency was eventually declared and the South African National Defence Force dispatched to affected areas (the first-time troops were ordered to subdue civil unrest since apartheid) this was done too late to be fully effective (see Nyar 2011: 150-1). The slow response has also been attributed to "conceptual challenges" (Everatt 2011: 8), which frames that the ANC government, in the aftermath of the attacks, denied that xenophobia exists in South Africa.

<u>Denialism</u>

President Mbeki's eventual response was that the attacks were "the work of criminal and anti-social elements" (Crush *et al* 2013: 1), not the work of xenophobic attitudes. In reference to social and media responses, Mbeki lambasted the "cloaking" of "naked criminal activity" in "the garb of xenophobia" (Mbeki 2008). Of course the activities were criminal.

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[50] See Peberdy and Jara (2011) for a focus on Cape Town; Sinwell (2011) for a focus on Alexandra; and Nyar (2011) for a focus on the corporate sector.

However, Mbeki insisted on the perspective that the South African "people are not diseased by the terrible affliction of xenophobia" (*ibid*). The 'pathologising' of xenophobia and its location here within a medical discourse in an attempt to dissolve blame is intrinsically linked to the ANC's ideological attempts to create a cohesive national identity. The project of creating a nation fell to Mbeki after Nelson Mandela's Presidential term ended in 1999, and became bound to Mbeki's intellectual vision of an African Renaissance. Drawing on the work of Diop (2000) and a post-colonial vision of (South) African revitalisation, unity, pride and solidarity (Mbeki 1996), this African Renaissance would be fundamentally undermined if conscious recognition were given to the possibility that South African nationals harboured prejudice to black Africans from elsewhere on the continent – even though subsequent research points overwhelmingly to this being the case (Everatt 2011: 10).

The belief that South Africans are "incapable" of xenophobia (Everatt 2011: 9) was further emphasised by Mbeki in 2010, who elaborated that if black South Africans were to show any form of prejudice it would be against those who were the historical oppressors (14-15). Mbeki's isolation of whiteness from the Freedom Charter and the rainbow nation at this point was, however, removed from what research suggests was the reality of the situation in 2008: that a "uniting" factor across racial divides in South Africa was a dislike of black African 'foreigners' (Everatt 2011: 15). Mbeki's attitude of denialism has "hardened into an orthodoxy" in the ANC (Crush *et al* 2013: 47), and is evident in a variety of social institutions (11).

Although instances of officials recognising the possibility of xenophobia as a reality are reported occasionally, a "failure of political leadership to own the problem" (Crush *et al* 2013: 47) was the case in 2008 and remains the case today in 2015. Events such as those of February 2013, where migrant Emidio Macia was handcuffed by the police to a van and dragged down the street, are often met with harsh words about the failures of government to deal with *police brutality*, but rarely with discussions about the existence of xenophobia and the implications of its denial – including within the police force (Steinberg 2012). This is despite committees from both the African Union and the United Nations emphasising denialism is "misplaced in the extreme" (Crush *et al* 2013: 13).

Denialism has similarly been intellectualised. Various projects have attempted to discern whether xenophobia is actually 'Afrophobia' or 'negrophobia', or whether it should be conceptualised as a form of (xeno)racism (Flockerman *et al* 2010: 253; Everatt 2011: 27-28). Crush *et al* (2013), however, offer an extensive analysis of attitudes in South Africa between 2006 and 2013, based on research conducted by SAMP in 2006 and 2010. The authors conclude

that there is overwhelming evidence of continuing (shifting) attitudes that can be identified as *xenophobic*, which affect the day-to-day lives of migrants, including an increased government commitment to deportation (56-63).

<u>Ideals vs Reality</u>

To give credit to the executive, in recognising intersecting social divisions which factor in to understandings of nationhood, South Africa has been signatory to various conventions about "forced migration and refugee protection", giving backing to this locally through the promulgation of the Refugee Act in 1998. This suggests that the government outwardly seemed to adhere to a commitment to protect foreign citizens. However, overall attitudes in legislation towards migrants continue to be largely based on "notions of exclusion and control" (Steinberg 2012: 354) and these are, frustratingly and ironically, rooted in the constitution. Although the preamble boldly claims that the country belongs to all those who live in it, the text of the remainder of the constitution "distinguishes between two categories of people: citizens and persons. The distinction means that not all people within the country are interpellated in the same manner. Some are said to have rights which others do not have" (Neocosmos 2010: 84).

The rights to vote and "engage in freedom of trade, occupation and professionalism" are, for example, reserved for citizens alone, despite the overall scope of protection of the constitution, in theory, being extended to all who live in within the geographic borders of the country (Crush 2000: 110). The sovereign foundation of South Africa, therefore, is based on an inherent opposition between an ideal of universal belonging and the reality of delineated categories of inclusivity. This is not to suggest, of course, that an open-door policy on immigration would eradicate xenophobia. Rather, for a framework of understanding, it draws attention to a fundamental disconnect in the conceptualisation of (structurally) belonging in South Africa.

In relation to the aftermath of 2008 Crush *et al* (2013) provide an extensive overview of empirical data to track changes, drawing on samples of views taken first in 2006 and then in 2010. They note that beliefs about migrants are largely formed by "stereotypes, myths and unverified biases" (1) and that 90% of the population feels that there are too many migrants in the country (20). Similarly, the potential introduction of policies "that would make life easier for migrants in South Africa are rejected by the majority" (37). The authors note that nearly 80% of South Africans "either support prohibition on the entry of migrants or would like to place strict limits" on entry requirements (4), and that 30% want a "total ban" on all work-based migration (34).

This is complicated, however, by an economic shift: in 2006 a higher income corresponded with a lower xenophobic score the SAMP Xenophobic Index (SXI), but in 2010 the levels of xenophobia increased with income (Crush *et al* 2013: 4). Most worryingly for the authors there exists in South Africa a significant minority (11%) of people who consistently remain "willing to use violence to exclude or expel migrants" (5), including acting to stop the children of migrants from enrolling at school, and to "take law into their own hands" should they deem it necessary (38). The authors ultimately suggest that South Africans display a "feeble commitment to their humanitarian obligations" (2).

A dominant view that South Africans continue to hold is that they are "under siege from the outside" (Everatt 2011: 110), continuing to parallel the views of government. Because of the perceived crime and moral degradation that migrants bring, South Africans largely favour "draconian approaches to regulating immigration" (109-110). This includes the use of apartheid-era electrified fences at borders; the use of the army to control movement; highly monitored movement within the country; and harsh detention procedures. Although the constitution applies to all those who are living in South Africa, public opinion about the rights of non-nationals "diverges significantly" from this legal reality (Crush *et al* 2013: 6).

For instance, 68% of the population believe that the right to the freedom of speech should never be extended to undocumented migrants and 42% believe it should never be extended to refugees, while 51% of people believe that undocumented migrants should not have the right to police protection in the event that they need it. These all suggest that the South African populace "fundamentally disagree with their own Constitution when it comes to basic rights" (Crush *et al* 2013: 32). Although these negative attitudes largely apply to undocumented migrants, migrants (and refugees) who are documented and living in the country 'legally' consistently fall victim to xenophobic violence.

<u>State of the Nation: The Enemy Within</u>

The reality is that South Africans are more hostile than citizens of any other country in the world (as per the World Values Survey, see Crush *et al* 2013: 34). A discourse of 'the enemy within' continues to permeate legislation and fester within the social psyche, and this is exacerbated by of abuse and corruption within the deportation system (Steinberg 2012: 354; Crush 2000: 104), and a lack of general protection offered to migrants working in South Africa. Within the mindset of the 'threat' of migration – and the contradictory discourse that xenophobia does not exist, of course – the country deported an overall estimated number of 2 million people between 1990 and 2013 (Crush *et al* 2013: 36). The policing of bodies that

Steinberg identified as a key factor leading up to the 2008 events continues to instil a daily sense of fear into many people.[51] The trend of "increasingly becoming a police state" (Ferial Haffajee in Gerber 2014) and the rapid "evolution of malignant forms of policing" is also evident in accounts of Lindela Detention Centre, one of the country's largest facilities for holding undocumented migrants, with reports of regular abuse, illegal detention, bribery and corruption (Steinberg 2012: 346).

In many ways, then, the social conditions which enabled xenophobia to percolate up to the surface of a strenuously maintained illusion of rainbow unity thus remain unaddressed in 2015. The explicit messages of pride in the country, celebration and hospitality have been underscored by a discomfort with how the original vision of an inclusive rainbow nation belonging to all those who live in it has become so bound to definitions of who is included and who is excluded (Jansen in Crush *et al* 2013: 9-10; 46).

At the time of writing the landscape of South Africa is drastically changing as fresh 'waves' of xenophobic attacks have hit. In much the same way as before the country has been facing a low national mood where a general sense of disillusionment with leadership and a sense of unachievable potential are pervasive.[52] This moment in history frames the fact that "behind the façade of successful democratic state lie deep-seated disillusionment, resentment and grievance" (Ndluvo-Gatsheni 2012: 83).

The state of the nation at present is one of profound uncertainty, where "South Africans are failing to meaningfully engage with issues of identity" (Gasnolar 2015), and the government voices ideas which speak to desperate attempts to forcibly instil a sense of what it means to 'be' South African – such as the proposed (and widely slammed) pledge of allegiance to the country by school children (Voice of America 2009). Against the backdrop of the issues above, 'other' countries (that is, specifically African nations) and their peoples (black Africans) are often scapegoated for a variety of social, economic and political ills.[53] Official empathy (and common sense) are often severely lacking: the Minster of Small Business Development Lindiwe Zulu's remarks about how foreign business owners in the country should reveal their trade secrets if they expect to be tolerated and respected is a recent example (Magubane 2015).

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[51] As Paelo (2014), another Mandela Rhodes Scholar, writes in her personal account of confrontation.
[52] In many ways this was captured in February during the State of the Nation Address. Dubbed the "shame of the nation" (Davis 2015) authors have noted that the address and the attitudes and events surrounding it speak to a fragile moment in democracy. See for coverage: Alfreds (2015); Legg (2015); Maimane (2015); Sparks (2015); Economist (2014).
[53] Allison (2015).

Such utterances should not be regarded lightly. While the government projects a vision of a united South Africa the implicit executive messages of intolerance overlay all too perfectly with those of the society. The impact of leaders' messages of prejudice cannot be understated as potential incitements for violence. At the end of March 2015 Zulu King Goodwill Zwelithini was reported saying that foreign nationals must "pack their belongings and go back to their countries" (TimesLive 2015). Coming out in support of the monarch, President Jacob Zuma's son hailed citizens at a "moral regeneration rally" to "be aware that as a country we are sitting on a ticking time bomb of them [foreigners] taking over the country" (Khoza 2015).

These statements have been regarded as catalysts for large-scale attacks which then occurred at the start of April (Nkosi 2015). Beginning in areas with histories of xenophobic tension and intermittent incidences, mobs "of thousands" were reported as gathering and attacking foreign-owned businesses and driving immigrants out of communities in KwaMashu, with the violence later spreading to other parts of Durban and the wider country (News24 2015). Within two weeks of violence six people were killed (Eliseev and Mkhize 2015). Thousands were forced to flee their homes, with make-shift refugee camps being set up to accommodate those displaced. Violence in Alexandra township again captured the media's attention through the photographically-documented beating and later death of Emmanuel Sithole (Marinovich 2015). Just as civil society previously rallied against what is popularly discussed as the 'acts of a minority', so too in this instance has there been a huge surge in the use of social media to express a (self-denialist?) collective opposition xenophobia (Sithole 2015).[54] The public remains divided, however, as the South African Human Rights Commission has faced bomb threats following rumours it would be pursuing investigations into Zwelithini's role in inciting violence (Nyembezi 2015).

As events still unfold, the government has condemned the attacks, with the ANC saying they are "shameful" (Ismael 2015). Yet, just as Mbeki did in 2008, President Zuma emphatically insists that *xenophobia* does not exist, and that "South Africans are definitely not xenophobic" (Zuma 2015). In general, however, key leaders have been noticeably absent from meaningfully engaging with the conditions which enable xenophobia, with the Centre for Human Rights at the University of Pretoria noting the role such absence plays in furthering the violence (Viljoen 2015). The Defence Force has once again been deployed to bring an end to the attacks. In a show

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[54] At the time of writing #NoToXenophobia, #StopXenophobia and #WeAreAfrica are popular across social platforms. At one point many of the discussions on social media were spurred by this message of anti-immigration, said to have been circulated in Facebook and WhatsApp: https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=1422857811352350&id=100008844340124

of strength and commitment to legislative policy, a combined effort between the military, Home Affairs and the police force "locked down" central Johannesburg in a "search and seizure raid" for illegal immigrants (Watson 2015), furthering an anti-immigration discourse and a rhetoric that other African countries should do more to stop their citizens leaving and entering South Africa (Hunter 2015).

There will be further analyses of events in the months to come. At the time of writing the governments of South Africa and Nigeria are involved in a heated diplomatic exchange following Nigeria's decision to call back their Acting High Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner for "consultation" on the attacks, and a Nigerian group's decision to petition the International Criminal Court to investigate a complaint against Zwelithini (Areff 2015). Other African governments have responded by repatriating their citizens (Nair *et al* 2015). Although the scale of the violence does not match that of 2008 in many ways the underlying factors remain the same, with Director of the African Centre for Migration and Society at Wits, Loren Landau, claiming that recent events should come as "no surprise to anyone who has followed the persistent demonization and denigration of foreigners" in the country (in The World Post 2015). Indeed, Crush suggests that the rights and experiences of migrants in South Africa have hardly changed for the better since the time of apartheid (2000: 105).

South Africans often shy away from confronting these social factors, with no nation-wide encouragement of self-reflection and assessment. In this way society at large and government are matched. Instead, the country turns to more "palatable causes" of violence (Everatt 2011: 31), denying the dual recognition of the anger of its citizens and the hostility it creates. However, anything less than an intersectional approach to what is a volatile and complex environment will fail to recognise the "deeper malaise, the hangover of dispossession, violence, racism, intolerance, and the use of force to settle disputes" which has been "the South African way" for centuries (27-28). When the friction between the ideal of African unity and the reality of contemporary nationalism, complete with discourses of exceptionalism and indigeneity, are held alongside an inefficient system of enforcement, widespread "disunity and disillusionment" within the Department of Home Affairs (Vigneswaran and Landau 2012: 128-131), and a legal system that privileges control and exclusion over management and integration, these begin to offer insight into attitudes and structures which shape day-to-day realities. The ongoing effects of these are explored by Neocosmos (2010: 85), but their collective contribution to a dominant attitude of the "physical and existential danger" of foreigners (Vigneswaran and Landau: 2012: 128) is central to moving forward in this project.

Moving Forward

In 1980 the South African pop group *Joy* released a hit song entitled *Paradise Road*. The lyrics resonated at the time with attitudes about the future of the country and the liberation struggle. In the 1980s the country stood on the cusp of civil war, fearful of the violence that had occurred in the name of race and nation. The liberation movement harnessed a collective hope that

> [t]here are better days before us / And a burning bridge behind us, fire smoking, the sky is blazing. / There's a woman waiting, weeping / And a young man nearly beaten – all for love. / Paradise was almost closing down. (lyrics to *Paradise Road*, Joy, 1980)

Now, 35 years later, having crossed that bridge, the country finds itself with more smoke in the sky, once again rolling from fires set in the name of nation. An understanding of this context is hopefully a way of moving forward to engage with those affected by prejudice and violence; the beginnings of ways to collaboratively work towards better days.

In summary, this chapter has contextualised attitudes towards nationality in South Africa, and has mapped some of the prevalent social views about migrants. By framing key historical and contemporary discourses I have argued that tensions between exceptionalism, denialism and indigeneity act as key forces to shape everyday life for migrants, and thus participants of this project. The chapter situates these forces as potential catalysts for xenophobic violence. This overview thus presents xenophobia as fundamentally linked to a wider project of nation(alism)-building, and as a reality which is often ignored and repressed on an executive and social level.

Working in conjunction with chapter one, this sets up a broad understanding of how sexuality and nationality often operate in South Africa. This understanding is not definitive, but instead operates to visiblise the complex and interconnected flows of power and privilege. These provide the beginnings of a framework for analysis. This is solidified in the next chapter, where the critical perspective of intersectionality is highlighted as a sensibility to 'hold' these factors together and undertake a queer necropolitical critique of empirical experiences.

Chapter Three

Intersectionality: A Critical Intervention

[C]ategories and stereotypes and classifications are authentic instruments of inequality. And they are static and hard to move. But they are the ossified outcomes of the dynamic intersection of multiple hierarchies, not the dynamic that creates them. They are there, but they are not the reason they are.

(MacKinnon 2013: 1023)

In the previous two chapters I offered a contextual analysis of South Africa in terms of sexuality and nationality. While 'cleaving' these two components works well for a thesis, we simultaneously embody sexual and geographic subjectivities (as well as others). Although I may be bound to a linear format in terms of presentation, to understand these subjectivities, and thus the chapters, as wholly discrete is misguided. This chapter, therefore, is a critical intervention: it establishes the conceptual 'thread' of intersectionality in the thesis, noting how the macro contextual overview may be held as a whole to engage with the narratives of the participants. Intersectionality shaped the broader approaches taken in chapters one and two, and I position it here as a core framework, an underlying "analytic sensibility" (Cho *et al* 2013: 794), to 'pull' these components together for further analysis of homophobia and xenophobia. In this way, intersectionality establishes the site of the empirical research in this thesis.

I begin this critical intervention by providing an overview of the history of intersectionality and the uses to which it has been put. The chapter then moves on to engaging with how the concept may be developed and *applied*, in terms contextualisation and empirical analysis. Focusing on this specifically in relation to homophobia and xenophobia, the chapter shifts to introduce queer necropolitics as an intersectional 'lens'. It concludes by framing intersectionality as an overarching means of critically and self-reflexively acknowledging the connections between subjectivities, and by offering queer necropolitics as an intersectional means to focus on and 'read' the everyday. The chapter thus gives form to the central sensibility for appreciating, and understanding, links between structures and social subjectivities. It offers a way forward for engaging with participants and remaining committed to positive intervention for meaningful social change.

Importantly, as an "analytic tool" (Chun *et al* 2013: 923) intersectionality is part of a wider project that seeks to unmask power to work towards forms of social intervention. However, it is by no means the only theory which sets out to do this. My choice to review and to *do* intersectionality stems from a personal experiential resonance. As it has developed there

has been an important emphasis placed on its connection to self-reflexivity: it mirrors the untidiness of personal journeys. Rather than naïvely claiming to be an all-purpose tool for investigation it constantly confronts the limitation of ideas, recognising possible omission but compensating through open-endedness. Embedded in a tradition of activism-through-understanding, its genesis in addressing real struggles resonates with the recognition that the structural issues highlighted in chapters one and two have very material (and often violent) consequences.

Shedding Light: Historical Background

Kimberlé Crenshaw, writing in 1989 from the perspective of critical legal studies, engaged with the demands of Black women in relation to their status and recourse in the law and other social institutions. Resisting a "single-axis" understanding of inequality – those "perspectives, methods, and modes of analysis that privilege one dimension" (Grzanka 2014a: XV) – Crenshaw argued for an analytic approach which considers the multiple facets of inequality (1989; 1991). Critiquing the way in which the law in the United States rarely treated Black women *as* Black women, in that their historically and socially shaped needs and subjectivities were exploited and/or excluded (Grzanka 2014a: XV; Yuval-Davis 2011: 5), Crenshaw argued for an approach in both understanding and intervention which fundamentally engaged with "the multidimensionality of marginalized subjects' lived experiences" (1989: 139).

Crenshaw utilises the term "intersectionality" to describe such an approach, drawing on the analogy of interconnecting roads to emphasise how "discrimination, like traffic through an intersection, may flow in one direction, and it may flow in another" (1989: 149), with individuals each positioned at the very intersection of these varying 'carriageways'. The metaphor of axes as avenues of traffic speaks to the influential overlapping systems which "create background inequalities" in everyday life (Grzanka 2014b: 17), working towards an understanding of multiple "dimensions of difference" (Grzanka 2014a: XV). Beyond an understanding, however, Crenshaw rooted the developing concept of intersectionality in a history of struggles for social justice (Chun *et al* 2013: 922) and a "radical critique of structural power" (Tomlinson 2013: 995).

Although Crenshaw is often credited with giving the term a popular academic appeal, it emerges from a background of critical race theory, Black feminism, and a broader project of engaging with "interlocking oppressions" (Brah and Phoenix 2014: 310). Ferguson reflects on the 'origin story' of intersectionality, drawing on parallels with the Combahee River Collective statement of 1977 (2012: 91), and Brah and Phoenix engage with the approach in relation to 19th century feminist and anti-slavery campaigns (2014; 2004). Similarly, Crenshaw's original

formulation of the concept draws on analyses by European and post-colonial feminists (Yuval-Davis 2011: 5), thereby participating in a "multivoiced dialogue about the experiences of women of color living in oppressive contexts" (Grzanka 2014a: XVI) and arguably naming an already-familiar commitment to transformative politics and thought (Nash 2008: 3).

Embedded in the social position of Black women, Crenshaw's original conceptualisation challenges the notion of a universal subject position within identity categories and sets out beyond single-axis inclusion to look instead towards the "larger ideological structures in which subjects, problems, and solutions were framed" (Cho *et al* 2014: 791). Through foregrounding how social structures and dimensions of reality "co-construct" one another (Grzanka 2014a: XIII), intersectionality has been embraced, shaped, and transformed in various disciplines to become what McCall hails as "the most important theoretical contribution that women's studies, in conjunction with related fields, has made so far" (2005: 1771).

Though Nash flags how it has (uncritically) become a "gold standard" (2008: 2) for analysis and Carastathis notes its status as "buzzword" (2013: 942), Grzanka emphasises the various applications of the theory which have contributed to its institutionalisation as a key approach to power and equality in society (2014a: XVII), as do Tomlinson (2013: 996) and Yuval-Davis (2011: 8). Indeed, it has developed to become a field in itself, with authors revising Crenshaw's original proposed framework in various ways (Grzanka 2014b: 4; Cho *et al* 2013: 785; McCall 2005).

Crenshaw initially developed a 'starting guide' for the consideration of a framework for the understanding and application of intersectionality in her report on gender and racial discrimination for the expert group meeting of the United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women (2000; 2014). This report, a "key moment" (Grzanka 2014b: 18) in the evolution of the concept, linked Crenshaw's earlier work within the US legal system to a broader global shift in thinking about the ways in which various systems create background inequalities which have material consequences for individuals and groups.

In the report, Crenshaw explains how 'compounded discrimination', or discrimination which creates multiple barriers, is often rendered invisible by single-axis individual human rights approaches. Because variable problems are often "subsumed within one category of discrimination" (2000: 8), an essentialised identity-based approach often results in failed and incomplete analyses and misdirected strategies for intervention. Intersectionality, then, set out to "capture both the structural and dynamic consequences of the interaction between two or more forms of discrimination or systems of subordination" (7). Although geared towards an

embedded struggle for (experiential) recognition (Yuval-Davis 2011: 4), intersectionality should not be reduced to a theory about identity. Rather, it is a conscious theoretical recognition that identities, as mediated by social structures, are "the *products* of historically entrenched, institutional systems of domination and violence" (Grzanka 2014a: XV, emphasis in original). Social classifications and intervention strategies based on single-axis understandings fail to recognise that "identities" are "processes constituted in and through power relations" (Brah and Phoenix 2014: 310), and as such fail to adequately address the realities of everyday life.

Rather than abandoning or dismissing identity categories, however, intersectionality recognises that they can "contain situated knowledges with valuable vantage points on power" (Chun *et al* 2013: 923-4), and this recognition of power turns attention to the ways in which structures and cultural artefacts actively contribute to dynamics of *disempowerment*. Citing examples of intersectional discrimination, including state policies, language barriers, cultural insensitivities and the interaction of legislation, Crenshaw frames various sites *for* this discrimination. These include the criminal justice system, the economy, and multiculturalism itself (Crenshaw 2000: 11-13). She emphasises that while some forms of intersectional subordination may be specifically targeted at perceived identity groups, and some subordination may be compounded by the explicit inhabiting of multiple subjectivities, other forms may be structural – such as when "policies intersect with underlying structures of inequality to create a compounded burden" (10-11). In recognising this Crenshaw flags the need to apply intersectionality to unmask the ways in which structures of subordination "converge" (14), and as a way to implement effective strategies based on this unmasking, rather than taking an approach of engagement based on experiential and subjective homogeneity.

Structural and Political Intersectionality

As a guiding baseline, therefore, Crenshaw differentiates between structural and political intersectionality (2000; 1991; 1989). This differentiation is not to enable a process of addressing individually discreet forms of discrimination, but rather to facilitate an active and collaborative addressing of the multiple vulnerabilities of groups and their relationships with structures of power, privilege, and disprivilege (Grzanka 2014b: 18). Structural intersectionality, also revised as "categorical intersectionality" (Cole 2008: 444) and delineated as the "multilayered and routinized forms of domination" (Crenshaw 1991: 1245), refers to material circumstances shaped by broad policies which intersect with "background structures of inequality" (Grzanka 2014b: 20). This speaks to the heterogeneity of experience, and

subjectivity, within groups which are perceived to be cohesive and homogenous (Cole 2008: 444).

The question of *how* one recognises layers of disempowerment is a key point of confusion and criticism, discussed below, but it also triggers an awareness that intersectionality is fundamentally rooted in being a "nodal point" or "gathering place for open-ended investigations" geared towards positive social change (Cho *et al* 2013: 788). Its historic roots in social movements and activism make structural intersectionality inseparable from political intersectionality – that is, how marginalised groups actively organise, form coalitions, and struggle on an everyday level to "challenge the conditions of their lives" (Grzanka 2014b: 22). An engagement with how disprivilege and privilege can be worked through to overcome potential "conflicting agendas" of "political constituencies" to which individuals may belong is central to a wider 'project' of intersectional engagement. Indeed, from a research perspective Cole (2008) argues that an employment of political intersectionality and gauging of the scope of potential for intersectional intervention should be undertaken at all stages of investigation, and linking structural intersectionality with political intersectionality underlies Crenshaw's initial framework for linking theory to "existing and emergent social and political struggles" (Cho *et al* 2013: 800 – also Carastathis 2013; Carbado 2013; Chun *et al* 2013; MacKinnon 2013).

Crenshaw's initial categorisation of these two approaches arguably risks obscuring the obvious political nature of structures and categories, leading to confusion about what intersectionality *is* and what it *does*. What this initial approach reflects is a differentiation between a "theory, method, or mode of analysis" that incorporates growing and evolving 'core' tenets of intersectional theory, actual real-world intersecting oppressions, and everyday forms of intervention and resistance (Grzanka 2014a: XVII). It is perhaps more useful, then, to consider it a synergy between categorical (rather than structural) and interventional (rather than political) intersectionality. Held together these give shape to a way of thinking about the positions and experiences of social agents in relation to social institutions and projects (Yuval-Davis 2011: 4). The activist roots of Crenshaw's conceptualisation draw attention to how, as a potential "analytic tool" (Chun *et al* 2013: 923), it renders visible those fluid vectors of disprivilege and disempowerment through thinking critically about reality and critiquing social forces, enabling one to "speak out" against inequality (Grzanka 2014b: 2).

As a sensibility, then, intersectionality is primarily concerned with the politics of power and knowledge production and the ways in which these are implemented and interpellated in society (Cho *et al* 2013). The adoption of this sensibility in the two-and-a-half decades since its

articulation has been three-fold: firstly, in the application of Crenshaw's framework in "context-specific enquiries"; secondly, in debates about its scope as a methodological paradigm; and finally in its key connections to political interventions (Cho *et al* 2013: 785). Within this adoption, however, Crenshaw's work has been revised to widely recognise that intersectionality centrally involves a systematic critique of power in society.

In an effort to delineate arguably successful and less successful programmes of action, Dill and Kholman (2011) differentiate between 'weak' and 'strong' intersectionality. Some research and engagement may incorporate a consideration of diversity and power but in analysis and implementation effectively reproduce hegemonic knowledge by ignoring or 'missing' relationships between disempowerment and social structures. This 'weak' intersectionality (2011; Grzanka 2014a: XIX) can be contrasted with the successful *relational critique* of 'strong' intersectionality, whereby counterhegemonic knowledge and action is generated by interrogating multiple forms of power and privilege alongside systems of inequality (XIX). In aspiring to provide a vocabulary to respond to social assumptions, power relations, and single-axis campaigns (Nash 2008: 2; Crenshaw 1991), Crenshaw's intersectionality-as-framework sets itself up as an activism-driven *prism* to refract the spectrum of social forces and structures which shape social relationships (Cho *et al* 2013: 804).

Refracting Light: Using an Intersectional Prism

The uses and usefulness of this prism, however, have been points of contention and debate, with varying opinions on its ontological and epistemological limits and benefits (see, for example Cho *et al* 2013: 788 for an annotated overview). The question of 'what do we do with this?' has led to calls for refined definitions, methods and methodologies of intersectionality (Brah and Phoenix 2014: 310; Grzanka 2014d: 302; Carastathis 2013; MacKinnon 2013; Yuval-Davis 2011; Cole 2008; Nash 2008; McCall 2005). The utilisation of intersectionality presents a challenge in that it is historically positioned as a "commitment" as opposed to "a prescribed set of methodological procedures" (Grzanka 2014d: 304).

Much of the criticism stems from the ways some researchers and practitioners adopt it as a tool to "interrogate and intervene in the social plane" while others focus on its validity as a theoretical framework (Cho *et al* 2013: 786). McCall sets out to map the range of approaches developed by practitioners with the intention of addressing the repeated question of *how* to study intersectionality (2005: 1771). The process, she argues, of including "multiple dimensions of social life and categories of analysis" (1772) gives rise to a complex diversity of divergent approaches.

<u>Categories of Analysis</u>

McCall's project takes the form of a "tripartite" mapping of intersectional approaches (Grzanka 2014d: 302). The first form of intersectional application is what she terms "anticategorical complexity", referring to those methodologies geared towards the deconstruction of analytical categories (McCall 2005: 1773). Intersectionality-as-methodology within these approaches focuses on history and the arbitrariness of categorisation to "undermin[e] the validity of categories or their ability to adequately capture the complexity of human experience" (Grzanka 2014d: 302). Providing an overview of projects which either embrace or reflect this style, McCall engages with the philosophical results of a resistance to perceived homogeneity, and notes the extensive criticism levelled at intersectionality as a whole as a result, in part, of the application of such methodologies (1775).

Indeed, for Puar (2014; 2007) intersectionality in such applications are still rooted in categorisations in ways that undermine the very ideals of the project itself. By knowing and naming categories intersectionality, in effect, stabilises rigid categories of classification within disciplinary apparatuses of the state (Puar 2014: 336-7). Through privileging "naming, visuality, epistemology, representation, and meaning" it colludes with the very power structures it seeks to undermine (339).

McCall recognises the volatile implications of such approaches, and shifts focus to a second category – "intracategorical complexity" (2005: 1773). Positioning this approach in the centre of a spectrum of approaches, McCall indicates that this category "inaugurated the study of intersectionality" (*ibid*), referencing Crenshaw's initial work on Black women and the legal system. Methodologies employing intracategorical intersectionality look within categories, revealing the heterogeneity of groups which are perceived to be homogenous. Beyond revealing "unexplored complexities" (Grzanka 2014d: 302) and within-group differences, these approaches critique the everyday meanings and boundaries of the actual categories (Yuval-Davis 2011: 6). Whilst remaining sceptical of categories, these approaches acknowledge the potential temporary stability that categories provide whilst simultaneously focusing on the complexity of neglected experiences (McCall 2005: 1773-4).

Related to this focus on micro-level experiences and micro-level power is the third category of analysis, which approaches power and subjectivity from a more "macro socio-economic" perspective (Yuval-Davis 2011: 6). Intercategorically complex approaches, which McCall favours,

provisionally adopt salient social categories to reveal the configurations of inequalities between groups or to expose the relationships of domination and subordination between multiply marginalized and privileged social constituencies. (Grzanka 2014d: 303)

These approaches remain invested in the material realities, displaying the links between different categorisations and inequality. Through focusing on the way intersecting categories "affect particular social behaviors and the distribution of resources" (Yuval-Davis 2011: 6), intercategorical programmes often remain committed to bringing about meaningful structural change that will have material consequences.

McCall frames these three approaches to illustrate the varying knowledges produced under the "rubric of intersectionality" (2005: 1774). Revising this and arguing for a progressive strategy for implementation of change, Yuval-Davis calls for a sensibility which unites the "sensitivity and dynamism" of intracategorical awareness with the broader, overarching concerns of intercategorical awareness (2011: 6). Where McCall differentiates between these two approaches (albeit within a spectrum), Yuval-Davis argues that they are not mutually exclusive, emphasising an applicability of the concept and potential framework to all members of society by linking interrogations to the shifting contexts of categories (2011: 7-8). Consciously and constantly forming such links – which, too, are fluid and shifting – positions inter-intra-intersectionality as an ideal self-reflexive sensibility for analysis, capable of and committed to suggesting avenues for intervention (for example, Spade 2013: 1031), and avoids circular abstractions.

Indeed, this adoption of intersectionality-as-process underpins a rebuff of Nash's critique of the lack of a clearly defined methodology and a rather ambiguous, seemingly all-encompassing conceptual definition. Referring to McCall, Nash warns of "a tremendous gap" (2008: 6) between conceptions and practices, echoing Puar's (2007) concerns that intersectional projects risk replicating "precisely the approaches that they critique" (Nash 2008: 6). Although Nash does not provide the "rigorous method" (5) she claims is needed, and indeed critiques the notion of intersectionality-as-static-tool as 'recycled' black feminism (9), she emphasises the potential of intersectionality to be progressive on the conditions of reflection and constant updating. Importantly, she argues, is the need for approaches to consider the intersections of privilege and oppression (12) and equally move towards prescribing or imagining points of intervention (Chang and Culp 2002: 490).

Yuval-Davis's reconceptualisation of McCall's work implicitly takes steps to integrate this concern. Although Crenshaw was primarily concerned with political and structural inequalities,

Nash's critique arguably stems from an interpretation of the subjective focus of early (anticategorical) projects as being overly committed to categories of identity. Crenshaw's interest in the judicial and political nodes of Blackness/womanness, and the need for focus and intervention in these arenas at the specific contextual moment, shaped the conceptual foundation of intersectionality. The notion that intersectionality in general does not consider privilege and oppression, however, sits as "curious" for Cho, Crenshaw and McCall given the "explicit references to structures" in early formulations of the concept (2013: 797).

Illuminating: Prismatic Applications

Importantly for this project, then, intersectionality is concerned with those social processes involved in exercising and exchanging power (Grzanka 2014c: 132). It has the potential to challenge Western modes of thinking and to create new meanings for "different dimensions of difference" (*ibid*). Its investment in transforming institutions merits its potential to critique existing understandings through linking them to power structures and axes which otherwise remain unchallenged and accepted as normative.[55] This results in imaginings of futures "occupied by more complex images that do more than *reflect* inequalities (Grzanka 2014d: 306, emphasis added).

This speaks to a commitment to identifying avenues for intervention. An emphasis here is a consideration of *how* the identification of "the structural conditions" of "ideological systems" may "lead to an adequate political response" (Duong 2012: 376) through the formation of coalitions for change, as articulated in chapter one. In working towards successful interventions, Cho *et al* emphasise the need for joining an inter/intracomplexity approach with collaborative intersectionality (2013: 792). This approach to creating temporary moments of solidarity, and facilitating the creation of sites for future engagement, has been empirically explored in relation to race and gender (Carbado 2013); to "liberatory politics of interconnection" (Carastathis 2013: 942); to forging new social relations and overcoming disempowerment (Chun *et al* 2013); and to grassroots resistance (Spade 2013: 1047-50; Cole 2008: 445).

Central to the critical intervention of this project is, therefore, engaging in analyses which capture "the synergistic relation between inequalities as grounded in the lived experience of hierarchy" (MacKinnon 2013: 1028). This is the feature which distinguishes *intersectionality* from simply *thinking about intersecting categories* (*ibid*; Crenshaw 1989: 49). Rather than

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[55] See, for example, applications to/within Butler (2014), Gill (2014), Keeling (2014).

exploring "static abstract classifications" (MacKinnon 2013: 1023), an intersectional analysis – as a sensibility or 'method' – is a versatile, fluid open-mindedness which tackles the "moving substantive reality of systems" in ways which produce counter-hegemonic knowledge and experiences (Crenshaw 1991: 1246).

This 'fluid open-mindedness' framed the contextualisations offered in chapters one and two, in that I provided an understanding of complex interplays by fracturing linear view of South Africa (that is, an image of 'legal inclusivity' or a 'rainbow nation'). These chapters are intersectional through the adoption of a sensibility which enables an open-ended thinking about sameness, difference and (un)belonging (Cho *et al* 2013: 795). Beyond this, intersectionality-as-sensibility enables one to 'pull' these perspectives together to shed light on the multiple manifestations of prejudice and their multiple, interwoven sources. In shifting the trajectory of this chapter from a conceptual overview to an *application* in this project, therefore, a key initial focus is an ongoing reflection on the fluid "layers of inequality" in everyday life (Crenshaw 2000: 7) and where points of resistance may lie.

Remaining critical of the history of identity politics, this recognises that subjectivities and experiences are not static objects but are fluidly constituted by power dynamics (Brah and Phoenix 2014: 310). Of particular relevance to the South African context is Crenshaw's applied recognition that the constitution constructs and describes social categories (Carbado 2014: 815). The ways in which individuals become marked as "legible and illegible juridical subjects" (815), both sexually and nationally, is fundamental to effectively (and affectively) creating points of intellectual and social intervention. This signifies a shift away from what intersectionality *is* to what it *does* and what it *can do* in terms of active solidarity.

<u>Establishing Empirical Focus</u>

Key to the empirical analysis, then, is the ongoing synthesis – and 'refraction' – of both identities *and* the dynamics which shape them, keeping a "firm grip on the way hierarchy works" (MacKinnon 2013: 1024). It is important to note that one may be tempted to scrutinise this from the position that the feminist origins of intersectionality have irrevocably bound it to an "identitarian framework" (Carbado 2013: 812; Nash 2008: 4). Indeed, this underscores Puar's suggestion that, from a queer perspective, in its attempt to engage with power and privilege through forging relational links, intersectionality assumes that identities can be "easily cleaved" (2014: 335) – thus disregarding its foundational vantage point.

This concern bears similarity to queer readings of 'LGBT issues' as discussed in chapter one. Taking issue with intersectionality as an extended form of identity politics, Puar (2014; 2013a; 2007) argues instead for affective politics, naming assemblages as the 'alternative' to intersections (and indeed others have theorised alternative terms and revisions – see Yuval-Davis 2011: 5-6). An "affective conglomeration that recognizes other contingencies of belonging (melding, fusing, viscosity, bouncing) that might not fall so easily into what is sometimes denoted as reactive community formations" (Puar 2014: 336), assemblages are in "perpetual motion" and allow us to "attune to movements, intensities, emotions, energies, affectivities, and textures as they inhabit events, spatiality, and corporealities" (339). Attempting to shift privilege away from epistemology and towards ontology, Puar's 'advancement' similarly speaks to the critique that intersectionality has nothing more to teach us (Carbado 2013: 815).

Cho *et al*, however, widely engage with such 'revisions' (2013: 797; as does Carbado 2013: 815-6), and emphasise the fundamental concern of intersectionality with structures of power and exclusion. While undoubtedly monumentally influential, the suggestion of assemblages within the scope of this project is a navigable "normatively contingent roadblock" (Carbado 2013: 815). Although this project critiques categories of identity it still recognises, out of practical necessity, the reality that many categories simply *become* fixed through the legal framework of South Africa.

In this, a position of openness to research possibilities requires one to recognise that many individuals are forced to "cleave" their own identities for varying purposes. Life in South Africa exists in deep structural and lived hollows carved out by institutions of the past. The history of the country cannot be so easily set aside: the social policies (and institutions which enforced them) thoroughly linked sex, gender, race, class and nationality. After nearly five decades of rigid structural imposition these linkings, and their prescribed lived identity categories (however ridiculous, narrow or constructed) are social *realities* that need to be acknowledged and integrated into strategies of intervention. In this way, assemblages – and in it a specific application of queer theory – are limited: to critique the privileging of the identity categories (Puar 2014: 339) is itself a starkly privileged position. Disregarding identity categories risks further invisiblising the lived (sometimes forced) subjective resonance that some may have with structures and categories. This radical politics fails to recognise that one cannot easily disavow a system on which one relies for survival.

Certainly the meanings of identity labels can shift and are influenced by the mobility of being, but new meanings and experiences can only be acknowledged *after* such identities are

initially given a name. An attempt to fully shift away from identities and structures leaves one questioning what to do should an individual express an explicit desire for belonging-through-identity. Fortunately, intersectionality-as-framework engages with privilege, along with structures and categorisations, and therefore has the potential to be extended in application to speak to concerns framed as coming to its rescue (Cho *et al* 2013: 797). The epigraph of this chapter succinctly captures a central response to criticisms about an identitarian framework. Rather than investing in cleaving identities in an approach of deconstruction, intersectionality "notices and contends with the realities of multiple inequalities" (MacKinnon 2013: 1019), working not to change those "ossified outcomes", as some have criticised, but rather to engage with connected systems which shape (dis)privilege and power.

In this way, although I regard an assemblage configuration as inappropriate for this project, I do not read queer theory itself as incompatible with intersectionality. Indeed, Duong (2013) argues for their dual deployment. In the shift towards empirical engagement, moving from macro to micro, intersectionality ensures a critical awareness of formative structures, and queer theory – through its disruptive power – sharpens the focus on the politicisations of everyday life (Duong 2013: 378), which forms the focus of the rest of this thesis. This conceptual symbiosis flows in both directions, as an intersectional sensibility facilitates the questioning of the limitations of queerness. This is achieved through the recognition that one should move beyond simply thinking and approaching towards an investment in "doing something" (Grzanka 2014d: 306) – in actively seeking to transform social structures through looking to form coalitions for broader change. In this way, an intersectional frame remains tethered to both an investigation of daily life and an intellectual African critique of queerness.

Intersectionality thus pulls together overarching questions of sexuality and nationality. Extending the image of a prism, the concept 'refracts' these intertwined and non-linear themes to offer a spectrum of points for analysis. These note the violence of structures imposed in life, and may be used to engage with the labels and descriptions of life which hide a multitude of experiences and subjectivities.

<u>Queer Necropolitics as Focused Intersectional Lens</u>

In this, I employ queer necropolitics as an analytic *application* of intersectionality – a critical lens of focus – for engagements with the empirical work. As discussed in chapter one, regimes of categorisation structure (un)belonging within "a discourse of citizenship defined along the principle of individual rights" (Crenshaw 2000: 6), creating contradictions of being and understanding. Similarly, as engaged with in both chapters one and two, the status of 'minority'

often reduces options and undermines social worth and credibility (MacKinnon 2013: 1025). The relationship between such flows and the South African context links, as discussed in chapter two, the project of exceptionalism and the creation of a national identity to questions of national sovereignty. The desperate attempts by the executive to foster a sense of pride as a way of tempering the percolating hostility and discontent in the country are, in the long term, a political strategy to materialise and institutionalise self-determination.

The macro contextualisation foregrounds how South African governments have positioned LGBTI individuals and 'foreigners' as threats to South Africanness. Mbembe's work frames a broader project of national self-determination as fundamentally about the "power and the capacity" of the state to "dictate who may live and who must die" (2003: 11). Specifically considering war, the military and colonialism, Mbembe considers "contemporary forms of subjugation of life to the power of death" (2003: 39). This is how he frames necropolitics, or "the right of sovereign power to kill and violently dispose" of population groups (Wahab 2016: 707) – including LGBTIs and migrants. A necropolitical reading reflects on "the symbiotic co-presence of life and death" in a nation which manifests in "the cleavages between rich and poor, citizens and non-citizens (and those who can be stripped of citizenship)" (Haritaworn *et al* 2014: 2). This speaks to the intersectional realities of the lives of the participants in this project.

Concerned with the "social and cultural production of human disposability" (Haritaworn *et al* 2014: 6) in the service of sovereignty, the application of a necropolitical reading in this thesis specifically engages with the ways in which some bodies are marked as deserving of life and others are disregarded, the deaths of which "consolidate sovereign power" (Martin-Baron 2014: 51). Analysing colonial occupation, and referencing Fanon, Mbembe explains that controlling a geographic area was, historically, an act of "writing on the ground a new set of social and spatial relations" (2003:25; 26). Within this re-writing, terror and fear become a necessary part of politics. The process of creating South African sovereignty is dependent on terrorising and fostering fear amongst those who threaten the project, and enabling life (based, in part, on the fear of the threat of the Other) for those who are deemed as acceptable. Drawing on Foucault, Mbembe argues that control within a nation "presupposes the distribution of human species into groups, the subdivision of the population into subgroups" (2003: 17). In this, therefore, "the politics of race is ultimately linked to the politics of death" (*ibid*), and such linkage renders this lens appropriate for the historical South African context (which Mbembe references, see 2003:26).

Although this project does not adopt a postcolonial framework, and while it does not engage with the politics of race (instead focusing on the politics of the stranger and the queer[56]), an implicit awareness of these histories and flows influences the adoption of this lens – and, indeed, these histories and flows may be used in future projects to analyse this thesis. Politics, in the regulation of subgroups, including the participants, functions "as the work of death" (Mbembe 2003: 16) and, in the manner of occupation, the "seizing, delimiting, and asserting control over a physical geographical area" serves to create spaces of control in which different people are given different rights (25). These function to create a "large reservoir of cultural imaginaries" (26) which perpetuate justifications and meanings of (violent) South African state/social practices. In the creation of freedom – the freedoms of the constitution – death is "irrevocably woven" (38).

In this regard, necropolitics is a perspective that facilitates the consideration of ideas and experiences both within and beyond the nation. More importantly, it *enables* an intersectional consideration of power dynamics beyond a binary of inclusion and exclusion. It is an effective tool for shaping analysis going forward, as questions of both nationality and sexuality are bound to sovereignty in South Africa. As explored in chapters one and two, the scramble to create a unified nationalism hinges, in part, on a politics of selective inclusion. The figures of both the migrant and the sexual other pose a threat to South African exceptionalism. The migrant brings with him/her the experiences of the outside, diluting the projected homogeneity of citizen experience within the nation; the sexual other provokes the fear of unAfricanness, and sexual difference must be "absorbed into hegemonic apparatuses" (Haritaworn *et al* 2014: 1) and silenced through assimilation (the ultimate marker of which is marriage equality, promulgated in 2006). The sexual migrant, therefore, posts a 'double threat' to sovereignty.

This point ultimately connects queer theory to necropolitics. Through a consideration of the ways in which sexual subjects potentially exist in "death worlds", those "rigidly striated spaces" in which "necropower functions to destroy persons" (Campbell and Sitze 2013: 26), *queer* necropolitics sutures a politics of disruption to an ongoing engagement with structural violence (Haritaworn *et al* 2014: 5). Considering the interplay between life and death, queer necropolitics functions as the "concept-metaphor that illuminates and connects a range of spectacular and mundane forms of killing and of 'letting die' while simultaneously radically

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[56] The politics of race are intersectionally bound to both of these, of course.

reimagining the meanings, purchase and stakes inherent in 'queerness' as a category of analysis and critique" (4). This, in turn, functions to produce both practical and conceptual interventions.

A queer necropolitical lens effectively sutures the analysis in the second half of this thesis to a broader ethic of constant critical awareness and openness to multiple flows of power and (dis)privilege. Application and further engagement are undertaken in chapters five through eight to explore the day-to-day embodiment of being a 'double threat'.

Moving Forward

This lens thus helps to trace sites of prejudice common to homophobic and xenophobic experience; to look beyond structures and identities; to identify fluid moments of collaborative intervention; and to foreground African life.

At this point my mind wanders to my own familiar feelings of displacement. Intersectionality, embedded in self-reflexivity, leads me to consider my own simultaneous belonging and non-belonging. The most valuable feature of the concept is not its illusion of an all-purpose solution but rather its stark framing of the complexity of experience. Although other concepts offer this, intersectionality speaks to my own 'messiness' of life and the 'messiness' of South Africa.

Such awareness remains embedded in an 'appreciation' for the structures which give both my subjective categorisations *and* fluidity purpose. This ensures that I remain conscious of the very real material objects and conditions which facilitate my privileged disavowal of certain imposed subjective categories. This is important, as my privilege flows in to my formation of the project and shapes my interaction with the participants. Self-awareness through this critical lens helps diminish any tendencies to situate myself as 'of similar experience' to the participants.

Intersectionality, therefore, aside from being a concept which has attracted a remarkably high number of metaphors (Crenshaw developed the image of traffic intersections; I favour the image of light and a prism, as evidenced by the section titles in this chapter), serves as a sensibility geared towards openness. That solidarity and partnership may flow from such a thought-out sensibility is the key benefit of its use. I discuss this further in the next chapter, where I elaborate on the ethical parameters in place in the project (as well as on the choices made in terms of methods) to ensure accountability and a grounded reading of queer necropolitics.

In summary, this chapter has offered a critical intervention for this project in three ways. Firstly, it has located intersectionality as an underlying 'sensibility' in approaching the research topic. Secondly, it has suggested that through its engagement with the relationship between power, identities and social structures, intersectionality is a framework for 'pulling together' the macro contextualisation offered in chapters one and two. As a core underlying concept it explicitly draws attention to the non-linear quality of sexual and national belonging in South Africa, and therefore resists a blanket privileging of one over the other. Thirdly, the chapter has positioned intersectionality as the prism through which we can 'refract' understandings of everyday life. It introduces queer necropolitics as an intersectional approach to be employed ahead to focus on the specific interplays of homophobia and xenophobia in the narratives of the participants. Overall, this chapter is a transitionary point between the first half of the thesis and the second; a synthesis of the contexts and a channelling of intent towards potential sites of action. This critical intervention now flows into the methods used to facilitate empirical analysis.

Chapter Four

Methods

The intention to investigate everyday experiences of prejudice at the specific intersection of national 'identity' and sexual 'identity' required a particular research paradigm capable of holding both categories of affiliation, as well as being open to others. Similarly, an engagement with social stigmatisation in a context where such stigmatisation is framed simplistically required a methodological approach rooted in an openness to fluidity. I actively sought to adopt methods which refused to "grant legitimacy to borders" of categories (Heckert 2010: 42). In this chapter I summarise the methodology I developed for the fieldwork undertaken in this project. I explain the methods used to enable and apply the intersectional sensibility framed in chapter three. I frame the ethics and challenges of the methods, explain the fieldwork structure, and note the analytic approach employed in the chapters which follow.

Initial Approach: Intersectionality as Method

Extending the critical intervention offered in chapter three, this project fundamentally sought to question existing assumptions in the 'Rainbow Nation' context about what are sometimes perceived to be universal identity labels and experiences. In the introduction, I shared how I arrived at the general idea of this thesis. From the outset I recognised that, as the project problematised labels in relation to issues of belonging, an attempt to discern a universal experience which united participants would be a contradictory effort (Cock 2005; Leatt and Hendricks 2004: 311; Hoad 1998).

As such, I set out to identify participants based on markers of subjectivity, rather than identity. I limited the project to men (as a broad subjectivity) due to time constraints, but also out of a desire to minimise any ethical dilemmas that could come with mixed-gender group discussions about prejudice and personal trauma. Being concerned with homophobia and xenophobia I sought to engage with men from other African countries, living and/or working in South Africa, who expressed same-sex desires or subjectivities.

Through this I remained conscious of an implicit sense of *journeying*. This awareness drew me to intersectionality as an analytic concept committed to offering new "transformative" imagined forms of existence (MacKinnon 2013: 1024; Halberstam 2011: 89), which fed a desire

to develop methods focused on making visible the interplay between social subjectivities and the forces which shaped them.

The first step for an *application* of intersectionality thus took the form of continuous grounding in the research – of consciously reflecting on alternative possibilities to avoid disregarding contextual specificities. As noted in my introduction, however, this was balanced with the realisation that journeys are ongoing. An unending cycle of reflection was avoided through striking a balance between reflecting and proposing action in the form of interactions and writing. This framed the shift to applying intersectionality as a "frame or lens that guides in the execution of *empirical* inquiry" (Grzanka 2014d: 302, emphasis added).

"Doing" intersectionality thus translated to developing tools which were "able to derive meaning from the observed data and interpret individual level data within a larger sociohistorical context of structural inequality that may not be explicit or directly observable in the data" (Few-Demo 2014: 175).[57] The development of the tools discussed below sought to balance McCall's notions of *intra-* and *intercategorical* complexity (2005: 1773), discussed in chapter three. Intersectionality became a journey of creatively developing methods – of data collection *and* analysis (Cho *et al* 2013: 795-6). Rather than a prescribed set of procedures (Grzanka 2014d: 304), it was the process of developing approaches which enabled the sharing of "counter-hegemonic knowledge and experiences" (Crenshaw 1991: 1246) in a space of self-awareness and mitigated power inequality, with a view to focusing on the everyday.

The methods generated were qualitative and discursive. I sought to emphasise aspects of lived experience which were important to the participants, as identified by the participants themselves. Using methods which foregrounded participant-chosen narratives and emotions also ultimately enabled my participants to question me. This helped maintain an awareness of my own subject position. Though avoiding a purely singular, extractive method (such as solely relying on parameters of focus groups, or unstructured interviews) I could question categories and assumptions to enable a more egalitarian interaction (Graham (2010: 194) influenced my sense of "humility" in this regard).

Ethics and Broad Structure

Forming such an approach was flagged as ethically 'high risk' at the University of Sussex, due to an explicit engagement with "sensitive topics" and a potential concern that the research might

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[57] The flexibility of this methodology is evident, for example, in Few-Demo (2014: 178-9); Bauer (2014) in relation to a quantitative engagement; and Museus (2011) in terms of mixed-methods applications.

"induce stress". However, I argued for the project to be considered low risk as topics of conversation would not extend beyond the everyday; that anxiety/trauma would not intentionally be induced; and that all information shared would be voluntary and self-identified. Ethical approval was granted on these grounds (application number ER/MDB29/1). It is for these reasons that I did not generate questions about certain topics. These topics included personal sexual history, personal relationships, sexual health, HIV, and abuse. As my sessions later revealed, the participants were comfortable speaking about aspects of these topics – such as sex work, HIV and intimate relationships – but my approved ethical parameters prevented me from explicitly instigating such discussions. Conversations which explored these themes arose organically under the broad questions I asked about the everyday. I later took this to be an indicator of the success of my approach to establishing a safe and equitable research environment. Where such discussions did occur, I maintained a supportive researcher professionalism, offering thanks for sharing and allowing other participants to vocally express their support if they chose to. It is worthwhile noting the eagerness I encountered to speak about these issues: they were formative components of the participants' lives and future research projects would do well to extend the scope of consideration while maintaining an ethic of mutual respect and participant-led discussion.

The overall ethical concern of not 'inducing stress' fed into my recruitment process. In order to minimise potential trauma I decided to work with and through community centres. I identified key community centres in three sites of investigation. In Pietermaritzburg (the capital city of KwaZulu Natal) I chose to work with the Gay & Lesbian Network; in Pretoria (the executive capital of South Africa) with Access Chapter 2; and in Cape Town (the legislative capital of South Africa) with People Against Suffering Oppression and Poverty (PASSOP).

These cities were selected for their size, notable LGBTI 'communities', and their individual LGBTI histories (see Gevisser and Cameron 1995). Experiences of belonging and subjectivity in urban spaces have regularly been read in relation to experiences in rural spaces (see Tucker 2011). I elected to centre this project in the context of urban South Africa, particularly due to the queer histories of the individual cities and the migration of individuals to larger metropoles. However, I remained open to discussing experiences in rural contexts if they were raised by the participants. Similarly, I wanted to remain open to possibilities of discomfort, disidentification, or hostility that could come with assumptions of space-based belonging/community (Probyn 1996), particularly as the participants would be journeying from various geographic, economic, sexual and national spaces.

Recruitment was left up to the centre co-ordinators. I specified that participants needed to identify, or be considered on some subjective level, as "men", "LGBTI[58] or same-sex sexually attracted", and "from another African country". My initial vision for interaction was based on a naïve assumption that I could orchestrate three large-scale group sessions followed by three focus group sessions, and then several follow-up interviews. Disregarding the time demands, the practicalities regarding participant logistics rendered such in-depth data collection impossible. As I encountered difficulties in co-ordinating with the community centres I also began to recognise factors which limited the possibility for repeat interactions. These included the fact that all the participants were migrants of varying movement 'status' (including economic migrants, refugees and asylum seekers with pending status) and were thus on various physical journeys, moving between cities. Similarly, as sessions were predicted to last several hours I had to recognise the serious time commitment I was expecting of participants.

Therefore, I shifted my focus to developing a more balanced and less time-intrusive method. I came to see this as a methodological alignment of thought and practice, as I had to actively meld approaches which were suited to the specifics of the project. I had to develop a 'hybrid' form of interaction. Recognising this, I designed an all-day workshop for each session. These workshops combined techniques and approaches (discussed below) which encouraged sharing, mutual respect, comfort and participant-led conversation. I specified that there should be a minimum of 5 participants at each site, and a maximum of 10. I felt that any more than 10 participants would not be conducive to creating a space of substantive discussion. The community centres agreed to hold the workshops on their premises. The centres were known to the participants and functioned as pre-existing 'safe spaces'. In exchange for assisting in recruitment of participants and providing a venue I offered to pay for food and transport on the day, and in the longer term to provide copies of the final thesis with full acknowledgement of their assistance. Each director was happy with this arrangement. I provided them with an information sheet they could give to potential participants which fully explained the project and what to expect from the interactions. I followed up with each director monthly for the first 6 months, and as the dates for each session grew nearer I followed up weekly.

Key Challenges

Several challenges arose:

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[58] LGBTI, as noted in the introduction, is the preferred overarching term for sexual minority activism in (South) Africa.

Firstly, the Pietermaritzburg session did not materialise. Several months before the scheduled fieldwork I undertook a pilot session at the centre, testing my methods with two participants. I did not include this data in the final research (as the demographic breakdown did not meet the requirements), but I remain grateful to the individuals for sharing their stories. However, based on this interaction, I mistakenly assumed that it would be relatively simple to arrange another session at this centre. Unfortunately it proved to be very difficult to recruit participants, as those individuals who were contacted were unwilling to reveal their 'statuses' as LGBTI/non-South African to a wider audience. This, I believe, spoke to the wider contextual reality of everyday fears in the very conservative and traditional province of KwaZulu Natal. The lack of a site of research in Pietermaritzburg left me panicked: I was concerned that I would not have enough research material. At the same time, I remained connected to the recognition that this was never intended to be a quantitative project.

Secondly, this fear was exacerbated through co-ordination in Pretoria. Up until the day before the scheduled session I had not received any final confirmation. I elected to just 'show up' under the assumption that my preparations had been enough. Fortunately, they were.

Thirdly, miscommunication emerged in Cape Town. I met with the local director the day before the scheduled date to go over the format for the workshop. Despite the expectations of the project clearly being framed there was an underlying assumption that the workshop could be used as a general PASSOP event. I was asked if I could cut the workshop down to an hour only, and if I could have up to 40 participants. I emphasised that the workshop had been designed as an all-day event, and while I was happy to give PASSOP full credit and provide report-backs for funders I insisted the session could not be altered to such a degree. I also explained that, due to the nature of discussions (as well as the very small size of the venue and catering) I could not accommodate 40 people. This proved to be quite disruptive on the day of the workshop: after beginning late people kept arriving – up to two hours in. I eventually had to request for the office doors to be locked and a sign placed outside. It was unfortunate that we could not co-ordinate a two-day workshop, as there was clearly interest in the session. However, his gave me hope that follow-up projects could be held.

Participant 'Breakdown'

Despite these challenges, the community partnerships introduced me to a diverse range of participants. I offer their chosen aliases here:

Cape Town (PASSOP) 8 (All asylum seekers/refugees)		Pretoria (Access Chapter 2) (All economic migrants)		Solo
The King	Top	JuiceBabie	Republican	Daniel
Roda	Chance	Max	Pat	
Delphi	Ms Malawi	Simon	Steve	
Ruwash	Ken	Star		

The workshops thus engaged with sixteen individuals. I included Daniel under a "solo" category as he contacted me privately after hearing about the workshop in Cape Town. He expressed an interest to share his narrative and experiences, but was unable to attend the workshop. I offered to have a one-on-one session with him. I followed the format discussed below, but adjusted the exercises to suit a single participant, which I believe spoke to the success of my methods.

I chose not to provide a 'biography' of each of the participants. If I had attempted to give a 'breakdown' of each individual I would inevitably have had to rely on recognisable labels, thus ossifying assumed meanings for the sake of familiarity. In doing this I would have implicitly prioritised one aspect of subjectivity over another. Giving a biography would have contradicted the overarching intersectional intention of this project. During the workshops, my methods and explicit awareness of hierarchies steered me away from dilemmas of 'how to present this individual'. I avoided reinforcing assumptions by relying on the bodymaps (as ethical self-representations) rather than a tabulated breakdown of participant identity markers. Even where certain labels on the bodymaps were shared, the meaning assigned to them was potentially different – and this would not have been conveyed in a biography. Therefore, rather than presenting the participants as collections of monolithic labels, I chose in my analysis to present them as individuals with common journeys. Framing the participants according to their own bodymaps at different points along their journeys positioned them as fluid navigators and survivors rather than (as structures of the state would have us adopt) discrete, and discreet, blocks of identity. This is how the reader may encounter the participants: at different points on their respective journeys, with different meanings given to subjectivities and experiences.

Before framing the session methods, I must acknowledge two potential limitations. As stated, participation was restricted to a subjective description of maleness. While focusing research on (cisgendered) men was not itself problematic, it would be beneficial for a long-term goal of increasing cultural knowledge to widen the scope of participation. A more pronounced

limitation was the need for all participants to speak and share in English, despite this not necessarily being a home language. This was a necessity, however, due the research relying on group discussion and interaction.

Sessions

I was excited to develop methods which I viewed as being imaginatively conducive for in-depth, personal discussions about homophobia, xenophobia, and life in South Africa. I thought back to my Mandela Rhodes sessions, and sought to emulate similar feelings of creativity and connection. After reflecting on recruitment, I elected to avoid positioning my intended group interactions as focus-groups. Although focus-groups provide detailed insights into subject matter, they are usually understood to be limited in size and time (Hennik *et al* 2011: 136; Morse and Richards 2002: 95); to follow a specific format (Hennik *et al* 2011: 143); and to be less-than-ideal for collecting personal information due to concerns about confidentiality (138). I sought to merge the desired *group discussion* with the benefits of having "conversation with a purpose" (109) that unstructured, or in-depth, interviews offered. I remained aware that in the process of interacting with participants I would be co-creating knowledge and reality (*ibid*), and so I sought balance the intentions of *recording* narratives with *eliciting* collaborative suggestions about the participants' own everyday lives. I wanted the sessions to equally enable personal story-sharing, collective conversation and affective empowerment.

Focus-group and interview techniques were thus blended to form all-day workshops (running from approximately 09:00-16:00). This primary research method allowed for contextual consideration to be a formative conversation factor (Squire 2008: 4). I divided the workshops into five sessions. The first focused on introductions and ethics; the second on locating the self within society; the third on narratives of prejudice; the fourth on the media and intervention; and the fifth on reflection.

Each session had a broad thematic concern, but the 'script' I developed functioned primarily as a signposting mechanism: the structure of the day encouraged an organic flow of conversation around central leading questions. I intended for my analysis to be rooted in narrative investigation (see below), and therefore I structured questions and activities around topics that would encourage the telling of stories. In this the participants represented their own lives and implicitly re-presented their own desires for the future. Heckert (2010) suggests that story-telling can be a way of resisting borders, and the loose thematic structure of a 'journey of a workshop' was conducive to this (also Simpson 2008). Within these sessions I used creative

means to shift attention, engage with stories, elicit emotion and provide a catalyst for discussion where verbal vocabulary could lack.

The method of "creative dialogue", with its emphasis on group interaction to "reveal, encounter and capture the nature, origins and consequences of sense-making processes" (Beeby and Simpson 2008: 55), influenced this planning. Browne and Nash's collection on queer methods (2010) was invaluable for understanding existing approaches which creatively and critically explored research in relation to sexuality. Broussine's work on creative methods, although written from an organization research perspective, provided insight into how "inventive and imaginative modes of data collection […] encourage[d] and enable[d] research participants to access and express a rich and multifaceted account of their lived experiences" (2008: 4).

The workshops were recorded with audio-visual equipment, to the advance knowledge of the participants.

Part 1: Introductions and Ethics

I began this session by introducing myself and the project before emphasising that all recording equipment would remain switched off until later in the day. I initiated an ice-breaker activity to assist in relaxation. In each session the participants came to feel comfortable in the spaces, as the venues were known to many of them and, due to recruitment from within the ranks of community centre contacts, some people had met before. Following this I invited each person to choose a pseudonym to protect their privacy. In each workshop laughter ensued as individuals chose their own names.

I then went on to emphasise that I would not be receiving any payment for the workshop. I shifted the tone and explained the importance of anonymity and confidentiality throughout the day. I provided each person with a participant information sheet (Appendix A) and then proceeded to read through this with the groups, aware of potential non-literacy in written English. I explained that an important aspect of the project was creating a space of partnership where people could speak about issues that were important to them, rather than me simply imposing views. In the spirit of this collaboration I offered a set of 'ground rules' to which each person had to consent (Appendix B). I emphasised the importance of respect and self-reflection, noting that the 'safe spaces' in which we were operating needed to remain safe. However, I explained that these were just the factors that I considered important, and asked whether there were any 'rules' that the participants themselves sought to have for the day. It

was important for me to create a space of shared agreement, and so I had a whiteboard and a marker on which I could write down any additional points I may have omitted from the consent document. In both Cape Town and Pretoria there was a desire to re-emphasise the need for privacy and the need for honour/respect – which I had included on the consent form but which several individuals sought to reaffirm.

I recognised that there could be potential concerns about signing a document which one may not necessarily be able to read. As such, I explained that consent to the form and to the whiteboard suggestions would be done audio-visually. At this point, prior to gaining full consent, I explained that I would be recording the sessions on camera and dictaphone. I noted that this was so I could concentrate on discussions. I explained that pseudonyms would be used for each person in all transcripts and reports. I also explained that I could want to use key elements of the narratives at future presentations. However, I emphasised that exposure to the audio-visual would be strictly limited to me and my supervisors unless *explicit* consent was given.

I established a system of consent whereby if a participant was willing to have their voice heard or image seen by others they could take a green sticker (provided), which they could place on their shirt. I explained that this signified consent. If they were uncomfortable with having their voice heard or image seen they could take a red sticker (provided), and only I (and my supervisors) would engage with the AV material. I explained this system and invited any questions. Importantly, I emphasised that there would be no penalties should they choose a red sticker, and I would not ask any questions as to why they chose either colour. I passed both colour stickers around the room and allowed each person to privately choose. I then asked if everyone was comfortable with me turning on the recording equipment, and proceeded to gain consent for the day. I named each person (as per their pseudonyms) and asked if they understood the consent document and points on the whiteboard, and confirmed that they agreed to all points raised. This acted as my informed consent for the project.

Part 2: Body-Mapping and Journeys

In the planning stages, Edgar's (2004) approach to imagework was a springboard for considering creative ways of engaging with participant desires, anxieties and experiences. However, as the goal of the research was never one of psychoanalysis, I elected to utilise body-mapping as a key method. Like imagework in its use of creative visual output, bodymapping shifts the focus of the subject to a consideration of one's self and one's position *within* society. Extended in 2003 in South Africa as a research tool to combat social stigma and a lack of understanding about the personal lives of people living with HIV (MacGregor 2009), body-

mapping makes visible the individual body as a site of inequality and acknowledges that it is "inscribed with a particular lived experience" (85). Drawing on its "established history" (see Cornwall 2002), MacGregor notes how, through emphasising a link between social contexts and personal experiences (2009: 88), it has been used as "a method of empowerment and education" (Maina *et al* 2014: 644) which roots itself in personal reflection and knowledge-dissemination.

Adapting the resources developed by Wienand (2007)[59], body-mapping was adopted to creatively externalise key self-identified markers of emotion, subjectivity and (un)belonging. This decision was made for two key reasons. Firstly, the ethics of the project remained rooted in participant-led value placement – and body-mapping anchored discussions to what the participants identified as key points. Secondly, a goal of the project was to advance knowledge through story telling; that is, through the narratives (or personal journeys) of the participants. Body-mapping functioned to locate the participants as active agents in story-based knowledge-sharing whilst *avoiding* a top-down (theoretical) imposition of values and categories of analysis.

As a starting point, therefore, I provided stationery and adapted Wienand's suggestions for visually representing bodies, using A4 paper instead of body-sized sheets for practical reasons. Post-Its were provided for individuals to write down the words they used to describe themselves (such as emotions, values, identities, or places). I then asked them to 'map' the post-its onto their drawn bodies, wherever they felt they best 'fit' – suggesting, for example, that if they had written "family" they may place this close to their heart if that was something they *felt*; their head if they *thought* about it; their feet if it kept them *grounded*; or outside their bodies if they could not articulate it, felt disconnected from or it, or if it surrounded them constantly. I invited the participants to shift the post-its through the course of the day, should they feel the need. A brief explanation of each map then served as detailed introductions, and framed key themes and ideas. The maps thus functioned as anchor points for the discussions, and the markers for chosen sexualities and nationalities initiated conversation at key moments.

These discussions took a semi-structured format. Following the theme of journeys, I asked a series of guiding questions relating to self-identity, and then 'scaled up' to speaking about Africa in general, situating the individual mapped selves within the wider continental context. I shifted conversation to considering the interplay between sexuality and 'Africanness', however each participant framed these. Using another creative method, I encouraged the

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[59] Wienand's guidelines serve to "increase biomedical knowledge" (2007: 33), but the creative value of the exercise translated to this project.

physical and artistic representation of these two central subjectivities. I gave each participant two balls of clay – one representing Africanness and the other representing sexuality. As we discussed the relationship between the two ideas I invited people to physically connect the balls of clay in whatever way best expressed their understanding of the relationship on a personal level; to roll the clay between their fingers, feel their sense of self, to shape their understandings. The intention behind this was to articulate an interplay which may not have been expressible in words, particularly for non-native English speakers.

Using guiding questions which I connected to points being raised in this physical interplay I 'downscaled' discussion from continental (un)belonging to personal, physical journeys to South Africa. I placed a piece of masking tape on the floor, and suggested that the line represented each person's journey from one country to another (emphasising, of course, that this was just a metaphor and that I did not consider migration to be either linear or simple). I asked people to stand up and position themselves at the 'start' of the journey, at one end of the tape. The intention here was to physically connect one's self to a memory of a particular point in time. The beginning of the tape signified 'home' countries and perceptions of South Africa 'back home'. After discussions about this we physically moved a few steps down the tape, signifying a move towards South Africa. I turned conversation here towards impressions of the country – what participants *personally* felt about South Africa(ns). Another step forward signified becoming located in South Africa and how, looking back, reality compared to initial expectations and impressions.

Having scaled down, I prompted a discussion of broader systems within the country, and asked about personal understandings of the law, the government, and how these differed to 'home' countries. I presented two statement sheets specifically about the constitution and the police (identified in chapters one and two as key structures):

> *Statement 1: In South Africa there is a constitution. This was made by South Africans and applies to South Africans and anyone living in South Africa.*

> *Statement 2: The police in South Africa enforce the constitution to protect and look after people living in South Africa.*

These statements promoted conversation about social structures and personal experiences. This formed a backdrop for shifting consideration to personal experiences of prejudice (although by this point encounters with it had already emerged). However, the overarching intention behind this part of the session was to reaffirm each participant's sense of self and locate each person on an ongoing journey.

Part 3: Encounters with Prejudice

After a lunch break I altered the tone of the conversation by asking participants to reflect on something that made them feel a strong emotion. I used this as a preface to explain that the next session would be dedicated to each sharing a story of encountering explicit homophobia and xenophobia. Encouraging people to think about life in South Africa and their body-maps, I sought to forge an explicit link to embodied experiences of prejudice. Each person was given up to ten minutes to share a personal account while others listened. Importantly, I acknowledged that some people may have felt that they did *not* face any prejudice. I emphasised that if they did not have specific stories of xenophobia or homophobia then that was fine, and a positive factor worth celebrating, and allowed those who did have specific stories additional time. Following this, general conversation was had in relation to re-emerging themes. I made a conscious effort to engage those who did not share specific stories to include them in discussion. This session carried with it a high level of emotional intensity, and so I ended it by expressing thanks. I also gave each person an inflated balloon, reaffirmed the successful struggles, and told them that the balloon signified their hardships and encounters with prejudice – and that they had to stomp on them. Prompting raucous laughter this activity shifted the mood, speaking to the success of the methodological tool. I gave each participant sweets to boost their energy and bring closure to what was, for many, an emotionally raw session.

Part 4: Media and Intervention

I utilised this session as an opportunity to explicitly consider the media as a key institution in shaping (un)belonging. I framed the media as a tool which fed into social attitudes, and I ascertained which technologies each person most frequently used as well as the uses to which they were put. Using guiding questions I invited discussion about media representations, linking conversation once again to the body-maps. I encouraged a consideration of the labels used on the maps and how these were shown in the media. The conversation flowed organically between this and a link to the media's role in shaping everyday experiences (particularly with regards to social media and homo-/xenophobia). Reinforcing the notion of a journey I steered a final discussion into what the participants would ideally like to see the media 'do'. Drawing on the media sources and technologies mentioned I questioned what they would like to see changed; what potential tools for intervention could be developed; and what support could be provided through the media. This flowed into a discussion about other sites of intervention.

Part 5: Concluding Reflections

In the final session I asked participants to close their eyes and reflect on the day. I invited everyone to share any words or emotions that came to mind. I was surprised to be thanked by many of the participants. Several individuals expressed thanks for creating a space where people with similar encounters could meet and connect and speak about issues that they had never been asked to speak about before.[60] I noted the final chance for sharing: I explained that I would set up a private camera in a separate room and each person could go and leave any message, if they wanted to. I decided to offer this opportunity in case anyone felt they wanted to say something about the day, or about their personal lives, that they felt they could not express in a large group.

Analysis: Overview

The sessions were all manually transcribed using NVivo.[61] The transcripts were then reviewed to identify key themes (which were, of course, predetermined by the topic of the research). These themes were grouped into 'questions of subjectivity', 'xenophobia', 'homophobia', 'social structures', 'media' and 'interventions' – though these were obviously not discrete categories. I remained conscious about the desire to identify intersectional experiences and present personal narratives, rather than suggest "commonality and coherence where often there is none" (Browne and Nash 2010: 8).

My critique of the sessions was firmly rooted in narrative analysis. Heckert recognises that "[i]n the intimacy of gathering stories, of crafting new ones, I take part in this production of myself, and in the production of others" (2010: 53; also see Squire *et al* 2008: 3). Just as Heckert's quest to 'become queer' is pinned on reflection and relationality, so too is an intersectional approach reliant on a conscious and "deepening awareness of the connections that always, already existed" (2010: 53). An experience-centred approach to narrative analysis, informed by a contextual analysis of social structures, was the best way to ensure my own accountability.

Although narrative analysis may easily fall as being either "merely structural (and thus unable to explain variation or context) and untheorized and personal (and thus unable to uncover the structured preconditions of gendered experience)" (Oikkonen 2013: 297) its potential lay in focusing on the interplay between structure and context (306), thus allowing for

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[60] See Space (2013) for the liberatory potential of collaborative spaces; Simpson (2008: 93) for empowerment through story-sharing.

[61] The transcriptions are double-encrypted and will be stored for 5 years in a secure room at the University of Sussex.

the application of queer necropolitics identified in chapter three. Narrative analysis as method reflected the South African context: just as everyday life is fraught with experiential contradictions so too was the method "characterized by unresolved tensions" (298). Narratives, as a part of wider cultural belonging, carry with them the assumption that experience can "become a part of consciousness" (Squire 2008: 2), which allowed the focus of the research to be on a broader contextual/necropolitical understanding, rather than individual psychoanalysis. That is, in considering 'narratives of experience' I could emphasise personal encounters with structures and society to enable a wider focus on life and death, and to create room to address turning points, general experiences, general states of being/unbeing, and imagined journeys (Squire 2008). As "the means of human sense-making" (Squire 2008: 2) narratives-being-told carried with them transformative potential, and narratives-being-analysed were imbued with a broader "pragmatic politics" (7) of solidarity, effectively enabling a scrutinising of constituent life-world components (Mbembe 2003).

Of course, narrative analysis carried with it the risk of over-interpretation. This was considered in the fieldwork methods, and ambiguity around statements or emotions were followed-up in the sessions by seeking clarity of meaning and affirmation, or dissent, from other participants. I endeavoured to continually check my views against contrary discourses and materials, seeking multi-directional intersections (Squire 2008: 2). Importantly, I elected to primarily focus on the narratives expressed through language use. Due to the variety of personal backgrounds in the sessions I only incorporated paralanguage when it was unambiguously employed (such as laughter, crying, or aggressive shouting).

Determining Presentation: A Note Going Forward

The analysis chapters begin with a focus on a narrative commonality: the shared starting point of impressions of South Africa prior to journeying. These impressions formed a point of comparison to the realities of life as 'LGBT migrants'. This starting point has been chosen based on the explanation given in the 'participant breakdown' above. In the analysis, chapters five, six and seven are given over to critiquing everyday encounters with homophobia and xenophobia, specifically employing a queer necropolitical lens to connect experiences and structures. Chapter eight then connects these journeys to an intersectional imperative of naming sites of intervention, focusing on solidarity and future critical engagements. By following narratives of daily life, the analysis chapters mark the everyday as a site of politics and struggle.

To do this an artificial 'cleaving' of journeys was necessary, for the sake of readability. Analysis is presented as it relates to *lived journeys* (chapters five and six, those physical day-to-

day encounters), and to *imagined journeys* (chapter seven, those emotional/psychological understandings of experience and subjectivity). Within 'lived journeys' I differentiate between encounters with the state (chapter five) and encounters with South African society (chapter six). Of course this is a fine distinction; experiences with state structures (Home Affairs, the police, and the legal system) are reinforced by experiences with society (including engagements with the media and encounters in social spaces). This differentiation should not imply a linear quality of life, or a hierarchy of belonging. It is instead a strategy to help pry open necropolitics.

Similarly, one cannot wholly disconnect the physical/lived from the emotional/imagined. Many of those lived journeys raised in chapters five and six are extended in chapter seven. For example, in chapter five I observe the subjective disconnect experienced at Home Affairs, which I link to social anxiety and prejudice in chapter six; in chapter seven I draw on the imaginative implications of such a disconnect in terms of transnationality. In turn, these issues are synthesised to consider points of action in chapter eight.

As I shift to analysis, in order to preserve a sense of connection one may consider chapters five and six the points of 'refractional focus' (extending the metaphor of intersectionality as a prism), chapter seven the rational flow of some of that light, and chapter eight as a space of some illumination. I say "some" out of the explicit awareness that, just as the spectrum of colour is not easily seen by all, I will inevitably be blind to certain wavelengths. I have endeavoured, however, to keep nodes of analysis open-ended and free-flowing – the vision of light, is, after all, a symbol of both life and death.

Chapter Five

Lived Journeys: Encounters with the State

I remember my country, all my friends, past home. [...W]hen I sleep at night they come in my dreams, then when I'm chatting with them I feel like tears coming up. Then I wake up at night and I'm like in tears, let me tell you. But I have nothing to do. I can't make a return.

(Roda, CT 48)

And nobody gonna help you.

(Delphi, CT 25)

The next three chapters engage with everyday life in South Africa. 'Life' becomes a keyword here, as I employ a queer necropolitical lens to analyse empirical experiences of homophobia and xenophobia. This chapter begins to map out the lived journeys of the workshop participants, with specific focus being given to interactions with the state. It focuses on journeys involving state structures, exploring how such structures influence and shape prejudice. As I noted in chapter four, one cannot easily cleave engagements with the state from engagements with the wider society. These aspects should not be regarded as mutually exclusive; instead, chapters five, six and seven should be read as fluid components of a wider intersectional consideration. In this, threats of death are held alongside undercurrents of obvious strength and resilience. Importantly, the theme of hope tacitly emerges in the analysis as a force of life. This frames discussions in chapters seven and eight.

In this chapter I argue that key state structures – specifically the Department of Home Affairs, the police force and the legal system – normalise and perpetuate homophobia and xenophobia. With a queer necropolitical lens one may begin to regard the day-to-day embodiment of being a 'double threat', as noted in chapter three. I begin this chapter by tracing the impressions and interactions that the participants reported having had with Home Affairs to illustrate the tensions between the images participants held of South Africa and the reality they encountered. Building on this I note how state expectations, in relation to nationality and sexuality, mirror discourses of indigeneity (particularity in terms of pressures to categorise oneself). Hostility emanates from multiple sites of interaction with the state, and I demonstrate how this renders LGBTI migrants as 'the living dead', which enables further analysis of the spaces between inclusion and exclusion.

Commencing the Journey

First Encounters with South Africa

I asked the workshop participants to reflect on their initial impressions of South Africa. When Max first arrived from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) – a place he left but did not identify as being 'from', rather seeing himself as being from both Congos – he called his father on the phone and said "it's beautiful! It's not what I expected!" (PTA 10). Pat, who also came to South Africa from the DRC, said that people in his DRC community loved South Africa, and Republican emphasised that many Zimbabweans he knew remained "fascinated by this country. […] It's different here, the moment you get here it's different. […] They love it. They believe the women are prettier" (PTA 8). Daniel, whose family brought him to South Africa from the DRC/Belgium, said that he had encountered a general perception that South Africa has economic benefits, being "a good place to come if you wanna get a job and earn money" (Solo 5).

This view, that South Africa presents economic opportunities not found "at home", was shared by several other participants, including Roda, who noted that in Uganda there is a perception that South Africa is "above the ordinary. So, is like one of in Africa the fastest growing [economies]" with people often expressing excitement at news that friends are travelling there, noting how "all those people [in South Africa] they are very intelligent" (CT 9). Indeed, JuiceBabie, Max and Pat all identified economic advancement as central reasons for migrating from their respective homes.

Simon and Republican both shared how their families – from Uganda/USA and Zimbabwe – considered the country a good place to go and further their education, or, as Republican put it, a good place for "study and enlightenment" (PTA 7). Similarly, Pat first travelled to South Africa to visit and gauge whether he could, in terms of both his sexuality and economic future, "try earn my freedom" (PTA 7). After visiting he appreciated why people he had spoken to in the DRC viewed South Africa as an 'exceptional' space, declaring, based on his first impression, that he was "in love with this country and I'm feeling free. I can express myself, I can be myself. My freedom" (PTA 7).

Within these impressions, the allure of 'freedom' is revealed as woven into the myth of South Africa as a site of potentiality (and which is thus discursively bound to the internal rhetoric of exceptionalism, and in turn denialism). For LGBTI individuals it is often seen as a "refuge" if you are unable to "hide" that you are gay (Star, PTA 9). For the participants, the freedom (and desire) to *be* and *belong* in safety framed South Africa, for many, as a "better" place to be LGBTI,

primarily because of the laws (Max and Simon, PTA 8). They noted, however, that such laws are rarely spoken about in a positive light in mainstream culture. Indeed, as much as South Africa may be viewed as a place of possibilities this impression also potentially feeds a general perspective that it has become too liberal (Simon, PTA 9).

Not necessarily only linked to sexuality, the view that the country is a place that "corrupts" those who visit (Ruwash, CT 9) was one widely held by people 'back home' in the lives of most of the participants. This was put down to excessive freedoms because "everybody is free to do whatever they want" (Max, PTA 8). In a context of widespread conservative values, however, negativity around 'excessive liberties' inevitably merges with homophobic attitudes: Roda felt that people often express disdain for the country out of a fear that "the gays are having control" (CT 9). This, Roda and others suggested, contributes to the view that South Africa is no longer a part of Africa: it does not "live like African Country" (Ken, CT 8) and is no longer "doing African culture. They turned to European and American cultures" (Ruwash, CT 9), speaking to a general rhetoric of unAfricanness. Yet a fear of the apparent power that South Africa has in the international community – its established reputation as exceptional – maintains a sense of "respect" for the South African government and state (Roda, CT 9).

However, this respect is at odds with a general sense of fear and apprehension about the country. I discuss the media in chapter six, but in relation to initial impressions of the country the participants suggested that social media – most notably YouTube, Facebook and WhatsApp – played an ongoing role in forging an ambiguous sense that South Africa is becoming increasingly dangerous for 'foreigners'. The xenophobic violence of 2008 and 2015 in particular had scarred perceptions of safety and promise, and posts shared online had prevented family members and peers of several participants from visiting the country.

The threat of this hostility, however, had not deterred participants from commencing, or continuing, their journeys (where such choice was an option). They remarked that social media equally contributed to their understandings of the 'promise' of the rainbow nation: all of them noted how the vision of relative legal and social freedom had been a primary force in their initial impressions of the country, if not the actual catalyst for their journey. The varying reasons for migration – including sexual refuge, economic promise, education, and greater freedom – formed an understanding of 'South Africanness' and one's position in the national project.

In discussions of journeys, attention inevitably turned to definitions of home. The politics of home were infused with the tensions arising from a disconnect between the myth of the rainbow nation and the reality. The first epigraph speaks to this, where a Roda's life

depended on being in South Africa – a physical home – but the realisation of never being able to return, and the difficulties encountered in this new home, shaped the realisation that home is more than physical; it is what is lost. The journey from past home(s) to present is both physical and imagined (a component I explore in chapter seven). Home is a space of both nurturing and violence, inclusion and exclusion, comfort and terror, life and death. The participants grappled with and embodied the emotions of home on a daily basis. In this way, it was fitting that the first point of contact with South Africa for all of them (and indeed all migrants), was Home Affairs.

Gatekeeper of Home

Home Affairs, the governmental department flagged in chapter two as the criticized administrative custodian of all peoples in South Africa, is a central point of interaction for all migrants in the country. As the institution which is responsible for approving all work and residency permits, considering asylum applications, granting refugee status, bestowing citizenship and renewing identity documents it holds a unique position of both hope and fear. As a microcosm of the state, the department needs to be considered a key shaper of journeys through life in South Africa, as each participant relied on it for their continued legal presence in the country. As both an instigator of fear and frustration *and* a site of desperate hope and necessary reliance, it is a concrete guardian of the politics of life, and as such is also a harbinger of death. It is here that necropolitics becomes an important lens. In considering the intersectional challenges that LGBTI migrants face in South Africa it is necessary to consider how the promise of 'a better life' is shaped and maintained in relation to who can attain and live such a life, and who is barred from achieving it.

Where attitudes and experiences of general life in the country varied amongst participants, feelings towards Home Affairs were unanimous, and mentioning the department evoked a distinctive dread, provided by the soundtrack of grim moaning and sighing. In Pretoria Pat jokingly lamented that speaking about experiences with the department would have kept us in the room all day, as there were so many things to report and complain about. Where a manufactured identity may fail to unify a nation perhaps a shared disdain for Home Affairs will succeed, as many of the points of conversation echoed familiar personal stories from South Africans: of queuing from 4am only to be told at 12pm that you need to return another day; of inadequate signage; of unhelpful employees; of failing infrastructure; of language barriers; of shameless hostility from officials.

What marked the shared frustration amongst the participants as distinct, however, was a simmering anxiety that the department would deny or revoke their work/residency permit

applications or asylum status. This dread surpassed everyday inconveniences experienced by citizens, and was felt first and foremost in direct encounters at Home Affairs in both Cape Town and Pretoria. As Ms Malawi summarised, foreign nationals are often treated "like a *dog*" (CT 20, emphasis in audio). Echoing this, The King noted how interactions with Home Affairs are some of the first that migrants have with the South African state, and that the department emanates a clear sense of disinterest and animosity:

> At Home Affairs, me I can express myself in language. But the big thing I couldn't know the English in a way I can just talk everything, you understand? The first time you come they just give you a paper like this [holding out a single sheet] – a form. And then you need to fill it. And you need to fill it in English! That person who's talking to you, who's trying to help, he's talking in English. Maybe he's talking in Xhosa as well, you understand? [Others in group murmuring in agreement] The other languages, you understand? And you don't even understand what he's saying. So you have to draft everything. (The King, CT 30)

Raising a key issue of the role of language in shaping senses of home (a point addressed in chapter six), The King's concern with the lack of information and support around access to and clarity of information was echoed by all in the Cape Town group. The idea of Home Affairs being helpful and supportive was met with universal dismissal. Ken and Delphi, asylum seekers from Nigeria and Burundi respectively, reconciled themselves to the idea that it ultimately depended on the official one encountered, with Ken emphasising that, in his experience with several different officials, "there's nobody in place, like, enforcing the law [stipulating the role of Home Affairs] to apply on each person" (CT 34).

The department is the only body in South Africa which can process documentation regarding migrant status, and both Roda and Delphi agreed that the success of an application and an enquiry came down to a combination of "how you express yourself", the person you deal with, and luck (CT 33-34). The University of Cape Town offers administrative support – a service which several of the Cape Town participants had used – but this is not an official resource, and it exists to ease some of the confusion which stems from interacting with this key governmental structure. The Cape Town group, having all been through the asylum seeker processes in varying stages, repeatedly emphasised the open hostility experienced at the department.

This was not limited to experiences of those seeking refuge, however, as Star – who identified as an economic migrant – recalled an incidence in Pretoria in which he and his mother were left feeling "degraded" after being shouted at and sent from "pillar to post" with no assistance (PTA 16). A feeling of being held hostage by Home Affairs permeated through the discussions, which spoke to an internalised resolution that "[t]hey don't care" (Daniel, Solo 8).

Beyond not caring, the sense was that the government – as represented through Home Affairs – does not

> respect foreigners. They try and find every way that they can to kind of just eradicate them. […] Like you see it, and obviously they talk to you like they belittle you […] They just mistreat you because you aren't from here, so they think they kind of have a right to do it because you can't really…you can't really do anything about it, you know? You can't stand up to a government or law official because I think too many people are scared that they might not, you know, they might get kicked out. (Daniel, Solo 7-8)

The fear of being "kicked out" coupled with an overall lack of structural support with regards to navigating the confusing processes of Home Affairs (indeed, a glance at their website – a key space of interaction and information – clears a path towards almost inevitable confusion[62]) discursively frames journeys into and within South Africa. As the initial point of contact with the state, Home Affairs disrupts some of the more optimistic impressions of what the country may hold for Africans seeking to change, or save, their lives. The perception, as Republican observed, that South Africa is a space of wonder for those eager to travel there sits in tension with the sense of "eradication" that Daniel mentioned.

This embodied sense of being pathological, something diseased that needs to be destroyed, echoes the social discourse of indigeneity and local exceptionalism which gave substance to the violent outbursts highlighted in chapter two. That it takes root in Home Affairs gives an indication of the shape journeys may take in the country. Feelings that the participants could not "stand up" to officials, that they could not seek further information or support and had to rely on the luck of interacting with someone who was relatively helpful, manifested clearly as anger and frustration. In the face of real-world dangers, anger also gave way to desperate pleas for reform, with Chance expressing that

> Home Affairs. Please, home Affairs, we need you. […] The government, you need to help about Home Affairs. Home Affairs, yes, Home affairs – help us. But like *before*, the way you used to help us. I mean, Home Affairs must give us right papers. Good papers – cannot find a job, cannot travel! (Narrative 5, emphasis in audio)

<u>Sexuality and Home Affairs: Proving Embodiment</u>

Regardless of economic status the participants all recounted demeaning experiences of Home Affairs as "foreigners". While securing the work permits necessary for economic migration carried with it high levels of frustration and degradation for participants in the Pretoria group, issues around access, following procedure, and the constant threat of deportation bore

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[62] http://www.dha.gov.za/index.php/refugee-status-asylum

significant weight for the asylum seekers in Cape Town, who were all in South Africa on the basis of their sexual subjectivities. This warrants consideration in relation to the means in which Home Affairs shapes experiences of (violent) inclusion and exclusion. For the economic migrants in Pretoria the issue of sexuality never came up in official encounters with the department – that is, in their applications for visas and permits.

A part of the reason, though, that Pat, Max and JuiceBabie travelled to work in South Africa was the image of relative sexual freedom that the country projects. The promise of the potential to explore sexual freedoms, however, is arguably only matched by reality when it is grounded in relative (economic) privilege. The Cape Town participants sought asylum in South Africa due to their sexual subjectivities, but many refused to reveal their sexual fluidity in most social contexts through fear of repercussion (as I discuss in chapter six) – a fear which was mitigated in the lives of most of the Pretoria participants through the security that their incomes, homes and support structures provided.

Of course, to claim this as absolute would be reductive: Pat, who migrated to Pretoria for "work and freedom" had not discussed his sexual orientation with his work colleagues. Roda, a (sexual) refugee in Cape Town, worked in a gay men's health clinic and relished the "what what" (that is, secretive sexual pleasure – a phrase Roda frequently used, accompanied by knowing eyebrow raises and a quick flick of the head) that comes with being 'openly gay' in an environment where many others are 'closeted'. Here we begin to slip into the language of the closet, and the assumption that being 'openly gay' is both desirable and necessary for psychological balance[63] – a discourse that problematically resonates with the legal tensions of the country. In this light, the protections that South Africa is seen as offering requires, in the face of a lack of economic privilege, an explicit engagement with Home Affairs about your sexuality in one form or another. Economic privilege, in this way, buffers the structural pressure one faces to categorise oneself as either a *migrant* or a *sexual migrant*.

Although these are not official categories in Home Affairs, the experiences of those who *had* sought asylum on the basis of their sexual orientations – Roda, Chance, Top, Ken, Ms Malawi and Delphi – reveal an additional layer of hostility on a structural level. Roda, who had been in South Africa for several years, shared that when he arrived in Cape Town with friends who were also seeking asylum their "problem was genuine. And I never got any assistance from Home Affairs" (CT 31). Fleeing Uganda out of fear of persecution, he explained that Home Affairs gave

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[63] See Gray (2009) for an engagement with ideas of coming out in relation to visibility and senses of belonging.

no guidance on how to fill in forms correctly to ensure approval of refugee status. Through the assistance of team members at UCT this status was granted, and this process was helped, he thought, by the publicised 'homophobia' in Uganda.

The flagging of his situation as "genuine" points to the dual factors that one has to both be 'genuinely gay' and come from a 'genuinely homophobic' place in order to have a hope at succeeding with Home Affairs, inasmuch as encountering blatant hostility and categorising yourself within a prescribed sexual category may be regarded as a success. The Cape Town participants all noted that in order to be regarded as 'genuinely gay' one had to firstly 'come out' to Home Affairs officials as "a gay" (Ken, CT 33) and secondly prove your 'gayness' to the officials – factors which contribute to questions of homonationalism and homogeneity explored in chapter seven.

The first step of 'coming out' – or, more accurately, declaring oneself to have a sexual identity that is a recognised minority by the department – is effectively a step of inviting personalised hostility. Ken noted that "when you mention your sexuality there be some discrimination. Like, 'eish[64], why are you gay?! Why are you gay?'" (CT, 30). Delphi agreed, and shared that officials you speak to will call people to come and look at you and engage in a discussion about "how can you be gay? How can you be lesbian? Since when you start [being like this] in Africa?" (CT, 30). Roda's strategy for avoiding such discussions was to accept the prejudices of some officials and look for others who "you see they're gay" and interact with them instead (CT, 32). Ken and Delphi both approved of this strategy, reconciling themselves to the idea that negative official perceptions about their sexualities were the norm, and that the best way of dealing with this was to move to another desk and hope the next official would be less aggressive and less mocking.

The second step of 'proving' one's sexual orientation, is however, far more invasive. Chance's personal journey revealed the aggression and lack of intersectional consideration:

> When I was interviewed, when I said I was gay, they reject me. They reject me. They said I must go back home. Like they said, "no, we'll give you three months. You must go back home". Then I was going to UCT. […] I explained everything what is happen to me. The first time someone was helping I didn't know English. Someone was help to write it [the forms for asylum] – but I didn't say I'm gay. And *now* I say I'm gay and they reject it – they don't have any proof I'm gay! They rejecting me. And when I'm going to UCT they help me. […] Home Affairs – they have given me 'appeal'! Appeal! Until now I'm appeal. (CT 31)

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[64] A word, in this context, expressing disbelief or horror.

Chance, who did not want to reveal to the South African government that he identified as gay, had his initial claim for asylum denied. Seeking assistance from the university did not help matters, as his lack of fluency in English prevented him from realising he had to openly declare himself as gay in order to secure his refugee status from Burundi, where he faced threats of violence from his family, community and government. His application was denied again. On his third attempt at engaging with Home Affairs, where he did identify himself as gay (and therefore at risk in Burundi) the officials did not believe him. His status as refugee, therefore, was put "on appeal" – awaiting bureaucratic review. This prevented him from being allowed to secure employment and accommodation. At the time of the workshop he had been "on appeal" for several years. This speculatively feeds the image of 'exceptional' South Africa, as pending asylum status under the Refugee Act enables the executive to superficially meet legal obligations *without* affording the rights that come with being granted refugee status.

Just as Chance would ultimately have to prove the authenticity of his sexual subjectivity, Ken had already been subjected to this 'process' (for a lack of a better word, as there are no accessible policies or guidelines). Upon his arrival in South Africa from Nigeria the officials he encountered refused to allow him into the country on the grounds that they "know that Nigerians are not gay" as "if you're a gay you have to stay in the jail for 40 years" (Ken, CT 33). Echoing popular social beliefs of the 'unAfricanness of homosexuality', the fact that Ken "didn't dress like, didn't behave like a lady" in the eyes of the officials meant that he had to offer them proof of his claim. After confiscating his mobile phone and tablet and checking his WhatsApp chat history, browsing history, and camera roll (and discovering conversations with a manager at PASSOP, as well as gay-themed pornography) the officials 'confirmed' his 'status'. Several of his friends from Nigeria were less 'fortunate', and they had their applications rejected.

Ken's willingness to disregard his privacy (that all-important idea within an ANC rhetoric of liberty) worked in his favour. However, his story emphasises the suspicion within the structures of the state and the simmering hostility towards (LGBTI) migrants who seek the legal protections and freedoms that they feel South Africa may offer. Practices at and (a lack of) regulations for Home Affairs also represent a disregard for the psychological and practical realities of expecting migrants to identify with prescribed, or at least officially recognised, sexual categories. As individuals who often have fled contexts where they have been persecuted for 'being gay', the assumption that they will be both *able* to articulate their subjectivities within a familiar discourse and *willing* to do so, is insensitive and dangerous.

The King, for example, noted that his personal journey over the last few years had made him comfortable with speaking about his sexuality in familiar contexts. However, he refused to label his sexuality, describing that "I am a gay, or I'm a straight, or I'm a bisexual – whatever here, what I know is I am a human" (CT 4). His unwillingness to conform to a descriptor (as explored in chapter seven) thus translated to an unwillingness to approach Home Affairs to explain that his "on appeal" status as an asylum seeker should have considered his sexuality, due to the threat that deportation back to the DRC would have posed to his life. The lack of resonance with the labels used by Home Affairs, coupled with the fear that he would have to 'prove' his sexuality to officials – and the inherent 'outing' that such proof would entail – put his status as an asylum seeker at risk.

This was the cause of a great deal of anxiety, and ultimately posed a threat to his future wellbeing. This anxiety, however, was at odds with a degree of sympathy for Home Affairs: Ken expressed that the requirement of proof is not unique to South Africa and is understandable given how many people, in his opinion, 'fake' their sexuality in order to try and get into the country. The invasions of privacy and expectations of subjective categorisation are, therefore, justifiable to sort the 'real' gays from the fakes.

The 'issue' of 'fake gays', as Ken noted, is not specific to South Africa. In the context of the United Kingdom, for example, the Home Office (equivalent in many ways to Home Affairs) has been criticised for reports that asylum seekers have to prove their sexuality (Bennett 2015; Cohen 2015; Best 2015; Parkinson 2013). In one case, a bisexual asylum seeker was reportedly asked over 220 questions by officials, including "did you ever put your penis into x's backside?" and "did x ejaculate inside of you?" (Yeo 2014). A South African specificity, however, is perhaps the observation that the practice of demanding proof once again perversely echoes a discourse of indigeneity, where testing people for how white they are, or how South African they are based on the thickness of their hair, is considered acceptable. The concern that 'fake gays' may be entering the country mirrors concerns raised in chapter two about South Africa being 'flooded' by waves of immigrants (Neocosmos 2010), desperate to enter and partake in the exceptionalism of South African culture, epitomised by the welcoming embrace of the department of Home Affairs.

This conjures a distasteful image; one can almost picture officials sitting in a room, torn between being horrified that gays are corrupting a sense of Africanness, but also concerned about fake gays entering the country and *really* ruining things. There is no high-ranking official sitting in a room composing policy guidelines for determining proof of gayness (we can certainly

hope not). And yet this indicates a distinctive procedural absence, and the sense that Home Affairs plays an unregulated role in shaping *acceptable* sexual categories, speaking to a prediscursive assumption of subjective homogeneity with a "less than liberatory effect" (Massad 2002: 363). Migrants who are structurally pressured into articulating their sexuality in easily-identifiable terms, offering proof of their 'guilt' through recognition of sexual difference, engage in processes of negotiating a regime of power rooted in a sense of national heteronormativity (Lubhéid 2008: 174). This national heteronormativity holds particular disdain for "queer migrants", as their histories and personal journeys "exceed existing categories" (Lubhéid 2008: 171) and thus pose a threat to projects of nation-building and South African exceptionalism. The slow structural erasure-through-categorisation through assumptions of subjective homogeneity has real consequences in the lives of those moulded to try and 'fit' the national system. It also has significant consequences for attempts to provide social support and understanding and speaks to a sense of entrapment felt by the participants. There is, as Daniel expressed, nothing to be done about it.

State Structures in Everyday Spaces

The explicit dread and sense of unbelonging shaped by the primary institutional contact point for the participants was reinforced on an official day-to-day level, beyond the confines of the Home Affairs offices in Cape Town and Pretoria. The general monitoring of behaviour and interaction extends to spaces of daily life, where private actions – walking to work, interacting with friends, exercises – are subject to anticipatory intervention and punitive threats. Rather than about a surveillance of sexuality, however, these spaces become about a continuous awareness of national background – of pathological foreignness.

Both workshops discussed the role of Home Affairs in conducting raids in social spaces, work environments and transport hubs.[65] JuiceBabie, an economic migrant, shared a story about how the department raided a nightclub demanding "hands up! Papers out!" (PTA 24). He shared that he managed to avoid being taken into custody by speaking to an official in local slang, convincing the official that he was South African. Despite having the legal 'permission' to be in the country the threat of arrest for unknown reasons was normalised and real. Legality and documentation means little if a person is not carrying their 'papers' on them – that is, if they do not physically have their passport, visa, asylum document or permit with them. Pat was stopped by officials in the CBD in Pretoria, in full view of the taxi rank and commuters. He questioned

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[65] Presumably thought to be 'frequented' by 'foreigners' – interviews with Home Affairs would have to be conducted to be certain; see Steinberg (2012).

why he had to produce his papers, only to be told that unless he did he would be "taken away" (PTA 13).

I asked the Pretoria group if it was a requirement to always have their passports on them. Everyone confirmed that this was what they had been told, with Simon (a law student) suggesting that it was simply "a form of identification" (PTA 14). This strategy of control and monitoring mimics apartheid-era tactics of the *dompas*, or pass laws. As urban areas were deemed 'white' spaces prior to 1986, black people were required, from 1952, to carry identity permits (called 'passes') in cities and towns. The focus of monumental protests, such as that of Sharpeville in 1960, the passes became a hated symbol of the apartheid system and the oppression of the majority in the country. Failure to produce valid passes led to arrests, torture and brutal detainment.

Although the pass system was repealed in 1986, Home Affairs seemingly projects a willingness – as Everatt (2011) has identified – to recycle the project of dehumanising population groups under the guise of 'regulation', control, and the preservation of a standard of living in exceptional South Africa. Participants had been subjected to regular raids and threats of punishment, but there is no legal requirement to carry identification – indeed in personal conversation with Member of Parliament Marius Redelinghuys he confirmed that it was precisely for the reason that such a system is too similar to apartheid that it does not exist.

However, as JuiceBabie lamented, "if someone abuses you, you go to report the case [and] they will not do any follow-up of that case" (PTA 13). Of course, not all of the officials demanding papers work under the explicit mandate of Home Affairs: Pat noted how often in the past, upon being stopped, he was told to "talk like a man", meaning that "they want money" (PTA 13). In such situations the participants effectively had a choice to pay the bribe or risk being detained under the pretence of having suspicious documentation – whilst experiencing the anxiety of weighing up whether the request for a bribe was an act of entrapment, the fulfilment of which could have led to prosecution and deportation.

Deathly Encounters

One may frame sexual migrants as a 'double threat' to sovereignty. In the embodiment of being both 'foreign' and 'gay', categorisations which the state itself paradoxically creates and perpetuates as a structural enforcer of alterity, the participants exist in a space of liminal (un)belonging. Such figures are regulated through being procedurally and socially coerced into oscillating between being *either* queer *or* foreign, thus defusing the threat to normative

sovereignty. This signposts a necropolitical relationship between structures of the state, society, and everyday life. In tracing engagements with Home Affairs, particularly noting the 'pathological' quality assigned to sexual and national otherness, I suggest that the department is a discursive agent in creating what Mbembe (2003) calls a 'death-world' for the participants of this project; a space where death is embodied and threatened within a wider world of life.

At a basic surface level the constant threat of deportation and the anxiety of potentially having to decide upon an 'othered' sexual category, coupled with – for the Cape Town group in particular – the endless status of 'on appeal' is a structural violence which at once subjects migrants to the promises of life in South Africa (snippets of legal freedom, social tolerance, the myth of acceptance and exceptionalism) and bars them from fully realising such promise (Mbembe 2003: 40). The liminality of both being included in the nation (in that they had been granted access to certain resources) and excluded (in that Home Affairs remained the panoptic guardian at the invisible threshold) is a world of life *and* death.

Death, within a necropolitical framework, "includes literal physical death, but also social, political and civil death – the social relations of death, decay, and dying that emerge from prolonged exposure to violence, neglect, deprivation and suffering" (Lamble 2014: 161). As the narratives further revealed, experiences were often marked by such neglect and deprivation – but simultaneously shaped by the vision of South Africa as a space of economic potential (for the Pretoria group), or a space that is better than the alternative of potential literal death in 'home' countries (for the Cape Town group). The power of the state, and the perceived success of a project of South African nationalism, "continuously refers and appeals to exception, emergency, and a fictionalized notion of the enemy. It also labours to produce [these]" (Mbembe 2003: 16).

Perceptions of the enemy, at a structural level, includes those prejudicial attitudes towards 'foreigners' explored in chapter two, and those discursively complexities towards LGBTI individuals explored in chapter one. The legal structures of the country, however, produce a complex *interplay* between exclusion and inclusion. The worlds that the participants inhabit should not be reduced to a view of exclusion. Indeed, Haritaworn *et al* caution against using necropolitics to focus purely on exclusion, as to do so would risk neglect (2014: 11). Rather, Home Affairs fundamentally provides a point of insight into how structures of the state categorise alterity within the boundaries of both "belonging and unbelonging" (6) through producing unique experiences of practices of exclusion and expulsion, and promises of the rewards of (eventual) inclusion. This dynamic creates a 'death-world', where the promise of

inclusion depends on "essentially violent and (socially) deadly process that produces forms of life in segregated proximity" (6), and where such a promise discursively fosters complicity.

Enforcing Death: Policing Participants

This structural manifestation of necropolitics may be extended further through a consideration of how the police force, as an entity of the state, 'contains' LGBTI migrants in spaces of death-world experience. In response to the statement *the police protect people and look after people living in South Africa* both groups shared mixed stories. There was a consensus that, as 'foreigners' and 'LGBTIs', a reliance on the police varied from location to location. In much the same way that your experience with Home Affairs officials depends on luck, so too does your interaction with a police officer. The oscillating uncertainty of what to expect was captured by Ken, who noted that:

> Ken: [T]he police came when people they are attacking me, maybe I'm living in the township – people they are attacking me because I am drinking. They can laugh at me, saying "why are did you wear a dress?" You understand? You know, that's what they do to gays. If, when they find out you are foreign… I saw that.
>
> Matthew: So when they found out you're foreign *and* you're gay?
>
> Ken: They ask you question. They asking question, "why did you wear a dress?" That's what they ask you. They leave you like that. (CT 14)

Ken here recalled how, upon being attacked at a local bar, the police arrived and, after learning he was gay – metaphorically 'wearing a dress' – left him to be beaten. However, after hearing how the police had helped Chance by brutally beating a male client who had not paid Chance for his sexual work, Ken thoughtfully noted that "in terms of force in South Africa, like police stuff, I think they are nice. Ya, they are nice. It's just that if, if being a gay does not stop them, not do what they want" (CT 14).

Acknowledging here that some police officers may not help because of prejudicial attitudes towards sexual minorities, Ken speculated that he had to trust in the law – he had to rely on the idea that there was "one law" that did not change, and so in other parts of the country he assumed people should be able to find at least some police officers who were tolerant or willing to support inhabitants. This acceptance of normalised prejudice as a structural reality was echoed by several of the other discussants, who approved of Ken's observation that should you need to go to a police station you undoubtedly will encounter officers who "don't like the gay" and who "might say 'go'", refusing to assist, but that you just "step to the next person. There are many police" and they will eventually attend to you (CT 15).

There was greater degree of optimism about the police in Cape Town in general, with Ms Malawi and The King sharing positive stories about their reliance on the police to encourage a sense of support. Roda, too, expressed positive views of the police in Cape Town – particularly with regards to revealing his sexual orientation. Where The King had been hesitant to mention his sexuality to the police, not wanting to cause future harassment in a situation where he was already being harassed by neighbours (CT 16), Roda had never shied away from calling himself gay as "some of them [the police] are also gays" and they knew that he could potentially 'out' them if they refused to assist (CT 16).

Noting how they knew the sexual habits of some of the police force, Chance, a sex-worker, explained that "they are the customer, the police!" (CT 15), prompting raucous laughter from the group. The fact that "you can tell them 'okay, please, […] you have something'" and that "when you are bottom they can take advantage to *what what*. A nice fat [bottom]" is a way of securing their services (Roda, CT 15). Humour aside, Chance and Roda acknowledged that sometimes the only way of attaining the support of particular police officers was through an exchange of sex. With humour defusing the anxiety of uncertainty about the role the police played in their everyday lives, Top, Ken and Chance emphasised that:

> Ken: Police issues, that's how you find the South African government doesn't care about foreigners.
>
> Matthew: What about gay people?
>
> Ken: They don't. They don't.
>
> Chance: Especially police.
>
> Ken: Haibo[66] they don't! [Laughter] (CT 13)

Such anxiety maintains necropolitics. Being caught between having to rely on the police, but anxious about what to expect, contributed to a sense of abandonment and isolation in South African society. The stories of sexual exchanges and normative prejudice were mild, however, in relation to the literal threat of death that came with uncertainty. Top shared that the problem, for many 'foreigners', is that they "need help" and do not know who to turn to (CT 13).

Top's journey within the death-world led him and his partner to be mugged, by men he knew to be homophobic, in a local Congolese community in Cape Town. Unable to give in to the demands for R2 (£0.01) two men proceeded "to moer"[67] him. Top managed to gain the attention of a passing police van patrolling the neighbourhood, but the officers inside replied "ah,

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[66] South African slang for "wow", "seriously?", or a dismissive "no".
[67] Severely beat.

foreigners!" and drove off. When his partner tried to pull the men from Top they beat his partner to death, at which point Top managed to escape "running in the street like a mad person". When neighbours called the police and one of the culprits was detained, the other tried to shoot Top – but was prevented from doing so by other members of the community. Friends of the culprits, however, sought vengeance on Top, and the advice given to him by the local police was that he should "run away. You can go to stay in Johannesburg or Pretoria". Financially unable to do so, Top, moved in with a friend, but was still awaiting updates from the judiciary. He noted that "I'm not safe, because why? Even in the public area. […] I must be strong, because I'm afraid. I don't know what I can do, because I use even to go to […] SWEAT – they help me, and Triangle Project, they took me for counselling. But sometimes if those problems come to me I feel like I lose control. I lose mind" (CT 24).

Services available through identified non-profit organisations such as SWEAT[68] (Sex Workers Education & Advocacy Taskforce) and Triangle Project[69] are dependent on available resources and personnel, but help empower community members to navigate daily encounters with death and violence. Top's story reads as an exceptional case, but similar experiences were shared – in terms of threat and psychological trauma – by several of the other Cape Town participants.

Chance's journey led him to a confrontation on his way to work one morning with two local gang members, who demanded money. Unable to give them any, they instead demanded sex. He felt that "I don't have a choice. They had knife. […] Let me sleep with them to save my life. I sleep with them. There are two of them – I sleep with them". This rape became a regular occurrence, and when he threatened to go to the police to open a case with the hope that "maybe I'm going to be safe" the gang members threatened to kill him again. Resolving to improve his situation, he began to request favours from one of the men in return for sex – which led to the ire of his neighbours, who were concerned with the "tsotsi"[70] he kept bringing home. After being robbed by the man Chance called the police, who then arrived at his accommodation to arrest the gang member. The man was eventually sentenced and detained in South Africa's notorious Pollsmoor maximum security prison. Chance, however, had received regular calls and messages from the man for over two years, informing him that "when I come out I'll kill you. No matter what, when I'm out you'll die. […] When I'm out I will show you" (CT 27-28). On such a journey the threat of death goes beyond the symbolic – beyond structural exclusion – and speaks

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[68] http://www.sweat.org.za
[69] http://triangle.org.za
[70] Gangster

to the "exceptional violence" that comes with the *inclusion* of residing in the nation (Haritaworn *et al* 2014: 6).

The inclusion that comes with being granted permission, by Home Affairs, to enter the country is also balanced by the exclusion that the department, the police, and other structures of the state implicitly enforce through a lack of understanding of the needs of LGBTI individuals. This fundamentally feeds into problematic structural definitions of a Gay International-esque calibre which have shaped the image of exceptional nationalism in South Africa. Delphi identified as a trans woman, but retained a social subjectivity of male-ness due to her official asylum seeker papers which marked her as "male". Unable to understand the language of the Home Affairs interviewer, she was unable to explain her journey (speaking yet again to the expectation to align with pre-established and recognised categories of identity). Home Affairs, therefore, had no knowledge of her gender reassignment – a factor which caused ongoing anguish and humiliation (CT 49). Although she was seeking support from organisations in Cape Town, her negative experiences with the state contributed to her unwillingness to approach the police for support after she was gang-raped at a party in Johannesburg. She shared that:

> I was new here, and I didn't know what to do. […] After when he done and I say, "please, I don't want to die here. Help me just to be away here – I can get taxi anywhere" that guy, "no, you opened the door, you can go out. And nobody gonna help you." […] I don't know which way I was come from. And for me it was not easy to express myself, English, because I was speak French. And to go to police station to say you get rape and they don't know all the procedure – these thing happen. So for me I tried to calling my friend. […] And my friend said, "what you gonna do? Can we just go in the police station?!" I said, "no, I cannot go in the police station. It gonna be problem to me." I afraid. And I have that emotion in me. […] And he said to me, "you can just go home, to go to pharmacy, if it can do something lucky". [Medicines] to stop my pain. My pain. All these things. […] And I feel to keep it inside for myself. (Delphi, CT 25-26)

Delphi's narrative draws frank and deeply personal attention to the isolation and lack of support that all of the participants experienced, to varying degrees and in starkly different circumstances. "Nobody gonna help you" sticks out as a marker of navigating the structural and social violence in South Africa. In the full narrative Delphi shared her unwillingness to go to a clinic or hospital following her rape, mentioning the stress and anxiety her limited grasp of English, as well as the thought of having to explain her situation to nurses and doctors, caused. The disregard that she, and many of the others, had for Home Affairs and the police contributed to a daily requirement of having to constantly support oneself.

The lack of structural support and personal uncertainty about the trustworthiness of civic services contributed to a navigation the everyday in a state of what Mbembe calls being

"the living dead" (2003: 40). Conjuring images of dystopian horror films, the phrase refers to the subjective corporeality of liminal existence between inclusion and exclusion – of being alive but abandoned, to practices and spaces which threaten literal death (as shared in the narratives) or figurative death (in the form of expulsion from the country or a lack of integration into processes of national belonging). The participants had life, and moved through life, but through a lack of structural support had been left to 'die'.

Legislative and Executive Death

I wish to flag here, however, that one should not read the use of this analytic in the style of "the death-bound African figure" (Nyong'o 2012: 42). The participants were not constantly on the cusp of literal death, and every moment of life was not a fight with a knife-wielding gangster. To read the journeys as such would fail to "interrupt" those "neo/colonial geopolitics" (Haritaworn *et al* 2012: 12) which often shape discussions of African sovereignty, human rights and prejudice, resorting to a politics of Gay International and white Western saviour complex (chapter one). Similarly, the day-to-day triumphs form temporary 'life-worlds', imbued with distinctive hope for the future.

Rather, the analytic should draw attention to the re-emerging and shifting *threat* of death that does play a central role in understanding the experiences of the participants, and which is located at the heart of evolving national sovereignty. The flow between the promise of life and the threat of its end maintains a state of living death.

Continuing a structural engagement, the vision of constitutional and legal protection carries with it the promises of life – protection, freedom and safety. Ms Malawi noted that "South Africa is a freedom of expression, freedom dressing, freedom talk" (CT 8), and The King recalled being impressed that "the government have signed the gay marriage, the same-sex thing" (CT 10). However, discussing legal structures, Republican expressed the view that the laws and constitution only protect people residing in the country "on paper", which was echoed by Star (PTA 12). Simon, a law student, disagreed noting that "depending on the kind of person you find, I think you're protected more than paper" and that "some people get justice, both foreign and local as well. So it just depends, I would say" (PTA 12-13). This speaks to an undercurrent of hope, but as Simon noted the national background and sexuality of an individual are not precursors to ensuring justice.

Yet what shapes the relevance of the view that judicial artefacts are largely administrative and not practically accessible is the lack of information available to LGBTI

migrants about what they should expect from life in the country, and what tools they have at their disposal to seek support, echoing observations in chapter one. Although the Cape Town group expressed that PASSOP provides general information, and the Pretoria group noted that OUT is a local resource, both groups expressed that in their experiences LGBTI migrants (and potentially all migrants) do not know where to turn for legal advice or basic information.

Of course, not all *South Africans* are aware of how the constitution may act as an enabling tool – but (LGBTI) migrants regularly encounter active disregard for what should be an institution of empowerment. Max, for example, shared how he was arrested for not 'producing papers' whilst out cycling, causing Simon to complain that "it's the ignorance. General ignorance. Like with the law I would say the whole police needs to be taken for a crash-course every two months, because they don't know them" (PTA 15). Economic status was, of course, at play here again: the group in Pretoria, all economic migrants, expressed an awareness of the legal system and what it entails, but a lack of access to the support it may provide was regarded as producing frustrating inconveniences rather than life-threatening situations that some of the Cape Town refugees recalled. This is arguably due, in part, to the security that economic stability provides in avoiding potentially prejudicial spaces or encounters.

The Cape Town participants felt that the legal system "doesn't apply to everyone" (The King, CT 10). Top expressed the opinion that "the problem [is] if we need help. Because in South African constitution there's not foreigners" (CT 13) – that is, in his view, the constitution does not translate to any meaningful help or support in the lives of foreigners. This was rooted in his personal journey of dealing with the murder of his partner, and the ongoing court case, which had been delayed since 2012 – exacerbated by his 'pending' asylum status. Despite recognising that South Africa is a space of legal freedoms compared to their 'home' locations, each discussant in Cape Town felt that the legal system and government did not extend care to LGBTI people. Similarly, no-one in the Pretoria group felt that the judiciary fostered a sense of acceptance in their own lives (PTA 23). The King emphasised that legal protections do not

> apply to everyone who lives in South Africa, because the government, they made a constitution and put it today, but there's no-one who come on the ground and talk about it [followed by murmuring agreement from the others] […] But now who's going to do it? If the government doesn't come there, from there, from the offices there upstairs and come down onto the floor and explain a reason why a community should be okay with anybody who lives in South Africa. (CT 10)

The view that the government should provide education about the laws and access to information about the rights of and resources available to LGBTIs/migrants/LGBTI migrants was popular in both groups. Republican noted that he wants "the government to be more involved"

– that it should disregard discourses of privacy and play an active role in providing a "platform" to speak about issues affecting minorities and the rights of all individuals (Narrative 2). Top expressed the need for the government, through providing legal reform, to "think also about refugee people" and consider ways in which "LGBTI members" can be protected under the law (Narrative 4).

Although this speaks to a social issue of access, information and education, the views of the participants are a reflection of the perceived role (or lack thereof) that legal structures play. Held as a distant force not relevant to the everyday, the legal system is a psychological and material component in maintaining necropolitics. With the potential promise (or hope) of mystical legal salvation one may hold on to life whilst being relegated, through the very *lack* of information and accessibility, to a zone of its absence. If the law is too complex to navigate, the police remain unaccountable, and Home Affairs is perpetually hostile, to whom does one turn?

Shifting to the Social

The problem here, of course, is that the vision of the government "coming down" to community level and explaining the law to ease both structural and social prejudice is that it fundamentally relies on the idea of the state as the guardian of belonging and potential citizenship "rather than the perpetrator of violence" (Lamble 2014: 163). Desires for access to existing legal structures (which are – as discussed elsewhere in the thesis – hailed as globally liberal and progressive) pivot on a dependence on the necropolitical status quo.

This dependence is rooted, in part, in what Lamble calls a "queer investment in punitiveness" (2014). Lamble critiques the violence espoused by 'LGBT activists' in their reliance on the "neoliberal carceral state" for "policing, imprisonment and punishment" of those who display prejudicial attitudes (2014: 151). Extending beyond "assimilation and co-optation" the reliance on, for example, hate-crime laws in South Africa and constitutional protections infuses "citizenship norms and practices" with "a chillingly punitive and deathly logic" (151). Relevant to the country's context of historical criminalization of sex acts, abjection of sexual identities, and violent policing of population groups, the desire for increased legislation, policing and punishment of social prejudice is a contradiction to historic goals of de-criminalization and reconciliation (155).

Lamble's concern with "queer investments in punishment" (2014: 153) may be extended to the investments in positions of migrants in South African society. The offering of state involvement as a "solution" relies on the "false promise" that practices of policing,

imprisonment and punishment "will offer security and safety to those who embrace them" (152). Such a reliance on punitive reasoning is partly a *product* of the experiences of the very "social and institutional structures of punishment" (153) which participants raged against.

In discussing Home Affairs and the police, for example, many of the participants lamented the prejudicial attitudes they encountered. These, in part, led them to discuss a desire for legal education and intervention, and the amused celebration of those stories which spoke of the police force taking their sides and facilitating life – which in turn led to a popular view that the police should be doing more and that law should be used to force social tolerance. In other words, a reliance on the very processes which violently isolate and differentiate the participants.

Problematising the desire for legal intervention and improved police/Home Affairs functionality is not an anarchic suggestion for a move, say, to vigilante community justice, or to an outright dismissal of the legislative gains on behalf of minorities. Caution should be exercised in terms of wholly supporting *or* wholly opposing queer punitiveness. This problematisation serves to emphasise that the position of LGBTI migrants in South Africa is an interplay between inclusion and exclusion, as opposed to a linear move from exclusivity to inclusivity. Circular thinking is a danger here. An overreliance on existing strategies for enacting legislation investment, in terms of punitiveness and structural 'correction', may potentially perpetuate living death. By venturing to punish those who fail to protect and rely on legal tools which, on a larger level, form a part of national sovereignty, the illusion that 'life is within one's reach' is maintained. Future considerations for intervention therefore need to be signposted as focused on the operationalisation of legislation rather than increasing or decreasing it (for this, too, may acts as a useful distraction to maintain the status quo). The truth remains, however, that those tools and the departments and structures which power them facilitate the production of alterity, and relegate LGBTI migrants to the status of undesirable and 'disposable'.

This is, of course, partly due to the fact that everyday experiences of prejudice within state structures are bound to experiences of *social* prejudice in everyday life. It is easier, in some ways, to navigate the prejudice found in structural spaces rather than social spaces. Indeed, the manifestation of homophobia and xenophobia in South African *society* generates strategies for surviving the "double thing" (The King, CT 11) of being both LGBTI and a migrant. It is therefore necessary at this point to shift attention to this interplay between the structural and the social, and to further reveal the work of necropolitics in the lives of the participants.

To signpost this transition, then, this chapter has identified that key structures of the state render LGBTI migrants as undesirable. Through pressure to categorise oneself, and to

prove one's embodiment of such categorisation, a necropolitical state of (un)being is maintained. I have argued that an ever-present underlying fear and anxiety amongst the participants speaks to a fundamental tension between the image of South Africa and the reality, as I conceptually establish in chapters one and two. Home Affairs, as the gatekeeper of acceptable belonging, institutionalises homophobia and xenophobia. The police, along with Home Affairs officials, extend these attitudes into everyday spaces, and the legal structures of the country are seen to be largely inaccessible. In this way LGBTI migrants embody intersectional liminality, and are 'forced' to oscillate between life and death. Through this South African exceptionalism is maintained, and strategies of indigeneity influence initial journeys of unbelonging for those perceived as a 'double threat'.

Chapter Six

Journeys through the Social

I don't feel 100% welcomed in South Africa. It doesn't mean I don't like South Africa –I like. I feel like I should stay in South Africa for good. But there's still something which have to be done so that I feel really I'm welcomed. Cause the way I stay, more than 8 years I'm still on asylum seeker!

(The King, CT 47)

I concluded the previous chapter, which focused on lived encounters with mechanisms of the state, by problematising a desire for legal intervention and improved government services. I suggested in my analysis that the narratives of the workshop participants reveal a complex interplay between inclusion and exclusion; that this fosters a constant necropolitical self-awareness and uncertainty; and that, ultimately, desires expressed for structural reform play a role in maintaining the status quo. In this, the anxiety and apprehension about living in South Africa, which underpin being an LGBTI migrant, are regularly reinforced in state structures through various manifestations of homophobia and xenophobia. I noted how this prejudice flows from a structural level to spaces of everyday life, and that on lived journeys one encounters multi-sited social hostility.

This chapter is therefore dedicated to extending a queer necropolitical critique with a specific focus on forms of social hostility, and broader journeys through social spaces, both corporeal and mediated. It is presented in two components: a focus on social death worlds, and a focus on participant engagements with the media as an extension of the everyday. In this I illustrate that the structural pressure to 'choose' between a sexual or national subjectivity in the South African context manifests socially as switching and concealment. I argue that homophobia and xenophobia are normalised, and that this violence is rendered inevitable in everyday spaces. This rendering is extended through mainstream and social media use, which ultimately contributes to a state of living death.

Social Death-Worlds

Obligations and Switching

A key mechanism identified in chapter five as a part of structural necropolitical regulation is the pressure to categorise oneself in terms of sexuality and nationality. This categorisation translated, in the lived journeys of the participants, to particular forms of social engagement. The participants had to carefully negotiate the interplay between their sexual subjectivities and

their nationalities in many environments in South Africa. Most in the Cape Town group spoke about hiding and concealing their sexualities for safety and protection in certain areas, which Pat and Republican framed as "switching" between "African obligations" and "gay obligations" (Republican, PTA 5).

Discussions here explored the idea of what imaginatively defines 'unAfricanness', which I critique in the next chapter. I raise this here to note how Republican and Max both felt that "people they judge. They judge you. And you switch, you know, *okay I'm gay* and [then] *I'm African*" to minimise prejudice and confrontation in South Africa (Pat, PTA 5, emphasis in audio). Max noted how stressful this "switching" could be, and emphasised that although he spoke about his sexuality "when they get to know me", he preferred to conceal details of his sexual orientation when in public in South Africa as he did not "want to be in such a position where, on my presentation, people get already pushed off", thus 'switching' to (self-defined) contextually acceptable attitudes, views and identities (Max, PTA 6).

Such expectation is not unique to South Africa, of course – one may predict hostility in any conservative environment in any country, and Pretoria is a particularly conservative space. That Max and his partners' presence in a restaurant caused other patrons to stare, make homophobic remarks, and then leave occurred in legally liberal South Africa is upsetting and unfair (PTA 21), but it is not 'shocking' in the reality of a deeply homophobic and traditional society. What marks this prejudice as particularly problematic, though, is the lack of recourse and its *interplay* with ever-waiting xenophobia. After all, Max would hardly have reported his harassment to the police after he was imprisoned for a night for not showing his immigration papers to officers who approached him while he was out cycling.

The CBD and certain higher-income suburbs of Cape Town were presented by both groups as more accepting spaces, while other parts of the country, including Pretoria CBD and many suburbs, were assumed to be hostile to LGBTI people. As Ken summarised, "there are some places in South Africa that you stay, you being a gay person, you get fucked" (CT 10). Hostility extends to places of work and study: when Republican decided to take a male date to a university function he was approached by "hardcore Afrikaners" and told that "we're gonna shove a telephone pole up your ass and we hope that'll satisfy you" (PTA, 24). Chance explained that his colleagues kept trying to get him fired due to him being gay (CT, 17). Fear underlied the idea of being 'discovered' – fear of having stones thrown at your house (The King, CT 16); of being hit, or being killed (Chance, CT 17); of being chased out of your home with shouts of "You are Satan! You hiding, you are gay! You are Satan" (Chance, CT 27).

The King noted that feelings of safety and survivability often came down to how one presents oneself in specific areas. Fearing that his sexuality could lead to unpleasant reactions, he noted that "I don't look as a gay, I just look as a straight man", which led him to being able to conceal his sexual identity at certain times (CT 11). Indeed, many of the participants, in both groups, noted how they hid their sexuality in various social contexts to avoid people "victimising you. […] For your own safety I think it's good to" (Star, PTA 15). Simon and Republican, both university students, suggested that while they did not go to great lengths to intentionally hide their sexuality any more, they had done so in the past, to avoid unwanted attention. Where concealment fails shouts of "moffie"[71] follow (The King, CT 12), and alterity is turned into a spectacle (Top, CT 11; The King, CT 20).

This, as almost any LGBTI individual would be able to relate to, is not a unique survival practice. Switching and concealment mitigate anxiety to a certain extent, but awareness of alterity produces an anticipation of prejudice. The concealment of sexual subjectivity in the case of the participants was coupled with the recognition that it is advisable to avoid drawing attention to your sexuality *as well as* your national background in South African neighbourhoods (The King, CT 16). Thus, while The King had successfully concealed what would be perceived as his sexual otherness, in terms of his nationality he had encountered difficulties as "they [the police] will know that is a foreigner, first thing. […] So it's a *double thing*, you understand?" (CT 11, emphasis added). Echoing these experiences, Pat expressed that his 'foreignness' and assumed sexual otherness were two embodied qualities that drew inevitable negative attention as a "double thing that you're having on you" (PTA 15). In this regard, a structural double-bind of prejudice is mirrored in the social.[72] The (forced) self-categorisation encountered in engaging with the state manifests in daily life: the embodied threat of being a "double thing" generates uncertainty and draws attention to constant difference.

"I've Seen Things on the Street"

Where the participants had 'successfully' invisiblised their sexualities they had been unable to perform different forms of nationality. This had, in every single discussant's journey, led to varying degrees of social xenophobia. As Star explained about the attitudes of South Africans towards people from other African countries:

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[71] A pejorative word for a gay man, or a man who is effeminate.
[72] Recognising, of course, that 'double-bind' is appropriate for this project, but 'multiple-bind' would be accurate in a wider intersectional consideration – classism, racism and sexism also influence daily life.

> [i]t saddens me a lot. It's definitely a problem. Mainly because we are human beings more than anything else, and wanting to hate the next person because they are not from your country and I...it's just an unacceptable act. [...] Well you know you experience [hatred] depending on the type of people you come across. Some it's so obvious. For example, when it comes to language barrier. You are unable to express yourself eloquently in their language and they automatically want to know where you are from. And should that get to their attention their behaviour towards you will change. [Nodding and agreement from the rest of the group] (PTA 10)

The site of the most pronounced and obvious xenophobia, in the experiences of each of the participants, was with regards to language use in social spaces. This connects to observations made in chapter two, and empirically was most notable in stories about transport hubs and in taxis (which in South Africa are unregulated mini-bus vans, and are the primary means of public transport). Chance advised to "never go in the taxi if you don't speak English" or a local language (CT 29). The consequences of speaking a language that is not one of the official South African languages ranged from being shouted at and told "this is not your home, is not your country! This is South Africa" (Chance, CT 29) to being physically harassed (The King, CT 29). Pat expressed that in these sorts of environments, when speaking a 'foreign' language – or, in his experience, being unable to speak a local language – "you feel like no, this is not my place, I wasn't supposed to be *here*!" (PTA 10, emphasis in audio).

The simmering normalised xenophobia rooted in language use is unavoidable, as Max noted, because even though it is difficult to "know" that he is "a foreigner" based on his appearances and practices, people regularly "pick up with my accent" (PTA 11) which had, in the past, led to varying degrees of hostility. In such spaces, switching into and maintaining a sense of 'African obligations' invites prejudice: the xenophobic displeasure that is expressed by many South Africans on hearing 'foreign' languages is a social force in shaping zones of life (and zones of its absence). The isolation experienced in the assumption that "because that person is black he must necessarily speak a way" (Max, PTA 11) reminds the individual of their exclusion and alterity from social normality and fulfilment of 'life in South Africa', Othering the body beyond the point of already-disprivileged liminality. Of course, while these moments of hostility are unpleasant and psychologically violent (none of the participants encountered escalating physical violence in such contexts), the disregard for the language needs of migrants reinforces structural xenophobia – albeit implicitly. Where day-to-day occurrences in social spaces psychologically police reminders of symbolic death in South Africa, structural neglect can manifest in encounters with literal death and abandonment. The lack of access to translation services, for example, contributed to Delphi's unwillingness to report her rape to the police or the clinic.

Xenophobia, an insipid force of decay, manifests in contexts beyond language use, and is often inescapable. Max sighed that he could only "take one [story] out of thousands experienced" to articulate the "trauma" he had worked through in South Africa (PTA 18). Despite migrating to the country for "work, visit and freedom" Pat declared that life "is not easy, because we see things. I thought it was going to be easy, but it's not. […] I've seen things on the street – how even the police are treating foreigners on the street – it's not easy, it's not nice. You don't feel safe sometimes" (Narrative 1). The "things on the street" experienced by several participants and their friends contributed to an anxiety surrounding an expectation of normalised "hate towards another foreign national" (Pat, PTA 8; Star, PTA 11).

This anxiety also pervades spaces held as safe, such as those of employment. JuiceBabie, who worked as a hairdresser, witnessed a migrant colleague being attacked in their salon. His colleague wanted to move out of a property she rented from a South African landlady. The landlady, seemingly angry that she would be losing the income, arrived with her boyfriend (a police officer in uniform) and they both set upon his colleague, stabbing her repeatedly. When reporting the case, JuiceBabie was told by the landlady that "we want to show [you] what is xenophobic" (PTA 15) – that is, they wanted to show him and his 'foreign' colleagues what they can do.

(Xenophobic) violence, here, was lauded as a mark of power and pleasure; a tool used to keep migrants in their place. The police did not "take it serious", and largely ignored JuiceBabie's attempts to report the case (PTA 13). Violence, in this way, is a reminder of the result if one fails at concealment and switching – almost an inevitability in contexts where concealment of nationality seems impossible. It was not uncommon for the groups to sympathise with each other about anxieties in the workspace, having all personally encountered, or all being close to individuals who had encountered, hostile attitudes rooted in their national backgrounds.

<u>Disidentification</u>

However, several individuals initially hesitated to use the word "xenophobia" to describe their experiences. I can only speculate as to why this was the case, but I offer two interpretations. The most obvious and personal of these reasons was an unwillingness to paint themselves as victims, or to align themselves with the experiences of friends who had suffered – and died – in the outburst of group violence that rippled through the country, which in turn

shaped the meaning of the term (The King, CT 20-21; Chance, CT 26). A disidentification with xenophobia as a label of prejudice connects to the normalisation of everyday violence.[73]

As we discussed such violence, though, Republican expressed that "the things I count as xenophobic are not just the attacks. It's the general opinion of… If I say I'm from Zimbabwe, what are you going to say next?" (PTA 17). This was echoed by Simon in his explanation that xenophobia encompasses the "inhuman" attitudes and articulations which he regularly resists on social media and at work. The media in South Africa is discussed below, but discussions revealed frustration at how news and social media regularly represent xenophobia as 'xenophobic attacks' – reports on the burning, chasing, and killing of migrants. In this discourse, which fuels the denial of 'exceptional South Africans as xenophobic' and relegates prejudice to isolated incidents, there is a lack of resonance with the everyday. Instead, the acceptance of insipid everyday of xenophobia – acceptance because, as experiences indicate, who do you turn to help end it? – speaks to another interpretation of disidentification: that the initial hesitation over sharing encounters with South Africans stems from being disinclined to rock the proverbial boat in the 'waves' of prejudice that other authors have spoken of.

The unwillingness (arguably rooted in both fear and compassion) to critique local structures and people thus maintains necropolitics. Although the desire to live (Delphi, CT 38) requires steadfast navigation, through threat of retribution (in the forms of violence and deportation) there is a damning undercurrent of understanding and justification of hostility. Max articulated this in the view that:

> I don't think South Africans are bad or nasty or… But you know what? It's also according to what they're going through themselves. And when they are not happy with what is happening, especially those who are in lower classes or who have poverty or whatever, and seeing you, a foreigner… For example, you stop at a petrol station. You're driving. And he doesn't know how to drive. […] [The hostility they express] is not fair. It's not fair. But one must also be at the stage of understanding. That's my point of view. One must also understand. (PTA 11)

Max likened the patience needed in dealing with 'South Africa' in terms of prejudice to that of a gay man 'coming out' to his parents (PTA 11-12). Just as a child coming out recognises the sacrifices a parent has made (and thus tolerates the anger and negativity), and recognises the disappointment a parent may face at 'ruined' prospects of the future, so, too, should a migrant recognise the sacrifices South Africa has made and the uncertainty of the future of the nation. Patience becomes a virtue of the death-world. Aside from being a distinctly nuanced journey of

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[73] See Browne and Bakshi (2013) for a UK-centric exploration of disidentification and normalisation.

coming out, this analogy once again emphasises the role of the state as that of guardian: a figure of willing sacrifice who ultimately has the interests of all its 'children' at heart. By maintaining the illusion that 'one day' the nation will come to accept (LGBTI) migrants, that one day sovereignty will be redefined to include all who live in South Africa just as the constitution once claimed, the promise of life eases the pains of the everyday.

Similarly, Republican, despite having encountered regular prejudice at multiple intersections, noted that "as a Zimbabwean, if I was in Zimbabwe and I was actually proud of my country I would feel the same way" as South Africans feel about 'foreigners': "I would feel like these foreigners are invading my space. So I completely, wholly understand where xenophobic people come from" (Narratives 2). He added, however, that this empathy does not "justify their actions, it doesn't justify what they believe" (Narratives 2). Caught between understanding and condemnation, acceptance and resistance, this attitude of complicity works to contain a self-sustaining liminality, where belonging is dangled as achievable but where aggressive unbelonging is maintained as the status quo.

Star disagreed with this justification, firmly articulating that any prejudice is "completely unacceptable", and that his willingness to seize opportunities presented to him should not in any way be to his detriment (PTA 11). Max and Republicans' positions, however, succinctly echo the recognition that there is no simple cause for xenophobia, as observed in chapter two. Yet the call for empathy binds the figure of the (LGBTI) migrant to a position of sacrifice and blame. Such a position is indefinite, given the multiple roots of prejudice and the ever-increasing hostility in the country. This position also feeds a discourse of exceptionalism and a social mindset of entitlement, whilst simultaneously absolving the government and state structures of responsibility and accountability – a point of contrast with suggestions made in chapter five.

One should note once again the intersectional influence of economic stability: empathy and tolerance were only heralded as possible perspectives within the Pretoria group, all of whom were economic migrants. The group in Cape Town, all of whom were either refugees or asylum seekers, were less forgiving – arguably due to their more frequent encounters with threats of decay in the combined forms of a lack of income, shelter, security, and opportunity. Where anger tempered with reflection and understanding shaped the tone of discussions in Pretoria, unrestrained anger and frustration marked several sessions in Cape Town.

<u>No Escape: Local Communities</u>

Of course, these are experiences that migrants from Africa in general probably encounter in South Africa. What marks the prejudice as more nuanced and problematic, however, is the sense of *inevitability* of daily hostility and its accompanying anxiety. Where migrants may find comfort, solace and community in neighbourhoods of other migrants, the participants' various sexual subjectivities often marked them as outcasts within those communities, too. This was particularly true for the Cape Town group, whose lack of economic privilege was a hindrance to being able to move freely to less aggressive spaces.

Feelings of relative freedom expressed in initial impressions of South Africa sat in tension with regular moments of prejudice directed at sexual otherness. Ms Malawi, whose refuge in South Africa was aided by Amnesty International, noted that the biggest problem for her was "people for my country" (CT 20) – her neighbours in her predominantly Malawian area of Cape Town. The attention given by the media to Ms Malawi's personal journey[74] caused her to be a well-known fighter of "LGBTI people human rights" (CT 13). As a result, she said she was unable to walk through the streets without harassment from her neighbours, who in one particularly vicious attack managed to stab her five times.

The fear of violence from within migrant groups was also a norm for Top, who faced a backlash from his Congolese community after he 'caused' the arrest of the man who murdered his partner (a fact irrelevant to the community as being gay was apparently intolerable in their eyes). In his narrative, the sense of abandonment by the police service under the dismissal of "foreigners!" was replaced by a fear of his own community who tried to kill him (CT 23). Ruwash, who came to South Africa so he could "live [his] full life" as a self-identifying gay man, explained that he was afraid to tell his Zimbabwean community in South Africa about his sexuality, and when they discovered his orientation "it was a hard time" for him, as they just "threw him out" (CT 3; 28). The dangers that migrant communities present in terms of sexuality extend to constructed 'safe spaces' for refugees. Chance escaped the extreme xenophobic violence of 2008 and fled to a refugee camp in Summergreen, where after two days he was chased out as "in Burundi there's no gay" and "[you] can't stay with us, you are gay, we don't want [you]",

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[74] Ms Malawi personally identified as a woman, and preferred the pronoun "her". Her self-identified subjectivity as male, however, came from attention she gained in Malawi, where she was represented in the media as a gay man embroiled in controversy. I refrain from providing a direct link to a report on the matter for ethical reasons relating to identification.

once again flagging the persistent social perspective of the unAfricanness of homosexuality (CT 26).

For many of the Cape Town participants the threat of potential violence was, however, better than the reality of inevitable violence (in their views) in their countries of origin. This 'living death' state is not homogenous in its consistency, but positive experiences contribute to a hegemonic affirmation that life in South Africa can be, if not good, then tolerable – or better than the alternative. Indeed, Ms Malawi shared how the police came to her community after being contacted by her neighbours, who were hoping to have her arrested under the accusation of "Ms Malawi is a moffie, moffie!" The police told her accusers that, "[y]ou is a foreigner. This is South Africa, is not a Malawi" (CT 19).

This glimmer of hope was, evidently, shrouded in a xenophobic dismissal of the practices and beliefs of 'the foreigners', who should have known better than to bring such attitudes into South Africa. My intention is not to frame this as wholly pessimistic, as officials who promote social tolerance and peace should be celebrated. Considering the dynamic between this and the preceding chapter, however, one should remain sceptical of a systemic/social interplay, reflecting on how, for example, the lauding of positive experiences as evidence of exceptionalism or inclusivity works to fuel discourses of denialism or exclusion. Despite Roda's successful journey of acquiring a refugee passport and relative positive experiences in Cape Town, he still noted that "I came [to South Africa] with a lot of inspiration. Then I know that everything will be okay, when I go to South Africa. But, when I came here... Things turned out vice versa. I was expecting things to be different" (CT 8).

Seeking Solidarity to Escape Prejudice

Homophobic and xenophobic encounters are widespread and normalised. Experiences of the 'double prejudice' had led to a deep mistrust of the leadership in South Africa, which fuelled a sense of isolation. While both groups expressed a desire for South Africans, and the government, to become more tolerant and helpful, they also expressed a more urgent need for solidary and support from other LGBTI individuals (an important theme I explore on an imaginative level in chapters seven and eight).

Just as many participants felt abandoned by their migrant communities, so too they felt abandoned by a sense of local 'LGBTI community'. Chapter one explores the dynamics which have contributed to the lack of a coherent LGBTI community, but in the face of prejudice in heteronormative South African society the participants felt disappointed that navigating life was

not aided by a collective solidarity. Men in Cape Town, for example, spoke of a friend who was sick and had not received assistance, despite attempts to get support from "LGBTI members", a phrased regularly repeated, leading to his eventual death in Ms Malawi's house (CT 44). Chance and Top lamented that they had no resources to bury him or to send his body back home. The anticipation of violence and loss caused a sense of "LGBTI foreigner, we are lost. […] I never see any help for LGBTI, I never see any help" (Chance, CT 43) and that "we [LGBTI people] don't love each other" (Ken, CT 44).

Of course, such feelings may be shared by LGBTI South Africans. The marker of distinctness, however, is a grim personal realisation of the general lack of care from the state and society. While personal encounters with the actual death of close friends exacerbates a growing sense of unbelonging and isolation, more frequent encounters with prejudice within the 'LGBTI community' contribute to necropolitics. Here the intersection of race (through a South African understanding) played an important role, as Republican noted. As a partner in a multi-racial relationship, his experiences of racism were abundant. This extended to supposed 'safe spaces' for gay men, such as the popular gay nightclub Babylon, where a (white Afrikaans) couple aggressively asked Republican's partner if he is "colour-blind" (inferring a disability, rather than a positive political affirmation) (PTA 20). The racism and classism that pervades the South African landscape filters into LGBTI spaces, wrought by the parallel histories of apartheid discussed in chapter one, drawing the observation from Top that other "gay people, they have a problem" with migrants (CT 10).

In these moments of hostility, where complete avoidance of prejudice is impossible and social navigation depends on varying combinations of luck, switching, complicity and economic privilege, questions of home are inevitably triggered again. Frustration with the state, as the epigraph of this chapter captures, flow into frustrations with South African society, and 'home' becomes imbued with a necropolitical quality. It offers the promise of life, the promise of improvement, and through this prejudice becomes normalised and tolerated. The socialised notion that "I *should* belong" in South Africa (Max, PTA 23, emphasis in audio) renders home as transitory and community as fragilely imagined.

The Media: A Landscape of Lived Journeys

There is, of course, liberatory potential in such rendering. One may begin to consider how feelings of home, subjectivity and belonging are entrenched in the social, transcend the physical and flow into journeys of the imagination. Chapter seven is dedicated to unpacking (hopeful) imagined journeys, which are – of course – rooted in lived everyday journeys. However, these

links are best rendered visible by tracing out some key engagements with the media, which was identified as playing a key role in social experiences of South Africa. The media, in both technology and text, is an extension of the necropolitical everyday: it is an aspect of life which connects, amplifies and distorts flows of both structural and social (dis)empowerment, and aids and hinders strategies of survival. The participants' use of the media thus marks an important point of transition.

Media Contextualisation

In the wider African context, media artefacts and institutions have played a (sometimes contentious) role in shaping "all new popular cultural forms" (Barber 2009: 3). Mass communication has been crucial in developing socialities across the continent (Zeleza 2009: 19), and media commodities have functioned "seminally as agents of socio-cultural change" (Narunsky-Laden 2011: 174). Of course, the media are formative in all contexts – to varying degrees – but in African states, despite there being no homogenous body of 'African media', both international and local media are highly influential (Hyde-Clarke 2001: 83). Marked by a general continental friction between governments and independent producers, media in Africa are often the sites of contestation about "citizenship, identity and democratic participation [...] against the background of accelerated globalization, the colonial legacy of imposed ethnicities, political transformations and economic struggles" (Wasserman 2011: 14). The media in South Africa are not exempt from this trend, where its role remains associated with "imaginative identification[s]" and shifts in sociality, playing a role in establishing – and disrupting – what "it means to belong to society" (Barber 2009: 9).

In relation to the general South African media landscape, the successive ANC governments have been concerned with the role of the media in "nation-building" or social development (Horwitz 2001: 283). This perspective, which suggests that media "should augment and assist, not criticize and disparage, governmental efforts" (*ibid*) is not violently enforced but it plays a predominant role in shaping governmental policy (as referenced briefly in chapter one, in the example of Zanele Muholi).[75] Although "monopolistic control of communications" characterised the apartheid media (Berger 2011: 355), and the ANC remained committed to the ideal of freedom of the press, since 1994 there has been an "increased involvement by government in communications policymaking, and a decline in participatory opportunities and processes" (332). Horwitz (2001) suggests that a "negotiated liberalisation" defined the 1990s,

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[75] This also speaks to African concerns with the 'cultural imperialism thesis' – see Barber (2009: 3); also Louw (2011).

and Berger shifts this to suggest a "managed liberalisation" shapes the media in contemporary South Africa (2011: 352). This inherent contradiction, between a governmental desire for greater control over the media in the 'spirit' of nation-building and "political self-interest" (353) and a relaxation of restrictions, produces a "contested terrain" of ownership, representation, production and consumption in terms of both 'mainstream' and 'new' media forms (354; also see Hyde-Clarke 2010 for a collection on shifting roles).

In this way, a consideration of media use in the lives of LGBTI migrants pulls together questions of structural and societal prejudice, and lived journeys, speaking to how media technologies and representations may "enhanc[e] the role of the imagination in social life" (Barber 2009: 3; also Appadurai 1996). Providing a full history of the media in South Africa is beyond the scope of this thesis.[76] However, I offer here brief 'snapshots' of key contemporary forces which framed discussions of the participants' engagements as they related to mediated understandings of (un)belonging. I the next section I continue to trace journeys within society with specific reference to formative qualities of aspects of the South African media landscape. I do not attempt to analyse how the South African media landscape as a whole may contribute to homophobia and xenophobia. Instead, I focus on the participants' own use of the media. Reflecting on their experiences, representations and social media networks reaffirm a socially 'enforced' disconnect between sexual and national subjectivities, and through the mediation of prejudice contribute to necropolitical uncertainty about one's place in the country.

'Traditional Media' Use and Representation

I initiated discussions of the media in South Africa with a focus on more 'traditional' and 'mainstream' forms – that is, broadcast and print media. Television and radio[77] remain the most popular media in the country, with 91.8% and 91.5% of the population having access to each, while newspapers have a reach of 43.8% (OMD 2016). Access to content in general varies greatly depending on economic and geographic factors, and the free-to-air public television broadcaster channel SABC 1 has the highest number of viewers on average (*ibid*). The SABC offers four television channels (as well as nineteen radio stations), and the most popular digital satellite pay station, DStv, offers over 100 commercial channels – yet has a reach of almost half the number of viewers than SABC 1 (due, in part, to infrastructure reach and cost factors) (*ibid*). The reliance

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[76] For an accessible 'crash course' in the history of the media in South Africa see Wigston (2007).

[77] See Bosch (2011) for the role that radio continues to play in fostering democratic participation.

by most people in South Africa on the SABC for media content is problematic given its reputation as a mouthpiece of the ANC, rather than an objective state broadcaster (Mail & Guardian 2014).

Television was identified by the participants as the primary form engagement with mainstream media. In both groups the SABC remained the main site of focus for considering screen-based representations. An enthusiastic discussion in Cape Town noted that a range of television content attempted to show what 'gay life' in the country is like.[78] Ken expressed that this was an attempt by the SABC to "make it look as if we… Look us like we are welcome in society" (CT 38) – we as *gay men*, he noted, as "in terms of foreigners" there were no shows of which he was aware that attempted to educate or provide a sense of solidarity (*ibid*). This should not suggest that the South African media have not undergone transformation, or that mediated projects and texts which challenge the status quo do not exist (see, for example, Lynch and Morison 2016; Harvey 2012; Richardson 2008). On a participant-level of exposure, however, both groups had a sense of isolated representational liminality: when thinking about representations of sexuality and nationality *together*, none of the participants could come up with a positive example.

In terms of sexuality, the positive engagements the participants had had with LGBTI figures in media texts (who were not African migrants) was balanced by a sense that many of these figures were neutralised, rarely having been given their own romantic connections or detailed plot lines – a familiar observation hardly unique to the South African context (Doty and Gove 1997). For The King, however, this contributed to his sense that "most of the gay people they're [still] trying to find where do they fit" (The King, CT 37). Media texts, in this way, may function as a necropolitical tool. This journey to find a sense of (unobtainable) belonging-through-media emerged in the Pretoria workshop, where the higher economic status of the participants extended engagement to subscription television.[79] Star identified the 1987 film *Maurice* as a text regularly screened on television, and Steve noted that *Boys Don't Cry* (1999) was consistently aired on SABC channels.

Broadcasting these films is considerably cheaper than producing local content, and although the participants felt that "they don't really get to the core of the nitty grittys" of being LGBTI in South Africa (Star, PTA 33) one may critically acknowledge at least a tokenistic attempt by the SABC and other media producers to showcase a variety of subjectivities. Of course, that

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[78] Including *Muvango* (SABC 2) and *YoTV* (SABC 1).
[79] Additional content mentioned included Simon and I, Call Me Kuchu, After Nine, Shift, Ashes to Ashes, Skeem Saam.

a film about life in Britain and another about violence in small-town USA may be used to facilitate an engagement with LGBTI life in South Africa (problematically) flows into transnational understandings of belonging and connection.[80] More local texts were, however, considered useful tools for selectively educating others about aspects of life as LGBTI individuals. Republican encouraged his parents to watch the soap-opera *Generations* (SABC 1), which provoked considerable controversy when it featured a brief kiss between two men (MambaOnline 2009), to help them get "around the idea" of him being a (self-identified) homosexual (PTA 32).

It would have been easy to allow the conversations about LGBTI people and media representations to continue for several hours. The conversation about (LGBTI) migrants was, in contrast, short lived. Beyond minor representations of African nationalities in television series, soap operas and the occasional film, both groups felt that "the media doesn't talk too much about foreigners" (The King, Top and Chance, CT 36) outside of news reports about xenophobia. This, of course, should not be considered full spectrum engagement with all media sources. Referring primarily to television, the participants had mixed exposure to other sources, for various reasons, and encounters with print media were limited.[81] In all of this, however, a frustration expressed by many of the participants was that in terms of relatability to their own senses of self, they felt representations were limited to stereotypes and familiar cultural assumptions. Commenting on South African news and television content Daniel felt that:

> When they're selling this whole image to society and to the world they never paint us out as victims. […] Foreigners as victims. Gay people. I've never really seen a sort of media-issued thing where we are represented as victims, or even just as *normal* people. There's always this story, or stereotype, that they kind of bring into whatever message they're trying to send out. (Daniel, Solo 20)

Daniel referred to a day-to-day mediascape in which neither LGBTI people nor foreign people are presented as complete individuals capable of myriad experiences and emotions. It is "never a positive sort of view (Daniel, Solo 20).

Although Daniel's perspective reinforces homonationalist arguments, which I critique in chapter seven, it gives insight into how the media landscape at once engages with projects of 'democratic representation' *and* reinforces the sovereignty of the nation by emphasising mostly static identities. Of course, one should remain wary about any project that does claim to 'fully' speak for a social group. In recognising the participants' desires for increased relatability in the

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[80] See Pullen's (2012) collection for an exploration of transnational identity specifically in relation to various media texts.

[81] Smith (2011), however, concludes that the print media in South Africa have historically been xenophobic, but have stopped short of being complicit in xenophobia violence.

media – which perhaps translates as a functional intervention to increase access and exposure to existing content – caution must be taken not to assume that "representational politics" (Wahab 2016: 711) is an endpoint for democratic belonging (particularly as South African LGBTI individuals, and heterosexual migrants, may not find themselves as gestalt figures represented in the media). The emphasis of defused and non-critical sexual assimilation strategies is often on visibility, representation and inclusivity. These are at the expense of considerations for the intersecting inequalities that arise from and ultimately "anchor" such "transnational discursive circuits" (689). Media texts which germinate from such "demand[s] for visibility" connect to existing structures and infrastructures and risk perpetuating a very narrow (broadly politically acceptable) definition of inclusion (696).

Yet in terms of content, the tension between 'seeing' oneself/one's journey in the media landscape and the recognition that "it's not me" (Republican, PTA 27) echoes dynamics of a social life-world. Identifiable texts act as guides that seem to provide hope, in the form of relatability and imagined connection, but whose ambiguity is an effective tool for maintaining liminal suspension.

'New Media' Engagements

Conversation shifted to 'new' internet-related media. To contextualise this discussion, 45.5% of people in South Africa have access to the internet (OMD 2016). A key underlying technology for the increased access to the internet is the rise in the use of mobile phones, which significantly structure contemporary social life in the country (Chuma 2014: 398). Chuma notes the general consensus that mobile phones, more than any other technology, have the potential to accelerate continental development (2014: 399-400), but also acknowledges the barriers of access in relation to this media. Indeed, one should be cautioned against dismissing the impact of mobile forms, as well as against glorifying it as the saviour of democratic participation (Chuma 2014: 400; Dlodlo and Dhuru 2013: 330; Steenkamp and Hyde-Clarke 2012: 96). Each of the participants had their own mobile phone with internet connectivity (some, mostly in the Pretoria group, had smart phones), but in discussions they identified the high cost of data as one of the barriers to connecting with each other and with services which provide online information (The World Bank 2016; Smillie 2016).

Although mobile and internet-related media forms in general have "not replaced traditional norms of socialisation" (Chuma 2014: 398) they have been increasingly used to engage with political parties (Steenkamp and Hyde-Clarke 2012: 98), comment on social life, and mobilise social resistance (Dawson 2012) – particularly through the use of social media. The

participants noted that social media, accessed primarily through mobile phones, played an important role in their lives. Indeed, over the last several years there has been a rapid increase in use of social media in South Africa in general, with Facebook being identified as playing a particularly important role for communication, information and entertainment (Dlodlo and Dhuru 2013; Steenkamp and Hyde-Clarke 2012).[82] Each participant had an account with the site, and they also identified WhatsApp as a key social network.

Just as the participants had to juggle revealing aspects of their subjectivity in everyday corporeal life (through switching and concealment), so too did they manage online articulations. Social media was identified universally as a site of both homophobia and xenophobia, some of which was directed specifically at individuals and some of which was ubiquitous and contributed to wider social hostility. Examples varied: on Facebook groups dedicated to Zimbabweans in South Africa JuiceBabie found homophobic comments about a photo that surfaced of two men kissing (PTA, 30); Republican had students in Pretoria create a meme of him kneeling with a rose in front of Robert Mugabe with the caption "worse than pigs and dogs", making direct reference to Mugabe's comments about gays and lesbians (*ibid*); Max was harassed by a pastor in South Africa, who posted threads about him and his "sinful" lifestyle (*ibid*); Pat, and several others, received a message that "a train full of a thousand Zulus is coming at you to butcher you", that "get ready, they're coming to you" (PTA 29); The King was sent a home-made video that showed how 'foreigners' come to South Africa to beg and steal food (CT 39).

This sense of uncertainty about belonging[83] and acceptance in South Africa was fuelled by shared stories about the negative perspectives of leaders (Steve, PTA 30). Yet despite these regular lashings of mediated prejudice social media was still held as a tool for potential empowerment:

> I had once on Facebook a friend who asked me, "where do you get the guts to come out?" And he said, "you did it because you are out of the country [the DRC]." And I thought, 'okay, you are right' – it's much easier for me, maybe. Maybe when, if I was still in the country it would not be as easy as it was. So ja… Maybe it's a bit easier for a foreigner to go to the media or whatever, to come out. (Max, PTA 33)

Mirroring everyday interactions in society, there was a distinct tension between the hope for social solidarity and continued community that social media offers, and a wary suspicion of other users. Delphi noted how many 'LGBTI foreigners' are afraid to share their narratives, particularly

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[82] By 2016 Facebook was the most popular social media site in the country. Of its 14 million users, 10 million accessed it through their phones (World Wide Worx 2016).

[83] Of course, such 'cyber bullying' is not uniquely South African. See, for example, Pullen's (2014) collection on media cultures for various accounts of social media and victimisation.

online, worrying that they will be identified and lose their jobs or be victimised in their communities (CT 28). However, beyond this, she noted that those who *have* shared their journeys get "use[d] for nothing" (Delphi, CT 40): that a sense of empowerment and opportunity that may come from sharing content on social media, or via other mediums, vanishes when such sharing amounts to nothing but spectacle. The Cape Town group noted how social media had been used to share stories about the plights of LGBTI migrants in Africa, and how journalists and media producers had previously interviewed some of them for various social media channels. In this, the lack of social support and continuing anxiety about survival in South Africa fed a view of the media as a potential tool to improve daily life, and as a tool to make grassroots activist voices heard. However, there was the bitter sensation that "because we are poor" (Roda, CT 40) social media users "are using our mind" (Top, CT 40) with no feedback and no positive outcome.

<u>Media and Social Journeys</u>

These flows produce a complex and evolving social/media landscape. Traditional media forms have been "lambasted for their sensational content, homophobia and xenophobia" (Wasserman 2011: 2), but have also been hailed as microcosms of "political discourses […] where access to the mainstream media or participation in political debate remains the preserve of the elite" (2-3). Social media, as the participants identified, plays a role in providing a sense of support, but also act as platforms through which one may experience open hostility. In this interplay, as an extension of the everyday, there was a sense of subjective absence and negotiated confrontation with normalised prejudice. Such lived and mediated 'violence' generates uncertainty about one's place in South African society.

This resonates with what Berlant (2007) terms "slow death", levelled partly as a critique against necropolitics, which Berlant views as too dedicated to "traumatic events" (2007: 759). As a component of her concept 'cruel optimism', *slow death* occurs "in temporal environments whose qualities and whose contours in time and space are often identified with the presentness of ordinariness itself, that domain of living on, in which everyday activity; memory, needs, and desires […] are brought into proximity" with abandonment, violence, and decay (*ibid*).

Although Berlant differentiates this, in the context of this project it fuses with an adopted perspective of necropolitics in South Africa as much a force of the *ordinary* as the extraordinary. Working from a vista of both the present and the future, from a lived cultural studies engagement rather than a psychoanalytic perspective on materialism, these concepts are not incompatible. The fear and anticipation of homophobia and xenophobia in everyday social spaces, and (mediated) journeys through this prejudice, contributes to a "physical wearing

out" (Berlant 2007: 754) which comes to partly define LGBTI migrants. Slow death here, then, is the "increased susceptibility to premature death" (Haritaworn *et al* 2014: 7) through the poisoning of memory, the corruption of accountability, the decay of tolerance, the deformation of mediation, and the distortion of social acceptability. This is the malformed heart of living death, and it reveals itself in prying open engagements with the media.

The media, in this way, plays a role in shaping life and the zones of its absence. The mainstream invisibility of journeys of LGBTI migrants (at least in terms of the media that the groups had been exposed to, and the media of which I am aware) speaks to a lack of intersectional understanding of the experiences of such individuals, but also to a practice of neglect by the government. Caution must be taken so as not to be reductive in terms of assigning media either absolute power or unsubstantiated blame. Instead of making broad conclusions about media responsibilities, then, the engagements with media that I have introduced should highlight the uncertainty of life – in terms of belonging, community, recourse, and structural support.

More importantly, however, the engagements begin to reveal imaginative strategies for potentially *enabling* life: the media were identified as sites for change and intervention, which I discuss in chapter eight. In response to the frustrated question of "[w]hat does South Africans people *know* about what is happening outside?" (Max, PTA 28, emphasis in audio), that the mainstream media should play a role in educating society about the existence of LGBTI people (Roda, CT 36), or that social media should be used by official state institutions to inform South Africans about the journeys of (LGBTI) migrants, were popular opinions. In this the media is problematically positioned as a saviour, but there is merit in considering media technologies and texts as conduits for enabling change, particularly in terms of the suggestion that "the government must *actively* pump information about how it feels, right, on these issues. [...] I want to see something there which says 'South African government wholly and fully supports and enforces the rights of...' Ya" (Republican, PTA 31, emphasis in audio). In this suggestion mainstream and social media play a role in facilitating positive social journeys, paradoxically extending the idea of 'nation building' to *beyond* the existing necropolitical nation.

Such enthusiasm is, I fear, unlikely to bring about change, given that it would position (state) media institutions as active guardians of the population group which ideologically threatens its sovereignty, much like those structures identified in chapter five. Existing representations and limited social media use foster a lingering hope, however, which maintains enough (necropolitical?) faith that an inclusive life in South Africa is possible. Max lamented

that, considering the educative role he felt the media plays, producers and programs do not make enough effort to 'reach out' to help create a mediated space "that you can feel, 'okay I'm not alone'. You know? Already by feeling that I'm not alone it makes you feel safe. It doesn't solve all the problems, but you know it makes you feel okay" (Max PTA 34). And yet an underlying fear that such an assertive approach would be "forcing it on people", despite "a very long journey" ahead, perversely complemented this positive outlook, shifting guardianship of society onto those already in a death zone (Star, PTA 32).

(Re)Imagining Life

In such spaces of lived uncertainty and anxiety the participants revealed how media engagements were used to question ideas of home, self and quality of social life in South Africa when compared to lost moments and impossible alternatives. The tension, for the refugees and asylum seekers, between wanting to be in South Africa with a hope for protection, and the inability to go 'back home'; the interplay, for the economic migrants, between opportunities envisioned, and the hostility which emanates from the guardians of such promise; and the oscillation for 'LGBTI foreigners' between being outraged at the treatment received in South Africa, and having to reconcile oneself to the inevitability of inescapable daily prejudice – these refracted intersections fuelled discomfort in conceptualising South Africa as a space of life:

> [i]t bothered me when people say 'I feel at home 100%, I feel at home' [in South Africa], but physically they don't feel at home. Because to say you feel at home is when life is okay with you. That is home. Where you are valued. […] So if you can now say you feel at home but still you are feared with your lifestyle, so afraid… (Ken, CT 48)

There was a sense that greater (mediated) engagement with society would contribute to deeper senses of home, contribute to broader social acceptance, and diminish the fear that Ken mentioned. Again, this should not be read reductively: 'the media' is not a homogenous entity, and 'it' is not a social panacea. What this speaks to, instead, is its perceived ability to help facilitate social relationships and interactions – that the media holds potential to offer support.[84]

In this one may begin to identify hope as a re-emerging component of social life in South Africa. This theme materialises as a strong undercurrent in chapters seven and eight, and it is rooted in visions for the future. Recognising the "challenges inherent in sustaining the critical imaginaries and projects" of the nation (Haritaworn *et al* 2014: 7) is thus dependent on considering less tangible components of life in South Africa. The participants' frustrations with

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[84] Indeed, this project is taken up by other researchers – see, for example, Talmor (2013), who provides insight into local efforts to utilise the media to facilitate queer senses of belonging.

existing representations and mediations, and their suggestions for alternatives, provide a segue into discussing transnational influences on their subjectivities which combine with everyday experiential manifestations as a part of "the perplexing dissolution of the African subject" (Nyong'o 2012: 45).

What this all therefore speaks to is a concluding observation that LGBTI migrants operate in a system where what occurs in the idealised constitutional image of South Africa does not manifest on daily social levels. Because of this, the success of navigating every life – both the structural and the social – depends on who one speaks to and how one performs, represents and mediates oneself. Through a queer necropolitical approach we may understand that LGBTI migrants exist in spaces where the intersectionality of their lives is ignored by day-to-day statehood, and where homophobia and xenophobia are normalised and socially anticipated, despite survival strategies of concealment and switching. As a result, they live in a protracted necropolitical state, a death-world, where they hope society will do good by them but where uncertainty ultimately reigns supreme. This uncertainty, mirrored in engagements with media, frames a point for further consideration, namely the imaginative dimension of everyday life. The next chapter will weave together questions of community, subjective definition and continental belonging. Through this I will render tendrils of life visible, and give shape to strategies for resisting South African antagonism.

Chapter Seven

Imagined Journeys

I know what you want. You want a story that won't surprise you. That will confirm what you already know. That won't make you see higher or further or differently. You want a flat story. An immobile story. You want a dry, yeastless factuality.

(*The Life of Pi*, Martel 2009: 302)

Chapters five and six pried open some of the day-to-day lived journeys of the participants – structural, social and mediated. I argued that the disconnect between the image of South Africa and the experiences of everyday life manifests as a necropolitical death-zone for LGBTI migrants. I concluded by noting that lived journeys importantly have an imaginative dimension. Focusing on this, this chapter is about suturing together these connected aspects of everyday life. This chapter traces how queer necropolitics can be applied to those journeys of the mind – perceptions, self-understanding, and imaginative navigation.

As merely conceptually suggested in chapters one and two, this chapter empirically demonstrates, through relying on the bodymaps produced by the research participants, how LGBTI migrants psychologically grapple with being both LGBTI and African (part one). I suggest that the dual processes of switching and melding, explored in chapter six, force a negotiation with the meanings Africanness and 'queerness'. These processes are necropolitical, but also have the effect of imbuing transnational terms with new, localised meanings (part two). I argue that through these re-imaginings the participants reveal moments of solidarity and community. In this a bubbling sense of hope emerges, which gives shape to what I term 'African Queerness/Queer Africanness' – a specific interplay between sexuality and transcontinental existence. I position this critical concept as a seepage of life (part three). This frames the final discussion on interventions in chapter eight.

A Note on Imagination

Halberstam, describing the transgender gaze in *Boys Don't Cry*, reflects on how a particular scene in the film uses cinematic techniques to facilitate a sutured "utopian vision" (2001: 294). The techniques simulate an "alternative vision of time, space and embodiment" (*ibid*), linking the imagination to escape and fantasy. For Halberstam this comes partly from the balance between "a willingness to see what is not there" and "a refusal to privilege the literal over the figurative" (*ibid*). The privileging of the literal over the figurative as a familiar social expectation is evident in the epigraph, from Yann Martel's *The Life of Pi*. In this quote the eponymous

character Pi, having been rescued after 227 days trapped at sea on a lifeboat with a Bengal tiger, explains to investigators that he realises he is expected to produce a familiar, easily-digestible story. The investigators find his tale of survival with a wild animal too strange and too unfamiliar to believe. Providing them with two equally possible, though vastly different, stories, Pi enforces a realisation that it is ultimately up to the men, and the reader, to choose the *better* story. You may find one of the stories more difficult to believe, but this factor alone does not make it untrue. This story requires more imagination, but the act of imagining does not strip away reality – it rather allows one to perceive, appreciate and live with the complexities of life.

A "dry, yeastless" description of everyday journeys provides factuality – homophobia and xenophobia occur in South Africa; you are African; you are gay. This is a privileging of the literal. Imagination, however, is needed to pry open the meanings of these experiences – to balance an acknowledgement of the literal with the figurative. If prejudice exists, how are subjective categories appropriated within these experiences? What are the possibilities for the future? How can life be achieved?

My use of 'imagined', therefore, does not mean 'untrue' or 'unreal'. In Halberstam's example the film never actualises the figurative. In the case of this thesis, however, the participants continually imagine – and enact and choose – alternative ways of surviving and navigating the everyday. Of course, elements of imagining or perceiving permeate all aspects of writing this thesis: I imaginatively position myself in relation to the subject matter; the participants, in their narration of their experiences on the way to and within South Africa, re-imagine their journeys; and the methods to record stories required conscious imagining. 'Imagined journeys', however, refers to those affective paths which give meaning and understanding to the everyday.

Imagination is the tool with which participants, and the reader, choose the 'better story': it is the mental negotiation of subjective resonance, the creation of new (personalised) meanings within prescriptive social structures, and the embodiment of alterity to both escape *and* remain grounded in reality. Imagined journeys are those processes of coming to perceive identity categories and social pressures in particular ways; those collective travels of envisioning what spaces and chosen labels *could* mean and *can* signify. In other words, the focus on the 'imagined', here, is to evoke a realm of possibility and empowerment. To imagine is to create, to conjure, to invent, to fantasise, and to escape death.

This employs the image of hope as a response to a focus on the pragmatic "politics of here and now" (Muñoz 2009: 10). This is made explicit in chapter eight, but it underpins my use

of 'imagined' here.[85] I introduce it now to clarify how, in the synthesis of necropolitics and queer theory, intersectionality and historical reflection, past and present, Africanness and nationalism, hope is made explicit. Imagination acts as a bridge between death and life; it is that threshold space between the dualities of the world and carries with it redemption through internalised empowerment. Imaginings are trajectories along which catalysed hope may flow – trajectories which lead to fresh ideas of community and solidarity, invisible in the world of the yeastless and literal.

Part 1 – Re-Imagining (un)Africanness

Nationality: Beyond Diasporas?

Recognising the lack of resonance with mediated representations of their intersectional subjectivities, as discussed at the end of chapter six, I used the participants' visual bodymaps as an anchor in discussions about their senses of self. 'African' was the subjective label with which participants most universally self-identified, and I discuss this below. A few individuals, however, mapped out a sense of national belonging or affiliation.

In the Cape Town group Chance, Ruwash, Roda and Top all framed their national backgrounds as explicitly important. For Chance, the placement of "from Burundi" in his head echoed his regular reflections on home and how he cannot return. Ruwash's placement of "proudly Zimbabwean" at his feet linked to his feeling of being "far from home" (CT 3). The *processes* of such shared identification – which come to define and explain everyday life – are of interest here, potentially mirroring concerns of diaspora studies[86] (Faist 2010: 13; Banerjee 2012: 9). That Roda, who woke at night crying for friends left behind, placed "Uganda" over his heart, as did Top, who repeatedly expressed the desire to return and be an activist in "Congo DRC", speaks to a potential diasporic transcendence of national borders, whilst imaginatively remaining aware of – and reinforcing – such borders. This creates an impression of potential "lateral" connections between people of a similar national background, which is a means for

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[85] Hopes and dreams shape the form of texts such as *The Life of Pi*, as well as many other post-colonial (and queer) texts. Although this is not a review of post-colonialism, post-colonial themes still exist in a subtle, overlapping, influential way. I do not want to diminish the autonomy of the South African people and legislation, and suddenly slipping into a post-colonial framework risks dissipating the blame and responsibility for much of the violence meted out in the country. It is not my intention to be derivative or some form of intellectual tourist, as the role of the imagination is central in many texts. However, this chapter draws on the very trans-disciplinary – very human – notion of hope and 'better futures', supporting cultural and critical theory with the narratives of the participants.

[86] Although this thesis does not adopt a diaspora studies perspective, see Banerjee *et al* (2012), and Baubock and Faist (2010) for debates in this field. See Patton and Sánchez-Eppler (2000) for queer configurations.

engaging with the everyday (Siu 2010: 144). In this, being a "Zimbabwean national" was positioned by Republican as a force outside of his body: an everyday reality which had shaped him and constantly surrounded him in his daily interactions, but something in which he "didn't have a choice" (PTA 1). Pat, like Top and Roda, placed "Congolese" over his heart – not identifying specifically with the DRC, but rather with the wider region.

However, that some of the participants expressed a sense of national connection should be read alongside a key point from chapter six: migrant communities/diasporas in South Africa may reject individuals on the basis of their sexuality, as shared in the narratives of Ms Malawi, Chance, Max, Top, Ruwash and Republican. In Pretoria, therefore, although JuiceBabie located "Zimbabwean" over his heart, he expressed a sense of personal pride at having triumphed over those from his home country and local Zimbabwean community who mocked his sexuality.

This potentially speaks to a limit of the diaspora (and to attempts to foreground national belonging). One may regard, for example, Ms Malawi's neighbours' rejection of her sexuality as an attempt to form a sense of national 'wholeness' rooted, firstly, in the idea that 'homosexuality' is un-Malawian and, secondly, in the desire to preserve a sense of unity as a means to cope with the xenophobia of South African society. This reveals, from an intersectional perspective, the precarious position that LGBTI migrants are in. Similarly, to read migrants as inevitable members of national diaspora also invisibles those imaginings which situate them as deprived of, or removed from, all senses of national connection. For Daniel this manifested as a lack; that despite his family being from the DRC "I think that I don't consider myself, which is very disturbing, I don't consider myself a Congolese person any more, you know? […] I don't consider that I belong anywhere" (Solo 3).

Varying negotiations of one's place in wider national frameworks thus flowed into deeper considerations of one's place on the continent in general. For many of the participants the upheavals of transnational migration were made easier with an understanding that "[f]or me I think Africa is my home. I always love Africa, cause I'm an African. I used to say that wherever I go, whether it's Zimbabwe, South Africa, Congo, Zambia, Kenya, Nigeria, it's Africa, and I'll make it my home" (Pat, Narrative 1-2); that amidst anxieties about life in South Africa one "was still in Africa" and therefore would find a place (Pat, PTA 9).

Continental Affiliation: Being "Of Africa"

Both groups expressed a deep, visceral connection to the continent – it "is where we belong – that's where we're born, that's why we know best" (Steve, Narrative 1). In this, while

most participants did not use a marker for national identity, a label signifying affiliation with Africa/Africanness was nearly universal across both groups. Despite everyday experiences of prejudice, hope and certainty of finding and having a place on the continent appeared unanimously steadfast. A continental resonance is key in this regard: it surpassed a longing for imagined belonging in South Africa specifically. Daniel's ongoing desire to "be connected to Africa. Not so much South Africa. I think just Africa in general" (Solo 13) reverberated with the Pretoria group (PTA 22). Yet this never shifted to disdain: South Africanness, based on personal experiences, was largely never held as a viable desire in the wake of longing for multi-sided acceptance and the 'aura' of an image of transcontinental Africanness.

Such longing occupies a curious space between necropolitics and diasporic practice. One could speculate that a sense of transcontinental belonging is a response to processes of exclusion from within diasporic communities, as well as from South African society. In this, it potentially functions as a strategy for both preserving life *and* forging community. Yet, it is problematic to regard a sense of being 'of Africa' as a specifically diasporic practice *itself*, and I emphasise instead the importance of a broader intersectional lens. That the notion of "African diaspora" as a category of analysis has facilitated intellectual inquiry into Africanness in various contexts (see Banerjee 2012: 5; also Ndhlovu 2014) is complicated by the obvious fact that (LGBTI) migrants in Africa are still living *in Africa*. I raise this based on the recognition that, in response to a UN call to define 'African diaspora', the African Union[87] (AU) framed it as those "peoples of African origin living *outside the continent*, irrespective of citizenship and nationality and who are willing to contribute to the *development of the continent* and the *building of the African Union*" (Weinar 2010: 79, emphasis added).

As a "category of practice" (Weinar 2010: 74), therefore, reading Africanness through a lens of diaspora studies reinforces necropolitics by placing conditions on disciplinary engagement with subjectivity. Although a degree of similarity exists in that both the AU definition and the bodymaps of the participants imagine a pan-African connection (Weinar 2010: 79), reducing transcontinental identification to a diasporic practice obscures the ways in which death worlds are perpetuated. That the participants were not living outside the continent; were not necessarily invested in the development of the continent and building of the AU (in which some member states take an explicitly homophobic stance on sexuality); and subjectively described sexualities popularly regarded as unAfrican, marked them – and other LGBTI migrants – as excluded from engagement.

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[87] The AU is a continental union of 54 member states. See https://www.au.int/en/history/oau-and-au

The participants embodied a transcontinental sense of belonging which devalued national borders. In this regard, transcontinental connection symbolises inclusive unbelonging without a prerequisite of nationalistic development. From this imaginative perspective, the position of African-outsider-within-Africa facilitates a particular type of narrative: each of the participants' journeys were marked by the fact that the transitory natures of their own belonging had, through both necessity and experience, provoked an almost transcendent view of continent-as-home. Importantly, this did not take an uncritical form for the participants: referring specifically to xenophobia in South Africa, Pat noted that "it's bad. Bad. Just because you are, we are, all Africa. We are all from Africa and we are all Africans" (PTA 17).

This is a subtle, yet crucial, factor in a reworking of Africanness: migration *and* prejudice across the continent forced the participants to grapple with questions of transcontinental belonging in ways which many in society never do. This combination functions as a marker in the emergence of a potentially inclusive, non-nationalistic Africanness. This differentiation is important: for the participants, experiences of prejudice – in 'home' contexts, diasporic communities, and South African society – fuelled a reconfiguration of Africanness-as-home beyond, and independent of, the nation.

That lived experiences may produce new imaginings is an act of political defiance, particularly in the necromantic shadow of South African exceptionalism and indigeneity. Africanness, for Republican, was a given: something inescapable, and a subjectivity which sat alongside his country of birth. JuiceBabie and Simons' bodymaps similarly reflected Africanness as an externalised, surrounding and thus politicised concept. For The King, it was an idea constantly on his mind, key to his understanding of himself, placed alongside "man" and "human". For Max, whose fundamental sense of home was rooted in the continent, "African" was located at his feet, grounding him to being both "international" and "independent".

"The sexuality thing": The Interplay of Africanness and LGBTI-ness

Of course, many people other than LGBTI individuals migrate across Africa and re-imagine ideas of Africanness. However, the intersection of sexuality is central to understanding the ways in which the participants grappled with continental affiliation. The "daily anxiety […] the fear of never knowing what's going to happen" (Daniel, Solo 9-10) in a space where one may feel one "*should* belong" (Simon, PTA 23, emphasis in audio) shakes configurations of Africanness and forces LGBTI migrants to re-imagine the concept beyond what others may consider to be moral or 'essential' – specifically in relation to sexuality.

Sexuality functions as a tool with which to attack (but, as I argue below, also help define), one's Africanness. As Republican reflected, in conversation in social spaces "[m]y nationality doesn't come up. The sexuality thing does" (PTA 22). The tension between sexual subjectivities and African subjectivities was perhaps most vividly captured in Star's bodymap, where he positioned "gay" on one shoulder, "African" on another shoulder, and "depressed" between the two. In this image his sense of continental self was a burden that weighed him down, balanced only by the force of his sexuality. The violent refrain of 'gay is unAfrican' was familiar to each of the participants and something which they had all worked through, or continued to grapple with.

This discourse was often linked to the role that religion played in everyday life. In many ways, the latest 'scramble' for Africa – or rather, a scramble for Africanness – has been in the form of a continental rise of evangelicalism (see Wahab 2016; Thoreson 2014; Nyong'o 2012). The view that homosexuality is akin to "spiritual/moral bankruptcy" (Goltz *et al* 2016: 110) had been encountered in the lives of each of the participants, and although this is not unique to Africa, it has become sutured to predominant discourse of Africanness (Wahab 2016: 692). Religion, as a site which frequently makes explicit the tension between sexuality and Africanness, emerged in the discussions as a force of empowerment *and* oppression.

Narratives of religious hostility in countries including South Africa (Top CT 23; Chance CT 26; JuiceBabie PTA 5; Max PTA 30) were balanced by bodymapping the central role that spirituality played in the lives of Chance, The King, Ruwash, Top, Pat and JuiceBabie. For these individuals, Christianity was linked to their understanding of Africanness. I raise this here to note how the universal hostility encountered in the name of religious opposition to sexual alterity had actively forced the participants to question what it means it 'be' African. Republican noted that "there is a *lot* of things that are unAfrican that we wholly embrace as African. Christianity! [laughter]" (PTA 25, emphasis in audio) and Simon lamented the rendering invisible of pre-Christian sexual identities and practices in Uganda in the wake of colonial missionaries (PTA 6).

Simon's point should carry caution. From one perspective, interpretations of 'colonial religious/homophobic Africa' facilitates, as discussed in chapter one, a "fantasy of a pink and purple Africa in need of rescue from a globally ambitious Christian evangelicalism" (Nyong'o 2012: 45), opening the continent to 'saving' by Western gay-rights groups. From another perspective, imagining the continent as 'infected' by a colonial influence "reactivates" what Wahab calls "Africanist discourses of alterity", tapping into a nationalist and pan-Africanist sense of an "essential, pure, and timeless "African" culture" (2016: 698). Both perspectives ultimately feed into a continental rhetoric of the unAfricanness of homosexuality.

The malleability, as well as volatility, of 'Africanness' is arguably exacerbated when one links social experiences in South Africa to discourses of the state. On a structural level, the liberal, secular legal framework has arguably 'sheltered' the country from extremely influential (trans)continental evangelicalism. Yet, this potentially feeds into the observation in chapter five that South Africa is seen as a space of 'corruption', a nation with excessive freedoms. In turn, one might ask whether South Africa's structural framework excludes it from participating in Africanness as set by a religious view of the continent. This would fuel both a discourse of South African exceptionalism as well as a national anxiety about becoming 'too Western'. Such questions would be best left to a theological thesis, but I suggest they do simmer beneath the surface of everyday life.

Religious discrimination is not limited to LGBTI migrants, but it is a contradictory site for imagining life in this project. In an everyday navigation of necropolitics, the (forced) acts of imagining and re-imagining the interplay between continental subjectivity and sexual subjectivity thus become psychological negotiations with living death, a "cruel" vector of survival (Berlant 2006; 2011). I once again invoke the imagery of Berlant, as such an interplay may be regarded as "significantly problematic" (2011: 24) in that it contributes to the deterioration of thriving (2006: 2) through perpetuating "a scene of negotiated sustenance" (2011: 14).[88] The struggle, for many of the participants, remained ongoing and at once both resolved and unresolved. In this "the conditions of ordinary life in the contemporary world" were "conditions of the attrition or the wearing out of the subject" (Berlant 2006: 23). This produced a slow death which, as positioned in the previous chapter, is the heart of a necropolitical existence.

This manifested as most of the participants identifying as 'African' *and* 'gay', but simultaneously expressing the view that, within a wider social understanding of themselves, one cannot be *both* of these things. In this, identification and disidentification sit together in the liminal space of being an LGBTI migrant as a constant 'switching', as noted in chapter six, – but also, crucially, as a constant *melding*.

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[88] As discussed in chapter six, Berlant's work – specifically in terms of slow death – is, within a wider field, not incompatible with metaphors of necropolitical consideration. I do not raise this here to deeply engage with Berlant's work. Rather, I acknowledge Berlant to indicate an awareness that the flows of hope and life and death come close to mirroring her psychoanalytical approach to optimism. In chapter eight I endeavour to elucidate on potential points of departure in relation to hope, working instead from a more general cultural studies framework.

Switching and Melding: Africanness, Sexuality and Solidarity

To speak to the empirical interplay between switching and melding, I utilised the creative method involving two balls of clay (chapter four). Relating how 'Africanness' and 'gayness' meshed together, Republican shared that:

> I am African. I'm proud of it. I will stand up for my continent. […] [People] they can't comprehend that I am gay. Like not my family, but the people, the general community, they can't comprehend the idea of a gay man. And, well, they do, they hear about it. But it's vilified; it's compared, it's on the same levels as paedophilia and bestiality, and that comes from the strong religious influence in my community per se. […] I can't speak about to another African about it in my area. […] I have my African obligations, my Zimbabwean obligations, and my gay obligations. And usually the two don't meet because […] I need to be completely free and do everything I want to do in any space I feel like in the same way that heterosexuals do *in* Africa, but I can't. So I can't marry the two. (PTA 4-5, emphasis in audio)

He thus held the balls of clay in separate hands, noting how imagining the two merging together could "in some cases" be "life-threatening" (PTA 5). Pat agreed, speaking to the heteronormative expectations placed upon him. He also held his clay separately, noting how he "can't put them together" and yet "I know to myself what to be in the right place, and where to do my things" but that ultimately "I can't do them together" (PTA 5). Said to much nodding and agreement, it echoed sentiment in the Cape Town group where The King, also holding his clay apart, exclaimed that "I think they should be like this. […] Because me myself, I live my own life. […] I tend not to trust anybody. […] It's difficult to be both of those things. African, gay" (CT 6-7).

This psychological switching may be read as an imagined extension of the day-to-day switching engendered by social structures. This component of the clay work demonstrates the ways in which South Africa – as well as Africa in general – refuses to allow for a politics of intersectionality. Although Max, for example, was comfortable with his sexuality on a personal level, being regarded as an (anomalous) 'gay African' would affect his ability to "live as any normal person" (PTA 2). He covered his 'sexuality clay' (for lack of a better term) with his 'Africa clay' and, laughing, insisted that "it's not that I'm hiding my sexuality. […] I'm not lying, but I'm not saying it either. Because I don't want to compromise my chances. […] I don't want to put *myself* under the stress of switching" (PTA 6, emphasis in audio). Acknowledging that being seen as 'gay' would diminish his standing and chances as an 'African', Max nonetheless held both of these subjectivities in his being.

That many refused to bring these aspects together, or tried to but could not, suggests a foreclosure of intersectional possibilities which is operationalised by the State, by society, by

local communities, and – as the next section explores – by Western models of understanding. Of course, personal journeys of negotiating 'gay Africanness' may take different paths. For Simon, who positioned himself as Ugandan and American, the Africa clay was a small ball resting on top of a larger sexuality clay ball. The sides of the sexuality clay 'seeped' into the Africa clay, which was something he had consciously fought for. He noted that "the two can work together because getting to understanding myself, it took me a while. I had to go and read about the backgrounds [of homosexuality in pre-Colonial Uganda] and all that kind of thing" (PTA 6).

Within this act of finding the past there are indications of fostering a mythic pre-colonial image of Ugandanness in order to re-imagine claims to 'true' African heritage in the present. This mirrors exclusionary discourses of Africanness, and so as a long-term process of negotiation is problematic for wider social change. However, what it indicates is that Africanness, as a myth of unification, can also acts as a burden when not re-imagined – as something which weighs you down with responsibility and the threat of exclusion, unless you actively wrestle with transcontinental questions of existential being. JuiceBabie, who wrapped his sexuality clay completely around his Africa clay (almost the complete inverse of Max) illuminated this process of imaginative melding by affirming that "I believe in myself. Though the Africa thing is on my shoulders everywhere you go. Like, they'll be giving you some labels and that stuff. But you should be proud of yourself. You mustn't lose confidence because of someone be sitting next to you" (PTA 5).

Yet, the psychological burden of constantly switching and melding remained a real, and constant, operationalisation of necropolitics. The weight of Africa on the shoulders of JuiceBabie and Star materialised as Roda, Ken, Ruwash and Top moulded their clay. Reflecting on his sense of what it meant to be African, and what it meant to be an 'openly gay' refugee in South Africa, Roda decided that "I'm still keeping them apart. I'm gay, and I'm African. Coming from Uganda because I know my country doesn't accept gays. […I]n Uganda is a Western character, and that's why most of us – we gays – we decided to depart" (CT 6). Out of solidarity for the struggles still faced by "gays" in Uganda he could not merge the two concepts. Ruwash echoed this, lamenting how "in my country they don't want even to hear about the gays" (CT 6), and Top agreed, laughing that "Ya, I'm gay. I'm African. I'm African" but could not place the clay together because he did not know the realities of everyday life in other countries on the continent (CT 7).

Where Simon felt enabled to meld the components through an educative journey, Top, Ruwash and Rodas' clay work suggests a different strategy for preserving intersectional possibility. Their explanations indicate a specific *solidarity*, rooted in their own lived

understandings, which in turn exposes cracks in the illusion of normative journeys. Instead of the familiar (Western) myth of coming out, being secure with one's sexuality, and fighting for 'gay visibility', Top refused to offer a comfortable image of a reconciled sense of self until all spaces in Africa are accepting of LGBTI people; that is, until Africanness becomes socially compatible with sexual otherness. Ken shared a similar, but visually different, sense of solidarity. Merging his clay together he created a small ball of sexuality clay, largely surrounded by Africa clay, and explained that "you can see I am a gay and can see I'm so small. This is Africa, Nigeria, it's bigger – to tell you the *risk* of me being a gay in my country is very high" (CT 6, emphasis in audio). This physicalized the sense that rather than Nigeria or Africa be held as more important factors in life, one should recognise the ongoing struggle for LGBTI Nigerians to claim their place as Africans.

Again, these processes of subjective negotiation are not unique to LGBTI migrants. However, in an already-discussed wider context of negotiating prejudice, the combination of *appearing* as both 'foreign' and 'gay' to South Africans, and of losing a sense of African solidarity amongst migrants from similar backgrounds (Chance, CT 17; Delphi, CT 30), LGBTI migrants regularly engage in imagined re-negotiations of "trying to find where do they fit" (The King, CT 37). And as the affirmations by all the participants that they *were* both LGBTI *and* African confirmed, the act of trying to fit can be 'successful', insofar as one may measure subjectivity in such terms.

As such, although the switching and melding evidenced here points towards how the necropolitics of the nation work to suspend the participants in a death zone, their very survival, despite these mechanisms, is an anomaly within the national project. Their ability to live as LGBTIs *and* Africans *and* migrants, fluidly moving between the 'obligations' of each and psychologically shaping these discourses as compatible within themselves, is an act of life. This hints again to a sense of celebration and the liberatory promise of hope. Within these imaginative flows, we begin to see how sexuality influences a sense of Africanness. The potential for embodying new forms of transcontinental belonging, influenced by encounters with sexual otherness, exist here.

In turn, new forms of Africanness potentially influence understandings of sexuality. However, this is complicated by an intrinsic anchoring of the unAfricanness discourse to the 'Westernness' of sexual alterity, which functions as an agent in the limitation of intersectional possibility and understanding. South Africa, despite its image of being 'beyond race/gender/sexuality', plays a part in an international 'gay rights' discourse – which is "deeply

structured by race" (Wahab 2016: 707; Massad 2002: 361). In this way, as well as many others, the country is not exempt from racialised debates. I flag race here to provide awareness of how imaginings of 'Westernness' feed into imaginings of sexual (un)belonging. Daniel, who held his clay in separate hands, exclaimed that in his experience "the perception that like you can't be homosexual if you are African" stems from "in the words of my cousin, 'it's a white thing, it's not okay for you to be'" (Solo 5). Efforts of reclaim humanity have a tenuous relationship with systems, identities and modes of operation that appear to be 'of the West' or 'a white thing' – a place where people "is living white, like 'white men' lives" (Ken, CT 8).

Such debates arguably form an implicit component of the structural procedures discussed in chapter five. These effectively mark which identifications are "worthy of protection" by the state (Puar 2013b: 337), which are evidently categories tied to a privileging of "identity politics, 'coming out', [and] public visibility" (338). These Westernised trajectories frame how LGBTI migrants negotiate their sexual subjectivities in relation to transnational understandings, as well as into their own perceptions of Africanness. Attention should thus be given to the ways in which the participants defined their sexual selves.

Part 2: Re-Imagining Sexuality

In chapter six I noted that the participants expressed a desire for an increased variety of media representations in relation to their sexualities. The shared desire for this, read as a component of a broader desire for a decrease in social hostility and an ability to reveal their sexual identities without fear, resembles a Gay International-esque image of belonging. This manifests itself in ideas of 'coming out', of being visible – by choice or coercion. On a psychological level, the effect of the necropolitical categorization of sexuality in "very specific terms" – as discussed in chapter five – is that there is seemingly limited scope for "flexibilities and possibilities to expand" (Gunkel 2013: 76), and that the illusion of imaginative inclusion is presented to those who 'fit' accepted understandings "at the expense of the delimitation and expulsion of other populations" (Puar 2013b: 337).

This places South Africa, and those LGBTI migrants who travel to it, in a curious position. Historically, queer academics have argued that "the nation is heteronormative and that the queer is inherently an outlaw to the nation-state" (Puar 2013b: 336). Yet, such reasoning unwillingly produces the same effect as the populist 'unAfrican' rhetoric: there is no room for queers in an African nation. South African exceptionalism, however, incorporates – at least on the surface – an image of acceptance. As Goltz *et al* observe, LGBTI as a term is "imported from the West and is based on identities that exceed acts, requiring individuals to claim a stigmatized

subjectivity" (2016: 116). The stigmatisation is limited, however, by the legal structures in place, and so 'LGBTI' becomes fused (on a limited imaginative level) to an aura of South Africanness.

This, of course, is a form of homonationalism. As I explore how the participants intersectionally imagined their sexual subjectivities, I suggest that neither a homonationalist nor a (Western) queer critique of homonationalism capture the negotiation of being both LGBTI *and* African. Amidst homonationalist assimilation into a discourse of exceptionalism, the participants assigned personal meaning to existing categories whilst simultaneously reconfiguring an imagined sense of community. These create cracks in necropolitics through which seepages of life-imbued alterity may flow.

Processes of Redefining

Homonationalism should be understood as an "analytic category" (Puar 2013b: 336) and an inevitable "facet of modernity" (337) in which certain abject bodies are assimilated into a national project. A 'hegemonic framework for homosexuality', homonationalism refers to the "geopolitical and historical forces, neoliberal interests in capitalist accumulation both cultural and material, biopolitical state practices of population control, and affective investments in discourses of freedom, liberation, and rights" (*ibid*). To reinforce a necropolitical reading, South Africa's inclusion of *certain* rights for *certain* (categorised) citizens is a part of a wider instrumentation of transnational "intelligibility and usefulness" where the neoliberal individualisation of subjects is hailed as a marker of civilization, and thus potential economic partnership (Wahab 2016: 969). Evoking homonationalism in South Africa brings the questions of exclusion and death to the foreground: it flags "how and why a nation's status as 'gay friendly' has become desirable in the first place" from a historical perspective (Puar 2013b: 336).

The desirability of 'gay rights' in relation to a vision of non-discrimination is explored in chapter one. On a broader level, however, homonationalism in South Africa may be regarded as an act of control by the state. The imaginative and structural relegation and regulation of sexual identities to understood, already-assimilated (exceptional) subjectivities ensures the maintenance of necropolitics. In this, one may identify familiar transnational definitions of what it 'means' to be LGBTI. In introducing themselves and mapping their subjectivities, JuiceBabie, Max Pat, Simon, Star, Chance, Ken, Ruwash, Rhoda and Top all used "gay" as a marker for their sexualities. For Ken and many of the others 'gay' is initially understood to mean "same sex. Ya. If you have same sex, like you as a man having sex with a man, or you as a lady having sex with a lady" (CT 4). This was echoed in Pretoria by Star, who exclaimed that the first time he came across the term was reading an article in the media, where he internalised gay to mean "feelings

for the same sex. That's actually where I got the term. And it is commonly used, and I always then identified myself with it. So this is who I am, you know? Knowing that I love other men, that I'm attracted to other men" (PTA 4).

A reliance on the language of Gay International and homonationalism reinforces the legitimacy of the national status quo (see Massad 2002: 385) – and, in this case, the image of South African exceptionalism. The status quo, however, keeps the participants suspended. Subjective resonance with "gay" is a component of homonationalism which assumes predistrictively that homosexuals, gays, and lesbians are universal categories" (Massad 2002: 363), reinforced by the operationalisation of state mechanisms such as Home Affairs and the constitution. Categorical legalistic reassurances explored in chapters one and five pinkwash[89] intersectional realities of everyday life. The promise of sexual (and conditional) national belonging is a tool to placate a demographic which poses serious questions for South African nationalism. It is in the interests of South African necropolitics that identifiable categories be defined and assimilated, as to open a national discourse to a *multitude* of sexual belonging would position 'queer' individuals on the outskirts of social structures. This would subject the mirage of 'nationality' and broader heteronormative Africanness to closer scrutiny. Without the perpetual promise of life, the threat of death may prove to be a driving force for potentiality and radical socio-political transformation.

The idea that one may find a place in South Africa in the form of *protected* sexual subjectivity is an act of conditional reassurance. And yet, through seemingly ignoring questions of Africanness – as rendering transcontinental subjectivity visible would undermine necropolitics –, 'homosexuality is unAfrican' becomes bound to a homonationalist position, further fuelling a binary opposition between 'The West' and 'Africa'. The risk here, of course, is that a reliance on homonationalist strategies may reaffirm a 'threat', in the rhetoric of ardent pan-Africanism, of Western influence and neo-colonialism, in turn "ratify[ing]" the "stereotyped horror" (Nyong'o 2012: 41) of the necropolitical state rather than challenging structures of oppression. Indeed, some of the desires of the participants arguably demonstrate such a reliance. Imagining the future in the form of, say, an increased reliance on the media to educate communities about gay life in South Africa, or on community leaders to hold sessions to inform residents about the rights afforded to all by the Constitution, becomes problematic through a necropolitical lens. These suggestions position rights-focused organisations – groups which

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[89] Pinkwashing refers to state practices of using gay rights for a limited group to distract from policies of discrimination (Puar 2013a: 32).

function within the parameters of the (homo)nation – as "the source[s] of guidance and enlightenment" (Gunkel 2013: 73). By not questioning wider frameworks of reliance the noble interventionist intentions of media organisations, NGOs or researchers may fail to meet a "mandate to challenge and transform the relations of power that operate through migration regimes to generate unequal regimes of living and dying" (Lubhéid 2008: 183). The issue here is, as Gunkel surmises, a danger of "complicity and collaboration", particularly though relying on politics of mediated representation (2013: 77).

One should not regard this point as a placement of blame on the participants. Their desire for freedom should not be arrogantly dismissed by those in positions of privilege as a betrayal of all things queer. Such is the 'nature' of homonationalism that, in asserting one's comparative sexual fluidity and independence, one seemingly has no choice but to rely on the language and structures which fuel prescribed belonging. Max and The King both exclaimed that they did not want their sexual subjectivities to subsume their other subjectivities, and yet both felt that the discrimination experienced in South Africa forcibly visiblised their sexualities *over* other aspects. This, in turn, led to the desire for increased intervention.

The key departure from homonationalist integration, however, as explored in chapters five and six, is that society did not see the participants only as 'gay'. Those *citizens* who do not fit within the scope of homonationalist categories will find themselves as discursively assimilated into a national project by virtue of their birth. LGBTI migrants, however, lack this geoprivileged reassurance. This is a point of disruption, as implications of homogenous identification become disconnected from assumptions of shared *meaning*. In a context where individuals 'switch' between identifiable markers, experiences begin to redefine categorical association. A reading of homonationalism fails to make visible the nuances of *how* 'homosexuality as African' is intersectionally imagined.

This speaks to a key queer critique of homonationalism in that Western theories and strategies for intervention/understanding are unsuitable for engaging with the nuances of everyday life – prompting, in some contexts, suggestions of alternative categories, such as SOGIEM (sexual orientation, gender identity and expression minorities) rather than LGBTI (Goltz *et al* 2016: 116). And yet, this critique is equally problematic. It was not that the participants felt that they lacked the words to describe themselves: it was, instead, that they felt resonance with many existing words and instead assigned different *meanings* to them. Their bodymaps pointed to connections which resisted both Western queer and homonationalist interpretations.

For example, Simon felt resonance with 'gay' due to what he perceived as its universalising positivity. Explaining that his adoption of the label stemmed from his own 'coming out' process, Simon felt that gay was a relatable term. Positioning himself as African, Ugandan and American, he explained that:

> For me, identifying as gay, I think it's one of those things where I had to identify as 'gay' to help my parents understand it. Because, you know, coming from an African family, growing up in a different environment for them it's all about Christianity. And if you say you're a homosexual they would be like 'oh, what is that?' Because under homosexual there is transgender and all kinds of categories. [Others nodding] So for my mum to understand that I am gay, that I'm a guy who is into other guys, so it helped them understand. (Simon, PTA 4)

Simon brings a point that will undoubtedly raise the eyebrows of local activists and more queer-minded readers – the idea of a hierarchy of categorisation and the merging of sexuality and gender identity. That "under homosexual there is transgender and all kinds of categories" was a view shared by the majority of other participants, in both groups. Of course, local languages may offer alternative (pejorative) terms; yet none of the participants offered these, and all elected to refer to themselves by terms which have transnational familiarity in English. Indeed, Top reflected that "a lot of people that confuse themselves about gays. You understand? So to be a bisexual, lesbians, and transgender to me is all of those kind of people – they're gay. You understand?" (CT 5). In this, personal resonance begins to assign alternative functions and associations to familiar labels.

Republican, for example, on his own bodymap, placed "homosexual" on his shoulders, alongside "black" (speaking once again to the burden of carrying his sexuality alongside his race). He chose to use 'homosexual', which, from an imposed academic perspective, carries with it connotations of cold pathology. For Republican, however, 'gay' was "a very informal way to refer to myself" (PTA 3). He exclaimed that "I know it's the common word, but I don't wanna especially separate myself from someone else who, you know, could be a woman. It could be anyone, it could be a transgender, whoever it is. So I'm just going to say 'homosexual' a general term, the blanket term, the blanket nation" (PTA 3).

<u>Shifting Meanings and African Solidarity</u>

In this sentiment exists the coalescence of imagined solidarity in the form of a 'blanket nation'. 'Homosexual' was employed as a charged inclusive term of respect: gay was too informal, and politically excluded empathy for transgendered people, or women (attracted to women). That 'transgender' pertains to questions of gender identity was, in this way of thinking,

secondary to a feeling of shared experience of prejudice. The idea of a 'blanket nation', the 'homosexual nation', evokes a problematic Western image reminiscent of the 1980s 'gay movement'. As Leavitt and Mitchell reflect,

> [i]t's become common, over the last twenty years, for American gay people to think of themselves as constituting an ethnic group, a "tribe" (to borrow the language of the seventies) or a "queer nation" (to borrow the language of the eighties). […] To envision homosexuality, however, as an ethnic identity is to risk forgetting that sexuality is an extremely individualistic business; that each gay man and lesbian is gay or lesbian in his or her own way. (1994: xxvi)

Indeed, this is a primary criticism levelled at Gay International and strategies of homonationalism. Summarising much queer thought on the topic, Goltz *et al* note that LGBTI people, or 'homosexuals' "do not constitute a homogenous community" (2016: 105). The danger of adopting a perspective of a shared 'homosexuality' lies in invisiblising local subjectivities, intersections, and struggles. Although the "symbolic resources of Western LGBTQ culture" may be "useful or adaptable in articulating […] experiences and identities" they feed a dangerous perception of otherness rooted in perceptions of neo-colonialism (*ibid*). This strategy, however, is fused with understandings of 'LGBTI refugees', as organisations which affect policy are invested in creating rigid notions of identity, often based on "group membership" (Shakhsari 2014: 1002). ORAM, an international non-profit organisation focused on refugee rights, for example, explains that "gay men have the immutable characteristic of being sexually or emotionally attracted to men" (*ibid*).

The *immutability* of a 'gay identity' is reinforced by South African necropolitics. Emphasising a world of shared identifications effectively produces a "missionary achievement" (Massad 2002: 385) in which binaries of heteronormativity are reproduced. The transnationality of 'gayness' is thus resisted by African activists and queer academics. And yet, when discussing a sense of connection and solidarity, an imagined feeling of community, Pat affirmed about gay-themed films from the USA or Europe shown on television that "I love it. I love it when I see it. [Others nodding and smiling] I say, 'oh, this is me. They're talking about us'. Even though maybe quietly my brothers are talking about it but still, I'm gay, forget I'm there, watching men and enjoying it" (Pat, PTA 4).

In this, sexual belonging seeps through the cracks of heteronormative spaces through a self-identified imagining of shared experience and shared prejudice, rooted in – but defiant of – the language of necropolitics. When presented with media representations in South Africa, although many felt that it was not quite them on screen or on paper, there was an undeniable sense of connection felt by the participants. Pat's remark was met with enthusiastic nodding,

and some frowning at me even asking about it, as if it was a silly, obvious question (CT 4). A sense of community, based on lived experiences of shared prejudice and solidarity, existed.

This feeling melded with a corporeal sense of being, of embodying gayness, which fed localised meanings. Roda felt that "[g]ay is a general term for men who sleep with men. So when we go in details then we try to differentiate ourselves. […] But in other words gay is a general term" (CT 5). But in employing the term as a generic marker, placed over his heart on his bodymap, he drew on both a feeling of connection and empowerment, dismissing the idea that for some people being gay is just a matter of your mind or a simple realisation of who you are attracted to. For Roda, "[s]ometimes when they say 'gays', some of them think that it's just a what – you just putting it in your minds. To some of them they are just looking for green pasture. But mine just come from the bottom of my heart – that's how I feel. My inspiration. That's how I feel inside me, that I'm a gay. […] It's just a pleasure" (CT 2). This was shared by Top, who described himself as a "gay activist". For him, the "feeling to be gay is not like when I'm old. I was gay when I feel to be gay. I was feeling to be gay when I was so young. So it's from my heart. It's not like someone forced me or someone came to me and proposed me to say 'Top be gay'. It's coming from my heart" (CT 2).

South Africa undoubtedly plays a role in exposing individuals to identity markers acceptable to homonationalism. Star, Max and Pat first came to learn about the 'meaning' of 'gay' through English language, international media in South Africa. Pat noted that the "first time I heard a guy say 'gay, I'm gay' I said 'what's gay?' Because you know Congo is a French-speaking country and I didn't know it" (PTA 3). Explaining that "when we were growing up those words for 'having sex with men', they use 'pede'. But 'pede', it normally comes from 'paedophilia'" (Pat, PTA 3), 'gay' offered a comparatively positive resonance with his own understanding of his sexuality.

This was a sentiment shared by Max. His use of 'gay' took on a tone of simple affirmation, superficially void of the identity politics which inflame the term in queer contexts as "the first time I hear the word 'gay' it was because of my French background. Gay means 'happy', so that was the first time that I heard the word gay. So when I discovered about my sexuality I said 'okay!' I would like to use 'homosexual', also, but you know what, 'je suis gay'. I'm happy" (Max, PTA 5). In this space, then, 'gay' was a marker of both same-sex sexual attraction and a universalising positive emotion. 'Gay', for Max, became imbued with cross-cultural meaning, rooted in his migration.

For Roda, Top, Max and Pat, identifying as 'gay' acted as a site of struggle and hope: a marker of pride at having triumphed on their journey. That Roda's sexuality was his 'inspiration' links it to his status as a refugee: it was central to his migration, and it gave him strength to seek freedom. Reaching such a point of understanding came through struggle. For Roda, though, there was a resonance with the interpretation of an immutable, essentialised sense of 'gayness'. Indeed, he dismissed the idea that some people may 'adopt' the 'idea' of being gay "in your minds" for the sake of "looking for green pasture" – or, as in Ken's observations with Home Affairs in chapter five, that people may imaginatively (and 'falsely') cast themselves as gay or lesbian to try and enter South Africa. Roda, from deep within himself and in his own mind, was an 'authentic' gay.

As much as this may cause discomfort for the queer reader one cannot strip away the embodied resonance with both the familiar label *and* an imagined community, rooted firmly in his personal experiences of migration, that Roda felt. This resonance was articulated repeatedly in the Cape Town group through the choice of phrasing sexual identity as "a gay", as Roda's reflection on his sexuality reveals. Many of the participants used this term. Ken expressed that "I love being a gay. I love my life" (CT 3). Being 'a gay' rather than just 'being gay' may be read as a simple linguistic choice, but within the realm of imagination, the very "telling about something – using words" is "something of an invention" (Martel 2009: 302). The choice of expressing sexual subjectivity as *a gay* allows for the seepage of sexuality-as-membership; of an implicit solidarity and connection that one is entitled to in the political act of claiming a label.

Again, the red lights of a queer critique of homogeneity and 'shared gayness' begin to flash. And, again, one may not simply wipe away the affective dimensions of subjective naming. Yet neither does this fully 'fit' with an interpretation of homonationalism.

Being 'a gay' flowed into a different expression for Chance, who, lamenting the lack of support he felt when his friend died, was horrified that he was a "member for LGBTI and foreigner" and yet received no comfort (CT 44). Echoing this, Top expressed a desire for more support from the media in the form of showing additional "member for LGBT" (CT 47), drawing on his earlier collectivist assertion that "I know to be bisexual and lesbian and transgender – we are [all] *gay*" (CT 6, emphasis in audio). The King drew on the idea of being 'a gay' and, through his own imaginings, viewed this as an embracing, rather than exclusionary, politics:

> On my own opinion, a gay is just a person […]. It's only depends on what you feel, and who you are, about yourself. So you might call me a gay – I don't have, I'm not going to have a problem with you or shout at you or fight with you or whatever. No. You might

> call me straight – I'm not gonna beat you, I'm not gonna fight with you, I'm not gonna do anything with you. So to me gay it means *you*. (CT 5, emphasis in audio)

This reflection stemmed from his apprehension in applying restrictive labels on himself, and took root in a cautionary warning that adhering to immutable identities may lead to processes of dehumanisation:

> So, I am African, and I am a man. And I am human. And I am a gay, or I'm a straight, or I'm a bisexual – whatever here, what I know is I am a human. That what actually people, they should put in their head, in their mind, of saying 'no, that person is just a human'. Finished, klaar.[90] (CT 4)

A Gift of African Solidarity and Sexual Otherness

The de-gendering of 'gayness' by participants who mostly explicitly identified themselves as men may, of course, be regarded as problematic. It is all very well to suggest a vision of self-identified community and unity from a position of relative privilege as men. And yet the politics of representation and the micro-aggressions of Oppression Olympics which sometimes plague intersectional discussions were absent in the Cape Town group, where both Ms Malawi and Delphi occupied a projected identity of transgendered (as well as social subjectivities of gay and male, for different reasons). Ms Malawi, who, to the amusement of all the participants, elaborately introduced herself every time she spoke, noted that "I'm a woman. Real woman" (CT 7), and was read as such by her community where she was called "auntie" and "mamma" (CT 12). Her personal identification as a real woman was held alongside a progressive societal reading of her as a 'transgendered woman', which was simultaneously read within a traditional African mediated context of her being a 'gay man'. Yet, in her self-identification as an activist she affiliated with an umbrella label of "LGBTI people" (CT 4). Using humour, she swept aside what she effectively understood as semantic differences within a shared community of sex and struggle:

> Me, I don't know. What the […] difference between transgender and gay? Make no difference, you understand? Because transgender is a woman. Example, Miss Malawi, do you understand? [**Group laughter**] Yes. It's *gay*, it's a gay. Me, is *woman*. Real woman. […] And gay and transgender is same – and gay is sex with men. Do you understand? Transgender, sex men. So, gay and transgender, I don't know what difference is! [**Group laughter**]. (CT 5, emphasis in audio)

For Ms Malawi, 'gay' meant the same as 'transgender' because, in her experience, both involved sex with men – and, as she shared later, both attract social hostility. What may certainly offend some in the politics of naming certainly did not offend Ms Malawi – she was instead offended

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[90] Afrikaans word for finished, a South African expression akin to 'done and dusted'.

by how she was treated by the South African state and by how (through a lack of resources) she struggled in poverty.

Delphi had a goal of being an "LGBTI" activist in South Africa. She noted that in community outreach programs interventions and imaginings of life neglected intersectional empowerment. She emphasised the importance that it "is not about only foreigner. It's about all the people African who living here in South Africa, is LGBTI" (CT 24). The significance of recognising a sense of connection between LGBTI individuals stemmed from her own journey, in which she did not neatly 'fit' into a single category of analysis, despite structural attempts to name her. Describing herself as a transgender woman who was not born a lesbian but who became one when "something happen" (CT 42), and who was still regarded as a (gay) male according to Home Affairs, Delphi held the position of sexual otherness – despite being a site of extreme violence in her personal narrative – as "a gift". Social progress, for her, depended on LGBTI individuals teaching wider society that transcontinental sexual fluidity is a site of awe and strength; a site of life and hope. For Delphi, "I can say it's about gift. I can say, for me, it's my gift. I get it. It's my gift. So you want just to tell the parents [of children who may be LGBTI] 'these things happen. It's about gift – you get it from you.' […] So you must know how to educate that gift" (CT 42).

The *gift* of African LGBTI membership is, perhaps, the most imaginatively empowering image to conjure in a context of multi-sited prejudice. In physical journeys through necropolitics, the promise of solidarity in the form of shared (African) values and understanding is a powerful statement of resistance. This is a distinct move away from a critique that may suggest this is a form of participation in South African exceptionalism ('South Africa offers LGBTIs a great future!'): the sense of connection and solidarity is independent of the structures of South Africa, and is, in fact, produced partly as a *result* of negative experiences in the country. It is also a distinct move away from a queer reading that it is a strategy of homonationalist participation in a "U.S.-centric model of sexual freedom and exceptionalism across Western (allied) territories" (Wahab 2016: 690). I once again return to the glaring flaw in this critique: that participants in this project electively chose to call themselves 'gay', 'homosexual', and 'LGBTI'. They found personal resonance with these labels and, defying a homonationalist reading, adapted them to 'fit' local experiences. More than this, they positioned themselves as both African *and* 'sexual other'.

The participants did not engage in a queer rejection of labels, but instead worked within structures to shift meaning towards their own experiences and views of *continental solidarity*.

What, then, do we do? Calls to 'decolonise thought', or provide an alternative vocabulary, or 'recognise local manifestations of subjectivity' are noble and, occasionally, patronising. Of course such perspectives are necessary in a post-apartheid context, but one cannot ignore the dual realities of transnational influence and personalised subjective resonance. The goal is not to suggest that 'gay' should be a marker for a politically questioning sexuality – a 'queerness' –, or that homosexuality should include an understanding of transgender. Certainly, specific intersectional sites will require a detailed understanding of further layered subjectivities. The point, rather, is to strip away the assumption that 'LGBTI' is solely a Western categorisation that offers no value – and to strip away the assumed, familiar meanings behind 'LGBTI'.

Obviously assuming the experiences bound to each letter of 'LGBTI' are universal is problematic. But equally problematic is the assumption that there is no value in subjective association with those letters. Staging some sort of existential intervention, where LGBTI people are educated about what labels they *should* be using, is absurd. Many suggestions are also divorced from the realities of daily life, choosing to remain firmly in the realm of imagination (which is as unproductive as remaining purely in the structural, with no vision of alternatives). Instead, I suggest we work with the image of the intersectional 'gift' the participants have.

Part 3: Resistance: Conceptually Revising Queerness and Africanness

As threads are pulled together and strategies for the future are conceived it is worth signposting that Africa should not be cast as a fertile field of hope and possibility inhabited by an exceptional community with idyllic potentiality (this reeks of homonormative neo-colonialism). What we may recognise, however, is that the rainbow nation has left a void of, and for, imagination. In the spaces created by the failure of South African nationalism and the exclusionary effects of denialism and exceptionalism lies a potentiality for actively forging transcontinental life. If both homonationalism and increased migration are facets of modernity that, try as we may, we cannot truly resist, then the act of imagining new social configurations and politics within existing structures and understandings becomes the site of potentiality.

This 'gift' that the participants carry is a vision of the future in which locally-defined queerness in Africa is *bound* to Africanness. The South African state and society 'force' the participants to switch between identity categories. Such processes, however, when held alongside the narratives of migration, reveal how they have actively engaged with the meanings of both 'queerness' and Africanness; that the experiences of being confined to homonationalist categories for necropolitical purposes unwittingly generate transgressive connections and meanings. What emerges through discussions of both lived and imagined journeys is that the

(en)forced negotiations with poplar understandings of Africanness and queerness produce a resounding sense of hope and vision.

The perpetual hope of the participants – that communities will become accepting, that leaders will intervene, that South Africans will embrace them, that Africa will develop – may, of course, be read as a necropolitical mode of ensuring complicity and placidity through the promise of 'one day' (which resonates with points I make in chapter eight). I argue, however, that this form of hope should be read as the product of a unique configuration of resistance to normative understandings of nationality, of continental belonging, and of sexual community. The narratives shared impart a distinct sense of frustration with the status quo, embedded in a resoluteness to keep living. Acceptance (of prejudice, of categorisation) is necessary, but does not translate to complicity: the recognition, on the whole, that both homophobia and xenophobia in South Africa are untenable is rooted in a belief that "I'm, you, are African. You are the one. So is nothing to discrimination [sic], because I'm African" (Delphi, CT 48). That 'there's nothing to discriminate against' because we are all African was the popular sentiment in both groups.

And herein lies political resistance. Despite the overwhelming popular view of the 'unAfricanness' of homosexuality the participants had negotiated what it means to 'be' both, and in doing so had created an imagined alternative life-world. The forced confrontation with what it meant to be African, and the violent expectations of adherence to heteronormative definitions, revealed constrictively small holes in the essentialised construct of Africanness. Through these holes a *seepage* of 'queerness' occurs, slowly saturating everyday spaces and interactions. The seepages are not permanent: they are fluid and evaporate when exposed to other intersectional realities or threats of violence. But they occur and are rooted in an affective sense of *embodying* sexual Otherness.

By the same token, the cocoon of 'LGBTIness' created by legalistic homonormative definitions cracks under realisations that globalised representations do not sit squarely with everyday experiences, and that transnational labels are, in fact, malleable. Through these cracks filter seepages of Africanness, of local realities, fusing with existing understandings of personalised (discursively private) sexuality. The expectations and representations of (Western) 'LGBTI life' are morphed upon exposure to transcontinental affectation. In zones of death, where life is promised by the nation but never fully given, seepages of Africanness *and* 'queerness' are an alternative life.

In this way, the position of LGBTI migrants challenges understandings of both Africanness and Queerness (and I capitalise the Q here to evoke a Western theoretical paradigm). The journeys of the participants reveal Queerness as a politics of *values*: community involvement, solidarity, support and education. By showing that Western labels can be appropriated and shaped to suit local needs, and yet still be rooted in non-Western experiences and (potentially, although not discussed in my groups) desires, the narratives reconfigure arguments in queer theory framed in chapter one. In the experiences of the participants there was an undeniable connection between a sense of *solidarity*, rooted in continental affiliation as well as sexual commonality, and a sense of *fluidity* (in the forms of both socialised switching and a psychological movement between each letter in LGBTI).

This fluid solidarity was rooted in shared prejudice and mutual understanding, and ultimately feeds an imagined lifeworld of hope and connection based on Africanness. Queer theory's "liberatory potential" is "often linked to its promise to undermine the most sacred and patriarchal institutions in western culture, like the church, family, nation, or state", which – in discursive backlashes against gay/queer rights – "resembles the fears of those who would imprison or kill queer people" (Thoreson 2014: 37). From a perspective of fluidity, solidarity, life and seepages, however, 'liberatory potential' lies in a reconfigured imagining of belonging: *transcontinentality*. The narratives of the participants did not dismantle religion or family – indeed, many of them celebrated both, as the bodymaps reflected. In this the nation and state are resisted, but not destroyed: rhetoric is redeployed to emphasise continental being rather than, or alternatively as well as, arbitrary geographic affiliations.

In chapter one I signposted the struggle to locate queer theory in an African context. Reflecting upon the work that the participants undertook daily, I argue that *this* is the site of its realisation – the ground zero for understanding and deployment. LGBTI migrants are, in the eyes of the nation, volatile anomalies; ideological radicals who rely on the state for material support but whose wider sense of being is independent of it. This fundamentally undermines exceptionalism: the participants may have been reliant on South African law for protection, but in revealing the violent nature of everyday life and locating a vision of hope for the future *beyond* the confines of the remains of the rainbow they exposed the systems as mere participants in a wider project of social change. South Africa becomes not the end point, not a mythical Promised Land, but a transitory space on a journey of Queer/African transformation.

I hesitate to shy away from using Queerness as a phrase. One may argue this is an act of perpetuating colonial thinking – why use Western ideas rather than creating new ones? But I

draw on the thinking of the participants rather than an essentialised view of African pureness and isolation. Just as the groups revealed a negotiation with existing terms, appropriating them to match certain aspects of life whilst fluidity allowing experience to challenge popular definitions, so too may we adopt Queerness to draw on its history whilst allowing for our own academic and conceptual seepage. Where queer theory may historically emphasise a dismantling of categories and communities, ever questioning, an African Queer Theory would merge intersectional reflection with action; individuality with community; solidarity with accountability; liminality with declaration.

African Queer theory would foreground Africanness-as-Queerness, and Queerness-as-Africanness, and recognise that seepages of life allow for a multitude of sexual subjectivities (those that resonate with homonormative labels and those localised expressions of desire which do not) and a multitude of migratory subjectivities (rooted in transcontinentality).

Of course, the danger here stems from a reliance on the idea of immutability. This has been discussed in relation to sexuality, but is also permeates discussions of migration. Refugees in particular, who "stand between life and death, seemingly moving in the progressive time of rights towards the future time and space of freedom" are discursively "fixed into timeless and immutable identities that legitimate their claims for refuge" (Shakhsari 2014: 999). Shakhsari notes how "normative refugee subjects" (2014: 1002) are constructed through an invocation of fixed timelessness and immutability, which serves to continually reinforce alterity and death while also reinforcing visions of the nation of refuge as exceptional. This produces the effect of migrants "who are under the protection of human rights apparatuses" being "stripped of rights" (1007). Key to avoiding the positioning of LGBTI migrants as immutable, then, is to intersectionally relate the ability to utilise categories which are perceived as homogenous to their constant undermining through the everyday connecting of fractured subjectivities.

<u>Towards the Future</u>

Central to this frame of understanding, therefore, is the joining of both seepage and fluidity. Resistance is not explicit, and political engagement is not constant. Hope is the driving force, and although this contextually specific manifestation of the emotion resists the pull of necropolitical death, it is woven into violent everyday realities. A vision of Africanness-as-Queerness/Queerness-as-Africanness, or African Queerness/Queer Africanness, is thus temporally rooted in the prejudicial present but focused on the *future*, beyond death.

The future is not stable: it wavers as experiences affect journeys. But, as one begins to imagine African Queerness/Queer Africanness, one is left with the frustration of the participants: what does such imagining *do*? What does such a future look like? Any cautious optimism and hope must be rooted in the link back to everyday struggles. Disregarding the past is a privileged position. The balancing of "gay" and "African" on Star's shoulders contributed to a formative depression. Daniel mapped himself as "lonely" and "anxious", relating these to his own sense of unbelonging in (South) Africa. The pleas for tolerance and support in the narratives, while connected to wider outlooks of hope and strength, also reflect dissatisfaction and hopelessness. Chance's list of practical struggles coupled with an appeal to other LGBTI 'members' to "help us, please. Please save us to go forward" (Narrative 5) demands measurable qualities of this paradigm. What, drawing on everyday experiences, can actually be *done* in the South African context?

As such, attention must be given to the ways in which a triumph over death may be enacted both critically and practically. Before the concept may be developed further, an intersectional commitment to 'doing' must be operationalised, and remain rooted in the narratives themselves. This is the task of the final chapter, which focuses on interventions. The 'gift' that Delphi mentioned is one of socio-political empowerment through solidarity and redistribution. Having named this as African Queerness/Queer Africanness I now shift attention to joining the imagined with the corporeal as I look towards the future, offering both practical and conceptual anchors for moving forward.

In summary, this chapter has given empirical insight into the key themes identified in chapters one and two. It has argued that LGBTI migrants negotiate a switching and melding between ideas of what it means to 'be' African and LGBTI. In this interplay both continental and sexual belonging mutually define each other, and produce spaces of temporary resistance to necropolitics. These 'seepages' of life take the form of solidarity and shared values, expressed, in part, through adopting identity markers which are imbued with local, journey-driven meaning. Processes of imagination thus catalyse hope. This chapter has suggested that these acts of imagining new meanings and new connections mark the path for potential future critical and practical interventions, which I frame as African Queerness/Queer Africanness.

Chapter Eight

Reflection and Action: Collaborative Interventions and Future Journeys

And death shall be no more; Death, thou shalt die.

(John Donne, *Sonnet X*)

I concluded the previous chapter by synthesising imagination with lived experiences to produce a critique of understandings of sexuality and nationality. In this, I suggested that processes of migration and encounters with multi-sited prejudice produce new meanings for subjective labels. I argued that the trajectories of LGBTI migrant journeys enable a unique interplay between Africanness and Queerness. This forced confrontation with the limitation of existing structures and modes of critique reveals intersectional 'seepages' of life; points of resistance driven by an underlying sense of hope.

Although I must work towards concluding this thesis I want to remain conscious that certain avenues of thought are very much part of a still-evolving perspective. Homophobia and xenophobia remain realities in the lives of the participants, and so it is not my place as researcher to bring this interaction to an end. Therefore, this chapter may be considered somewhat unconventional: I position it as an 'interventions' or 'actions' chapter, and a precursor to my conclusions.

In part one of this chapter I remain committed to a research goal of 'flagging' key sites for active intervention, as identified by the participants. Stemming from the narratives shared in chapters five, six and seven, this section takes 'a step back' from analysis to mark important points of access for future collaborations. Building on this space of reflection, and rooted in chapter three's emphasis on using intersectionality to 'do' rather than simply think, the second section moves on to extending the potential for future intellectual interventions as established at the end of chapter seven.

Part 1 – Reflection: Everyday Interventions

Within the workshops, after exploring journeys understandings of sexuality, nationality and prejudice, I facilitated discussions on specific suggestions regarding what the participants would like to change – what active steps could be taken to translate their hopes into meaningful material realities. Some of these proposed interventions have inevitably seeped through in

chapters five, six and seven, particularly with regards to structural prejudice and administrative interactions.

As a starting point it must be acknowledged that, despite varying degrees of prejudice, the knowledge that there are structures in place designed (in theory) to protect vulnerable minorities does provide a degree of comfort. As Republican noted, "it's good to know that on paper and if ever I hire the most expensive lawyer I can go to court and I can win because I have the grounds" (PTA 23). This psychological reassurance was, however, undermined by an acknowledgement that "it all seems like such a mission. And you just try to avoid it as much as possible, try to avoid having to deal with the authorities" (*ibid*).

That it is 'such a mission' to try and understand and, importantly, access resources speaks to a fundamental point of feedback: the need for education *and* the means to engage with information. Daniel, who went to school in Cape Town, explained that he had never been exposed, within the official education system of South Africa, to any form of discussion on rights or support in terms of sexuality or nationality. No-one in either group knew of any resource specifically designed for LGBTI migrants, and the Pretoria group all shook their heads when asked if they knew where LGBTI migrants or refugees could go for legal or social advice (PTA 31). It seems like a potential first step, in this regard, to begin generating some form of educational resource.

I suggested an app or website which provides, in simple and accessible terms, contact details of organisations who may offer support, and information about what is expected of individuals (such as regulations about carrying identity documents). This suggestion was rooted in the knowledge that, having briefly surveyed each participant, each person had regular (daily) access to a smartphone with an Internet connection, and that websites and mobile applications were the most used features – as noted in chapter six. This is not to suggest adopting a technologically determinist paradigm is desirable: detailed research is necessary to understand *how* groups use technologies and media form, with strategies specifically designed to 'fit' existing patterns of behaviour.[91] In going forward the day-to-day structural inequalities must be contextualised to provide a multi-sited approach to partnerships (that is, not solely reliant on technological solutions).

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[91] See, for example, Mowlabocus *et al* (2016) on challenges and potential solutions for facilitating health-related interventions and the media in a UK context.

While acknowledging, as researcher, that media technologies/representations are not messianic, the view that these should play a greater role in bringing about daily change was a popular idea. Daniel felt that there should be "hotlines for gay guys" (Solo 21), and Star thought that "whatever organisations that support LGBTs instead of them only incorporating them [organisational advertisements] on a gay magazine or [gay newspaper] but on all the newspapers that are printed out, or magazines that are printed out. And making sure that, you know, we are a part of the community" (PTA 31). Yet, these suggestions emerge from a space where such resources do already exist: several LGBTI-related organisations do offer 'hotline' and call-back services, and LGBTI 'visibility' does occur (albeit on a small, problematic scale) in mainstream media.

The point of intervention, therefore, needs to be one of mediated investigation into targeted media use and exposure. This was explicitly flagged in a heated exchange between Ken and Roda: Ken, emotional over the lack of health support available, exclaimed that the health organisation Roda worked for did not provide the correct resources. Roda defensively shot back that Ken had simply missed the advertisements – and indeed, Ken had never been exposed to the local media sources Roda's organisation utilised. In an environment of limited funding and expensive media costs it is understandable that NGOs utilise the few means available. It was, however, evident from my interactions that a greater understanding is needed of *what* media forms are used and *how* in order to facilitate the effective transmission of information. Once again, a technologically determinist approach to the liberatory potential of the media should be avoided in favour of a wider consideration of questions of distribution and reception.

Such information varies from general points about South Africa and its structures, to the sort of health information Ken desired. Travelling between Pretoria, Cape Town and KwaZulu Natal it was starkly clear how information availability fluctuates by location in South Africa. There is a definite need for resource consolidation and policy reform. In Cape Town several spaces of support exist for LGBTI individuals, as noted by the participants, but awareness of such resources could be increased. In Pretoria OUT provides a valuable service in the form of Men2Men[92], an information portal that Pat used regularly (PTA 28). Steve, however, noted that it "also has to do with location. If you're more in a CBD kind of setting, or town kind of setting. But if you're in a township, for instance, where we *do* have other LGBTI who are not also from South Africa, who lives in townships and villages, who have no access to information" (PTA 28,

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[92] http://men2men.co.za

emphasis in audio). While an organisation such as OUT[93] exists in Pretoria (Access Chapter 2 utilises OUT's office space) and provides participant-recognised services to LGBTI individuals (in terms of hate crime support, psychological support, a clinic and training) such an organisation is absent, for example, from KwaZulu Natal. Although there are smaller NGOs in the province there is no universalisation of information or resources. As a point of illustration, while OUT offers STI testing in Pretoria and Health4Men[94] in Cape Town, only HIV testing is offered at LGBTI community centres in KwaZulu Natal. STI testing needs to be performed at a government clinic – and there was no easily accessible information I could find at the time of writing about processes and LGBTI-friendly institutions. The only searchable local result that offered reaffirming and confidential health support was a private clinic where one was charged £500 for a screening.

In terms of health it is evident from this research that mental health support is site of necessary intervention. Delphi and Top shared how they had both received counselling from SWEAT[95], and OUT provides such a service in Pretoria. Yet the psychological traumas many LGBTI migrants face as the result of multiple prejudices, coupled with the intensive anxiety and loneliness that some experience as a result, in part, of their liminality – such as Daniel (Solo 1) – frames the need for considered engagement. Of course, one should not paint all LGBTI migrants as psychologically fragile survivors of trauma. Neither should one assume that LGBTI migrants are the 'most' at-risk group in this regard. It is clear, however, that the oscillation between Africanness and LGBTI-ness, between staying alive and avoiding death, contributes to a unique 'crisis' of (un)belonging. The process of renegotiating home is inherently violent and painful, and LGBTI migrants undertake this repeatedly.

A researched and contextualised project of education is thus needed on several fronts. Information interventions about rights and health also extend to providing practical support in the form of day-to-day interactions, such as opening a bank account. Top and Chance both expressed frustration at their inability to open South African bank accounts without a work permit and with asylum-seeker status. Chance lamented that "if you don't have a work permit or whatever […] you can't open an account. Never. Because they'll say you've got the wrong paper" (Narrative 5). The endless 'pending' status of Chance's asylum claim prohibited him from opening a bank account, which contributed to his inability to secure full-time employment. This, in turn, snowballed into difficulties with finding accommodation, as many places of residence

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[93] http://www.out.org.za
[94] http://www.health4men.co.za
[95] http://www.sweat.org.za

require proof of address and bank statements. Although the participants did not actively suggest solutions, the rise of micro-banking services such as Revolut, Monzo and M-Pesa may hold potential.[96] These systems facilitate the instant and relatively simple transfer of funds across borders, bypassing traditional banking systems and restrictions. They are, of course, coupled with a different set of challenges, including access to smart phones, an active internet connection to use, favourable home currencies, and passport registration within the apps.

Another day-to-day interaction which was identified as a site for intervention was language use, as explored in chapter six. While the participants expressed a desire for education in the form of information about how to survive and function in South Africa, The King also framed the need to help migrants communicate more effectively in the country. He proposed an NGO-managed WhatsApp group for language support (CT 41), whereby one could message the group to have a word translated or explained. The logistics of such a suggestion aside, it speaks to a node of potential solidarity and collaboration in that a re-evaluation of structural approaches to language use and policy is needed. As Delphi's personal narrative reflects, an understanding of linguistic requirements is crucial to minimising risks of violence.

In this way media technology was once again seen as having the potential to initiate some form of grassroots change. In terms of both the tools and images available the participants felt that "I would love the media to do a lot of things, in terms of educating the people: health care, health issues, human rights. Talk about it. Invite the people who knows human rights and talk about it. Make a show whereby really the people sit down and talk, talk, talk, talk" (The King, Narrative 3). Max felt that the media has the potential to change the way people perceive migrants and LGBTI individuals by generating discussion and including identifiable and relatable representations (PTA 30). The responsibility of the media, according to The King, is to "make it clear – more clear – to the community" in that "the communities should now know 'these person [sic] I'm living with, he's my neighbour" (CT 39). In terms of homophobia and xenophobia there was consensus that many South Africans do not know "about what is happening outside" (Max, PTA 28) and that such an attitude may be partly blamed on the failure of the media. Although one should not slip into a discourse of 'the evil media is responsible', it is important to note that potential change was seen to stem from shifting media roles. In this way it was positioned as a locus for hope.

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[96] See, for example, Anthea Paleo's insights (2016).

Intervention may also come in the form of holding the police, Home Affairs and government accountable. Republican emphasised that for a shift in social perceptions to occur the government needed to mediate its own support of LGBTIs and migrants:

> But there is something the government can do, right? The government, I believe, must join the blame on social media and tackle these issues *as* the government – and just like, whatever it be. Be it the right to health, whatever. The government must *actively* pump information about how it feels, right, on these issues, on social media. And I'm not saying it should be mandatory for people to look at this stuff, but at least when you're reading through Facebook comments or YouTube comments on a video that was portraying something gay in South Africa I want to see something there which says 'South African Government-dot-CO-dot-ZA' and a statement which says 'the South African government wholly and fully and supports and enforced the rights of…' Ya, and then if I get some idiot going 'no it's ungodly! It's whatever whatever, there's no room for it in South Africa or in Africa' – I'll be like 'but your government said that, my guy, I don't know what you're doing'. You know what I mean? And then people like that can actually know that they're standing alone. (PTA 31, emphasis in audio)

The King shared a similar view, expressing that officials, both governmental and religious, should be preaching tolerance and acceptance at a grassroots level. This echoes the framing discursive tension between the image of South Africa as a 'safe haven' and the reality of a lack of governmental/state engagement with LGBTI individuals beyond the constitution. That there should be wider governmental and leadership involvement and accountability was really a key shared desire amongst the participants, and coupled with further research offers a pivotal suggestion for collaborative intervention (although chapters five and seven caution against perpetuating necropolitics in this regard).

Republican's insight also reflects how social media can, on occasion, reaffirm a sense of belonging. PASSOP and Access Chapter 2 both utilised Facebook groups to communicate with members, and each participant used a form of social networking. The involvement of the government and leaders in these online social spaces may contribute, in the future, to feelings of protection. Of course, Republican's insight similarly reflects how social media can act as a force for entrenching a sense of alienation. Once again, an overly optimistic view of such media should be avoided in favour of a researched and contextualised understanding of the politics of use.

This, however, is secondary to what was identified as the most reaffirming and achievable step towards change: the creation of spaces of interaction. In undertaking this project I did not anticipate the cathartic effect the workshops would have for the participants. In terms of homophobia and xenophobia Daniel felt that, in general, "there isn't enough talk or conversation going on about it" (Solo 12). The Cape Town and Pretoria groups agreed, and as

such the workshops acted as spaces of connection, affirmation and solidarity. Max expressed that:

> I know that this is just a drop in the sea. We just representing a whole mass of a lot of people who are going through issues that we have shared here, and even worse that we are sharing here. And if *us*, you, any other organisation, and us as individual, to try to find out how we can reach those people – to give them access to times like this. And because it's really, really a time that you ca feel 'okay, I'm not alone'. You know? Already be feeling that I'm not alone it makes you feel safe. It doesn't solve all the problems, but you know it makes you feel 'okay, something's… at least something is happening'. (PTA 34)

Pat reflected on how, when he received the invitation to participate, he was sceptical and decided to attend but just observe and not participate. This was certainly not the case on the day, as he was one of the most vocal participants. In engaging with other LGBTI migrants he felt that:

> It's really, really good and opening eyes as well. Because you in this, different things come, come, come out from each other here. It's really, really helping and make you feel like, ja, at least I have something. I know this, this is my right. Because we might know some of the details. We might think that we know, but some of the things we still don't know. (PTA 34)

The temporary space of community and information-sharing acted as a point of intervention in terms of resisting necropolitics: it generated hope through shared dissatisfaction and solidarity. Republican agreed, sharing that:

> I'm glad for studies and research like this one where we actually talk about these things. And there…it's not very common that one gets to get the chance. I've been here for 5 years and nobody has ever asked me the questions that Matt asked me. And nobody has ever come up and said all the things outright that the people at the table were saying. And being a black, gay, Zimbabwean guy who's in an inter-racial relationship there is a *lot* to deal with! So I'm glad that there's a platform where we can talk about it. And I hope the platform gets bigger. I mean, the only way is up. I hope the platform gets bigger. (Narrative 2, emphasis in audio)

As a step for intervention, then, spaces of sharing offer intersectional potential for empowerment through self-reflection and generating a sense of shared values, through enabling individuals to "have access to be themselves" (Steve, Narrative 1). However, an investment in community groups and the creation of spaces for sharing ultimately needs to stem from an understanding of points for conceptual intervention. As such, I now shift attention back towards the intellectual journey thus far, utilising the spirit of these suggestions from the participants to frame how to critically move forward.

Part 2: Sites for Conceptual Intervention

Tracing the Intellectual Journey Thus Far

The 'double rainbow' (Stobie 2007) of South Africa is a layered metaphor. It speaks to the promise of a non-racial post-apartheid society, and the vision of liberation and constitutional protection for all inhabitants regardless of sexual orientation. It is a metaphor seemingly of hope – of endless potential to be achieved one day soon. Yet in the wake of myriad social issues, including a widening economic gap between rich and poor, administrative corruption, failed service delivery, unemployment, violent crime and historical anger, the visions Mandela and the liberation struggle had for the country are increasingly being questioned. 2015 and 2016 saw the rise of movements such as #FeesMustFall, #RhodesMustFall and #ZumaMustFall. Aside from speaking to the increasing role that social media plays in generating social momentum, these movements are evidence of a bubbling unrest within the country. One should not slip into an alarmist discourse: South Africa is not a warzone, and is not on the cusp of social anarchy. It is, however, a space of extremes, and at times it does feel as though the clung-to hope of a 'rainbow nation' is what gives purpose and vision to many.

This hope was, in many ways, the catalyst for this project – or rather, the catalyst was a critique of this form of hope. In both the discursive shaping of this particular hope and the structural implementations of making it a reality I sought to interrogate the subjective and experiential spaces of in-betweenness. As framed in chapter two, an unforeseen result of presenting South Africa as a country of hope and possibility has been the rise of a discourse of exceptionalism. This has fed a growing rhetoric of denialism about prejudice in the country: xenophobic attacks are the actions of a limited few, not a part of wider social attitudes; South Africans are not homophobic, they are just religiously devout; we have moved beyond prejudice, and acts of aggression are anomalies. To critique South Africa and South Africanness would be to expose the fragility of the national project – and this, in turn, speaks to the false hope of the rainbow.

The 'endless potential' of a country with 'a special history' and a 'unique diversity of culture' is fundamentally connected to a specific project of nation building which emulates post-apartheid visions of the future whilst simultaneously attempting to incorporate selective globalised scapes of transnational belonging. The hope that this offers is false through its inevitable lean towards oppression and exclusion: in the construction of an *image* of a tolerant and accepting South Africa a *reality* of exclusion and violent liminality is created. On multiple fronts the coalescence of exceptionalism and denialism has generated a deep dissatisfaction,

one which festers without resolve. The desire for a new form of belonging – a new reality – is fed by the vague promise of 'potential'. This hope rings hollow. It is a tool to maintain the status quo, for how can new belonging ever be found within the structural bounds of a preconceived nation? This form of hope becomes cruelly necropolitical, raised in chapters six and seven in relation to 'slow death'. For Berlant, objects become 'cruel' when "the object that draws your attachment actively impedes the aim that brought you to it initially" (2011: 1). The hope of the rainbow metaphor presents itself "ambivalently, unevenly, incoherently" (*ibid*) and holds the "cruel promise of reciprocity and belonging to the people who seek them – who need them" (21). Such optimism contributes to the attrition of life.

Within the necropolitical South African project LGBTIs will never fully belong, for it is a project built on heteronormative values in a context of social conservatism, and LGBTI subjectivities transcend national boundaries. Similarly, 'foreigners' will never fully belong. One may work towards residency status and citizenship, but exceptionalism emphasises essentialised national belonging, the fault-lines of which are exposed through eruptions of xenophobic violence. Life is thus conditional, particularly for LGBTI migrants who are often 'forced' to oscillate between subjectivities. They are suspended between life and death: the promise of things improving (which manifests in forms such as 'pending approval' on asylum papers) is tempered with the threat of removal from relative paradise (in the form of deportation or social violence).

This thesis is obviously not positioned as a revolutionary manifesto to bring about a new South Africa. The questioning of the nation is, however, fundamental to understanding the macro forces which have a role in shaping lived experiences. The promise of potential and hope is empty in many of the narratives shared. Although one should not fall into the neo-colonial 'trap' (Wahab 2016: 708; Nyong'o 2012: 42) of casting South Africa as a space of endless homophobia and xenophobia encouraged by the State, one *should* see these forms of prejudice as the symptoms of wider, more complex attitudes and forces identified above.

This festering prejudice is fed by the conceptually stagnant hope of the rainbow – that hope which does not 'do something'. This stagnation may be traced, I believe, back to the overarching attitudes and histories framed in chapters one and two. Privacy, which embedded a tolerance of sexual diversity within an understanding of nationality, plays a role in invisiblising the struggles of the participants. From the perspective of the state, asylum or working rights have already been granted, and sexual protection is available – therefore whatever happens is

a private matter, and whatever acts of prejudice take place are removed from an understanding of exceptional belonging.

Of course this is reductive, but a discourse of privacy is undeniably sutured to public engagements with both homophobia and xenophobia. Republican framed the lived frustration of this in a sterling critique of neoliberalism:

> I get it, this is a very capitalist free society where people must mind their own business. But I really would like the government to be deeply involved in the lives of its citizens, no matter…in the lives of its *residents* no matter if they're a majority or a minority. I just think it's better if the government does something. (Narrative 2, emphasis in audio)

A discourse of privacy, in a context of active protection and a rendering visible of rights, is highly problematic. It is one of many contradictions that shape the landscape. I flag it here, however, to emphasise how LGBTI migrants are conceptually 'dealt with' by the state, and to signpost a specific manifestation of *hope* raised at the end of the previous chapter. Here, in the wake of multi-sited prejudice, Republican captures an anger-fuelled hope that intervention will come on an executive level.

And yet not moments ago I argued that hope within South Africa is futile; the future is bleak. In chapter seven I argued that hope is the key ingredient to bring about change. The question is, therefore, what distinguishes the hope of the participants from the hope of the rainbow? How is the hope of this thesis not a false hope?

Conceptually Differentiating Hope

Central to this differentiation, I argue, is that the failure of the rainbow has created a space for imagination *beyond* the nation and yet *within* it too. Potentiality lies in the hope that comes with imagining new solidarities within existing structures. It is an active hope which provides an alternative – and it sits in contrast with the endless rainbow promise that 'things will get better'. It is a hope rooted in an attachment to values, rather than material conditions, and invested not in the systems of cruelty, but in the cracks between them.[97]

The conditionality of life in South Africa is inevitable, for within necropolitics LGBTI migrants are imbued with disruptive power. The suspension of LGBTI migrants in a state of living death imaginatively reveals the threat they pose to the national project. They fundamentally

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[97] This echoes Gray's (2009) suggestions about understanding the rural LGBT American context. Hope, for Gray, stems from the specific configurations of close communities and networks of familiarity which help to form "makeshift public spaces that can alleviate the disenfranchisement" (176) in the daily lives of queer and LGBTI-identifying youth. Gray considers how media and emerging technologies are used to "manage the delicate calculus of gay visibility's benefits and risks" (165) in the creation of such spaces.

challenge a reliance on the state: their experiences speak to physical, actual, lived life beyond and across borders of sexuality and geography. Where Queerness may be regarded by many as 'unAfrican' by many, and Africanness as 'unQueer' by others, the participants showed how both of these concepts are worked to be embodied simultaneously. Their lives are at once both local and transcontinental. This catalyses resistance.

The individuals with which I engaged reconceptualised a two-directional flow between Africanness and Queerness. Africanness is *queered* by creating scope for belonging and acceptance of non-normative sexualities. Queerness is *Africanised* by emphasising the importance of community.[98] The concept as a whole is rooted in both self-reflexive reconciliation *and* a practical commitment to 'doing', which stems from the everyday reality of the threat of death and violence. African Queerness/Queer Africanness rebuffs critiques of the position of Africa in Western queer theory (as discussed in chapter one, see Clarke 2013; Lind 2005). In repositioning Queerness as bound to an understanding of Africanness (in the form of transcontinentality, familial support and community), subjective labels become imbued with both transnational *and* local meaning. In turn, this avoids a preoccupation with naming that has weighed down queer theory in Western contexts. African Queerness/Queer Africanness neutralises a tension between assimilation and transgression. The fluidity of subjectivity, marked as secondary to lived reality, continually transgresses normative *understandings* of being whilst simultaneously relocating assimilation to a site of non-normative belonging. Rather than struggle for acceptance in the nation it reconfigures interaction and solidarity to a transcontinental space *beyond* the nation, whilst pioneering operation from within existing national structures.

This is not purely theoretical speculation: the lives of the participants reveal this liminal movement. These are the very possibilities of experience that Stobie (2007) highlights as a part of the disruptive power of queerness in Africa. Quests to build a new field of thought, to strip away influence and fully 'decolonise' approaches strike me as essentialist and dismissive. This, however, is *not* a step towards building new field of thought – it is not a pure, innate Africanness.

Instead, this is a reworking of queerness; a binding of a Western concept to African experiences.

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[98] One may be inclined to draw parallels with a concept of *Ubuntu* (Ndhlovu 2014: 190). However, as the participants did not explicitly articulate such a sense of connection I position this critical intervention as conceptually distinct.

It is a reworking of Africanness; a binding of a local concept to transnational sexual fluidity.

It is a bringing together of existing thoughts to create something new in the in-betweenness of the everyday. Life in South Africa often encourages (or forces) the participants to 'switch' between their identities. Yet, by redefining queerness and Africanness as community and solidarity we see the *seepage* of these values in their narratives and interactions. The fluidity necessary for 'switching' produces this.

These 'seepages' are fragments of differentiated hope. They are disruptive, and they are of life. *This* hope is rooted in solidarity – in the unlikely, and seemingly contradictory, African/Queer alliance. It is rooted in a reconceptualised vision of belonging as fleeting, as temporary, as a simultaneous *un*belonging. Through emphasising self-reflection and critical action, *this* hope enables life that is not bound to the success of arbitrary (death-bound) borders.

This is, perhaps, the self-defeating irony of South African necropolitics: the rigid relegation of belonging enables the very potentiality which ultimately reconfigures it. The hope of the participants is not constant – social structures do not allow for continuous resistance. But in the moments where controlled (South) Africanness shows hints of queerness, and in the moments where homonationalist expectations slip and reveal glimmers of imagined transcontinental community, the cracks in the structures are revealed, through which life may flow.

A Hope for the Future

Through this the lives of LGBTI migrants reveal that South Africa is not the land over the rainbow; not an exceptional climax on a journey, but rather a stepping stone on a path towards wider social change. Their lives, and their hope, are linked irrevocably to the death of the nation. This death is not the same death espoused by the necropolitical state. Where necropolitical death is obliteration, this death is transformative. It is death bound to new life, catalysed through an African/Queer interplay.

This is not a reliance on an identitarian framework. It is not a perspective based on immutable categories of analysis. What it is, is an imperfect union of values; a joining of experience-based ideals forged through violence and reconciliation. It is a vision driven by inclusion, rather than exclusion, and motivated by a frantic – sometimes desperate – anger and need for intervention. The hope which drives this is committed to 'doing something' rather than being focused on the promise of necropolitics. Some of the narratives would undoubtedly upset

'pure' queers in their casual 'appropriation' of sexual labels and meanings. Some of the narratives would also upset pan-Africans who rail against Western influence. Yet, by living, and in many ways embodying, uncertainty and fluidity the participants resist conceptual concerns about the ossification of meaning.

The narratives offer scope for a "we" which speaks to a "logic of futurity" rather than "a merely identitarian logic" (*Muñoz 2009*: 20). That is, the inclusivity of African Queerness/Queer Africanness is "not beyond such differences or due to these difference but, instead, that it is *beside* them", and is a hope for the future "in which multiple forms of belonging in difference adhere to a belonging in collectivity" (*ibid*). Muñoz (2009) renders queerness as intrinsically 'of' the future. In much the same way that he regards queerness as an "ideality that can be distilled from the past and used to imagine a future" (1), African Queerness/Queer Africanness locates belonging and life on the horizon by drawing on experiences of the past. The "here and now" (1) should be rejected due to the "poisonous and insolvent" (30) nature of the present: the necropolitical talons of the state grant life solely through "majoritarian belonging, normative tastes, and 'rational' expectations" (27).

The future promises disruption of "ossified" understandings of society and people (Muñoz 2009: 25-26). An African future balances fluidity with subjective categorical resonance. Central to achieving a future is moving beyond "individual transports" in favour of a "collective temporal distortion" (185). This "collective potentiality" (189) is fuelled, in the South African context, by a lived vision of transcontinental community fused with a globalised acceptance-meets-questioning of sexual community. Such a reckoning may be challenging within the bounds of Western queer theory, but Africa offers a site of localised potentiality, realising the possibility of life where "multiple forms of belonging in difference adhere to a belonging in collectivity" (20).

In this, African Queerness/Queer Africanness is fundamentally about a politics of *values* – a shared framework of understanding. Through imagining the future it, as a concept, offers empowerment-through-Queerness-through-Africanness, shaping values and thus suturing itself to the redistribution of rights from within a rights-based rhetoric. It offers cartographical assistance for navigating a world of life.

This is the 'gift' Delphi offered in chapter seven. It echoes the "liberatory politics of interconnection" (Carastathis 2013: 942) framed as an ideal in chapter three, or a 'shared framework of values' noted in chapter one. Through their everyday experiences and their continued hope for intervention (and actions taken to make this a reality), LGBTI migrants reveal

how the necropolitical reality of South Africa "operate[s] to our collective disadvantage" (Cho *et al* 2013: 792), and how the journey forward is marked with a primary recognition that "[f]rom shared critical dissatisfaction we arrive at collective potentiality" (*Muñoz 2009:* 189).

Continuing in the political spirit of suggestions for 'doing', Top reflected on transnational collaboration:

> I say thank you for all activists for LGBTI members, all over the world. And we can try to fight about our law, about our right. We need our law to be grow up, and grow up. Because we got the power. The power is in our hands. And we can try to do something in the world. (Narrative 4)

The hope of this project, therefore, is not the naïve hope of the rainbow. It is moving, angry, and inclusive. Immersed in dissatisfaction with death, it is not directed towards specific individuals or groups, but towards wider structures. Hope alone is a false promise, an avatar of death. Coupled with *action*, however, shifts attention towards the future – whilst remaining, through harsh confrontation with reality, engaged with the present. Participant attendance at the workshops is evidence of such action, however tentative. This is not a reflection rooted in passivity, but rather in capturing a pulsing desire.

It stems from a vision of inclusivity beyond the nation. My thoughts turn to a personally formative text, Neil Gaiman's *The Ocean at the End of the Lane*. Gaiman imaginatively questions:

> How can you be happy in this world? You have a hole in your heart. You have a gateway inside you to lands beyond the world you know. They will call you, as you grow. There can never be a time when you forget them. (2013: 185-6)

This resonates with the critical view of this project, and the active disturbance of necropolitics. The knowledge that lands and futures exist beyond the rainbow nation, that there are forged communities calling, are holes in the heart. In this, I position LGBTI migrants, as active agents of change.

In the journey onwards the concept of African Queerness/Queer Africanness honours the narratives of individuals who face intersectional prejudice whilst simultaneously rendering Africa itself as a site of potentiality. This is a space of fluid (un)belonging and (un)being beyond the confines of nationality, but one which is tethered to work done within the structures of the nation. The queer potential of Africa thus lies in its ability to emulate the final epigraph of this thesis: to overcome necropolitical death is the ultimate transgression, and by emulating transcontinental life LGBTI migrants are the ultimate transgressors.

Conclusion

And, Creeping Beneath the Rhododendrons

Summary of Thesis

This thesis has argued that although homophobia and xenophobia are multi-sited realities in South Africa (despite its image implying otherwise), LGBTI migrants in the country constantly navigate daily prejudice in ways which foreground unique configurations of life and hope.

I have argued for a reflexive approach to understanding everyday experiences of homophobia and xenophobia. It has become somewhat of a tired refrain to remark that there is a disconnect between the myth of the country and life 'on the ground'. This project has shifted beyond this familiar observation and instead pried open formative discourses and realities to offer four key original interpretations and contributions:

Firstly, I have suggested that an intersectional sensibility pulls together wider social attitudes and histories concerning sexuality and nationality. I offer this explicitly in chapters three and four, but this approach has been adopted throughout the thesis, making a concerted effort to move beyond the limiting boundaries of inclusions and exclusion. Remaining connected to an awareness of non-linear flows of power, identity and structures, this thesis has 'refracted' the disconnect between the image of the country, as explicitly explored in chapters one and two, and the reality. This refraction has emphasised that, on a general level of contextualisation, belonging in South Africa often violently resists same-sex sexualities and non-native nationalities. This manifests as nationalism which embraces attitudes of exceptionalism, denialism and indigeneity (notably evident in the case studies on xenophobia presented in chapter two). These are reinforced by leaders, media spectacle, and assumptions of categorical homogeneity (articulated in the contextual review of chapter one). In turn, this feeds a continental rhetoric that 'homosexuality is unAfrican'; that to be LGBTI *and* an African migrant are discursively incompatible.

Secondly, however, I have shifted beyond this critique to present empirical manifestations of this discourse, as evidenced in the 'micro' analyses of chapters five, six and seven. I argue in chapters one and three that queer and necropolitical perspectives can be used in an intersectional evaluation of everyday life. Through an applied lens of queer necropolitics, then, one may recognise that homo-/xenophobic attitudes, structures, practices and mediated

engagements function to relegate LGBTI migrants to social death worlds. In these spaces, as the journeys of the participants reflect, prejudice is both normalised and anticipated. The key state structures, which form the focus of chapter five, mark LGBTI migrants as undesirable: as a 'double threat'. This view is entrenched at both the societal and the mediated levels. As argued in chapters six and seven, the social and structural pressures to categorise oneself according to recognised categories sheds light on how the intersectionality of life is neglected in South Africa. These pressures are both physical and psychological, as chapter seven illustrates: structural expectations are mirrored by imagined practices of switching between/melding Africanness and LGBTIness. I argue that this speaks to the formative tensions outlined in chapters one and two, but that this goes beyond a simple linear disconnect between image and reality. Instead, within the necropolitical frame presented, these pressures render LGBTI migrants as the living dead, superficially tolerated to maintain an image of South African acceptance but never fully integrated into the deceptive ideal of the rainbow nation.

In evidencing this claim, I offer a **third** contribution: that South African necropolitics has the unintended effect of enabling a re-imagining of categories that are perceived to be, and are structurally presented as, homogenous. This observation in chapter seven, which draws on the engagements of chapters five and six, frames various transgressions which challenge normative definitions of Africanness and sexuality. I argue that these combinations explicitly resist the confines of national belonging and Western discourses of categorisation. This gives way to a fluidity of subjectivity which favours personal resonance and action over political correctness and circular preoccupation with the self. Through this I argue that practices of switching and melding – which I take care in evidencing throughout chapters five, six and seven – not only demonstrate a lived grappling with the formative discourse from chapter one that 'homosexuality is unAfrican', but importantly reveal how homosexuality *is* African. The narratives expose a flow of hope which propels the lived qualities of being *both* African and LGBTI.

Central to this, therefore, is the suggestion that through these processes of redefinition LGBTI migrants offer temporary seepages of life. These moments are revealed throughout the analysis as fleeting points of hope. This liminal seepage has facilitated my unique perspective, and **fourth** contribution, for understanding both context and experience. The participants, through their forced confrontation with questions of belonging, sexuality and nationality, offer a queerness that is rooted in Africanness, and an Africanness that is rooted in queerness. The emphasis here is on solidarity, action, and transcontinentality. I present these seepages of life as African Queerness/Queer Africanness, which I name at the end of chapter seven and in

chapter eight as a contributory critical intervention and as a localised 'addition' to queer theory, initially problematised in chapter one.

Through an emphasis on transcontinental life I ultimately present a future-driven critique of South African necropolitics. I argue that African Queerness/Queer Africanness utilises existing social structures to look beyond nationality whilst simultaneously allowing room for national affiliation; that it celebrates (rather than wholly critiques) transnational influence, but imbues seemingly Western labels with local meaning; that it shifts nationalistic views of affiliation away from aggressive processes of othering, and instead favours a reconciliatory emphasis on community and acceptance. I note that this is not a permanent state of being or engagement, and offer suggestions for how this concept may be actualised both practically and conceptually.

As per the suggestions presented in chapter eight, this is not a concept rooted in an intellectual space of deceptive hope. It is a passionate, pleading, an active *doing* committed to bringing about change regardless of widespread solidarity. It is open-ended and embracing, but I show that it is not dependent on approval. Or rather, the participants show – through *living* rather than dying – that it is not dependant on approval.

The recommendations that the participants offer are a primary point of actualising the academic research conducted in this project. The measures which they suggest should be scrutinised further and actioned by those in activist positions. Certainly the practical points conveyed above in 'Everyday Interventions' are not outside the realm of possibility – and it is my hope that NGOs will engage with them and process them their resources allow. Indeed, as a step in remaining ethically committed to this project I published a 'report-back' on my initial findings, which I provided to PASSOP and Access Chapter 2 to use as they saw fit (Beetar 2016). I also envision my findings being used to further sensitity in LGBTI-specific spaces, where historical divides and (dis)privileges may (unintentionally) disregard intersectional solidarities. This may take the form of wider inclusion at local film and literary festivals (coupled with local governmental support of such initiatives – my home context makes me think of the Durban International Film Festival, the Durban Gay and Lesbian Film Festival, and Time of the Writer). Of course, artistic projects which speak to the intersection of homophobia/xenophobia still need to gain wider momentum – but it is my hope that perhaps my findings may help shape their directions.

Regarding the suggestion for greater dialogue between the government and community, the arguments and findings of this thesis have highlighted a particular possibility for

intellectual and practical engagement: to speak about shared values within, but beyond, questions of nationhood or fractured identity politics. I envision this taking form in spaces such as those dedicated to annual conversations about the meaning of 'Africa Day', or at debates held on Mandela Day. In these spaces, the intellectual content can drive engagement with a wider audience. These spring to mind as I am aware of the excellent work that the Community of Mandela Rhodes Scholars does in promoting such events at community level throughout South Africa. I would challenge those in positions of organisation and leadership to engage directly with LGBTI migrants and to create additional spaces which, as the participants noted, foster feelings of action, mutual respect and connection.

This may flow into those in-between spaces of opinion pieces and popular commentary on the state (and State) of South Africa. The intellectual conclusion of this project is such that questions of progress and change may be offered within the nation, but need to challenge hegemonic assumptions about belonging (and those dangerous necropolitical ideas of loyalty, patriotism and entitlement). Thus, articles that regularly discuss racism, or classism, or sexism (such as those which appear on the Mail & Guardian's *ThoughtLeader* platform), should argue for reform from an intersectional perspective – and beyond this, use ideas of Queer Africanness/African Queerness to argue for individual and societal reflection. This will hopefully be extended into the academic realm, where my contribution may be used to pry open new possibilities and remain critical of structures which seem to offer a 'better alternative' but merely reinforce existing power dynamics.

In such an academic engagement, then, this thesis ultimately reveals that the forces of xenophobia and homophobia, which manifest as methods to maintain necropolitics, produce the conditions for liminal unbelonging. This surpasses the structures that work to subjugate. In presenting this understanding I have offered a conceptual fracturing of existing ideas of identity-based progress. This is an open-ended approach to possibility and potentiality. Through focusing on transcontinental solidarity, and through actively collaborating at sites of identified intervention, meaningful purpose may be found in a shared commitment to values of dignity and reconciliation, regardless of sexuality or nationality.

Through the bringing together of seemingly opposing subjectivities and forces, just like the joining together of Mandela and Rhodes, I have argued that new modes of being may imaginatively transcend existing ways of thinking.

Final Personal Reflection

I could not foresee the outcome of my research. Obviously I anticipated certain experiences due to my awareness of the power dynamics within the overarching social structures of South Africa. But I could not foresee a resolution or a path forward. I did not set out to reconceptualise a workable queer theory for South Africa, and I did not plan on grappling with ideas of Africanness. However, my partnership with my participants led me on these journeys, and I have relished them.

On the whole, reflecting on my synthesis of the two analytic components of this thesis makes me aware of a personal shift in thinking. As I shared in my introduction, this project grew from personal frustrations over a lack of belonging in a context which, for the most part, expected me to belong, and to *want* to belong, whilst simultaneously telling me I could only belong in certain prescribed ways. This frustration evolved, through being exposed to that tense space of Mandela and Rhodes, into a personal commitment to positive social change as much as into a desire to deconstruct and destroy all that is sacred to conservative heteropatriarchal nationalism. As I mentioned above, my distaste for discussions of 'hope' and 'potential', while witnessing and experiencing varying degrees of hostile exclusion, fuelled what I assumed would translate purely as a scathing and conclusive dismissal of the status quo.

But arriving at such a blanket dismissal is not a productive critique. Yes, it would be extraordinary if we stripped the continent bare and eliminated nations and poverty and prejudice – but this is fantastically fanciful. Solutions must be found by striking a balance between stripping down, building up, and navigating within. It is about developing the enabling conditions whilst using the already-existing enabling tools. In the face of symbolic and physical death questing to build *new* tools seems unnecessarily indulgent.

So I find that the desire to deconstruct, and the frustration with a rhetoric of potential, still exist – but this research process has forced me to confront hues of possibility to which I may have previously been blind. Most meaningful in this is that I did not anticipate the hope that was shared in the research sessions. As I explored, this is not a false hope encouraged by, and in service of, a system of oppression: it is a hope fuelled by anger and action, directed partly towards that very system. I think it would have been impossible to fully anticipate this hopefulness. As I write this I think back on my views when I began this project and I can picture myself rolling my eyes at the mention of hope and optimism. Yet, as I reflect, I recognise that even in a radical anarchism, or a transgressive queerness, there is fragment of hope; a view of an alternative. This is perhaps often lost in the righteous raging and feelings of being

overwhelmed by an incessant onslaught of forces which strip us of power and privilege. The participants in this project, however, succeeded in visiblising their hope through their African Queerness/Queer Africanness, which is fundamentally bound to pursuing accountability.

Of course, I encountered processes of fusing 'opposites' in service of a shared politics of values in the Mandela Rhodes spaces. As energising and formative as these were they always resonated, it seems, on a level greater than individuality. Being guided by Mandela and the (very, very distilled) entrepreneurial essence of Rhodes (without the rampant colonialism, that is – though perhaps with a *touch* of the alleged sexual deviance) produced a vision of long-term change on a grand level. While my colleagues were putting this into practice in their own fields – through genetic engineering in the forestry industry, to drama-based therapy with the deaf community, to teaching scientific method using Shakespeare – I struggled to understand how such changes could be articulated in a cultural studies space, where attention is given to the importance of everyday individual identifications. Reading back over drafts of chapters one and two, written before my fieldwork, I am aware of my scepticism towards ideas such as 'decolonising thought' and creating a 'politics of solidarity'. It is easy to explain what needs to be changed – it is more challenging to locate 'how to effect such change'.

A 'how' is partly what this project has come to offer. The shared critical dissatisfaction that gives way to a potential future, which may be embraced through an immersion in a contextual overview and everyday understanding, underpins hope-in-action. This is the possibility that my research process has opened me to. I am struck, in various discussions about various intersections, by a placating trend which effectively places the onus of changing and educating those with privilege and power on those without. I regularly encounter views that it is the duty of the oppressed to educate the oppressors. I appreciate, of course, that if no-one steps forward then nothing will be resolved and the status quo will flourish.

Yet this often seems to involve setting aside one's own difficulties and traumas for the benefit of slow and steady progress, effectively reaffirming privilege (whereby "I" am in the privileged position and "you" will have to explain and convince me to change). This merely extends injustice, to say nothing of the impracticalities of this expectation when located within the everyday realities framed in this thesis. What emerges as key in this project – and what marks those successful intersectional endeavours referenced in chapter three – is the temporal quality of the alternatives to this harsh appointment of duty. Seepages of impossibility facilitate moments of alliance, and, moving forward, action drives a hope that transcends structures of containment. Hope, in this way, is embracing.

More than this, though, it is an open-ended inclusiveness. The structures of state-driven oppression (those daily agents and forces of necropolitics) are utilised to the end of envisioning a future *beyond* the status quo. This is not a linear narrative or a one-dimensional journey: it is a sub-structural seepage, and it is empowering. For in it there exists the possibility of self-identification and self-discovery regardless of perceived categorisation: one may feel solidarity with a vision of transcontinental support even though one may not identify as an LGBTI migrant. Yet the hope does not rely on this – it goes forward without the approval of those who may yet feel comfortable or self-aware enough to set aside the rigidity of labels in favour of respect-driven action.

I offer this intellectual holding merely as a point of insight into my own self-reflection. It is my growth of thought, starkly unexpected. But I do not want to end this thesis on an eat-pray-love-esque note. The purpose of this thesis was to gain an understanding and navigate points for action, not to grow and live my 'researcher truth'. This is just a by-product of an intersectional approach to investigation. It would, to be frank, be quite superficial (and untrue) to say that this has been a transformative process that has wholly redefined my sense of purpose and belonging. I still feel a deep sense of discomfort with imposed identity labels, particularly ones of nationality. However, through reflection I can acknowledge that what this process *has* defined is a sense of possibility within multiple unbelongings.

Therefore, I look back upon my framing in the introduction – that this project is a mapping of liminality. A favourite moment in *The Ocean at the End of the Lane* captures this concluding space for me:

> Adults are content to walk the same way, hundreds of times, or thousands; perhaps it never occurs to adults to step off the paths, to creep beneath rhododendrons, to find the spaces between fences. (Gaiman 2013: 74)

The research journey has been a process of finding the spaces between the fences, and this project is a map of some of these concealed routes. The beauty of the shift from oppression to democracy, of a progressive legal system, of comparative media accountability – of all these 'exceptional' social structures – lines the paths that we are expected to follow; the paths adults are content to walk. But this beauty, and the seeming beauty of the promise of life, obscures the paths beneath the structures – the avenues behind and below the rhododendrons. The status quo often rigidly shapes and enforces ideas of life, and so what this project offers, really, is a cartographic sketch for empowered unbelonging.

Just as the non-cultural studies reader may have been slightly bemused at my sharing of personal history in the introduction, so too may they be wondering what the point of this section is. The 'point' is a collective breath; a shared moment to pause, hold these ideas, and signpost where we have come from in order to understand where we may next creep. The point is to recognise and appreciate the spaces between the fences that the participants have shown us, and to make sure we do not crawl back out and take the easier path like responsible adults.

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> PTA – Pretoria workshop (Access Chapter 2)
>
> Narrative – Collated individual narratives shared in private at both sessions
>
> Solo – Solo interview conducted in Cape Town

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Appendix A: Participant Information Document

Matthew Beetar PhD Project – Experiences in South Africa. Information Sheet.

Hello! Thank you for your interest in my project, which aims to understand and listen to your experiences of homophobia and xenophobia in South Africa.

This document will give you some important information about the project, and about your participation. Please read through each page carefully. If you are unsure about any of the information, please speak to me. However, I will read through the document with you in person and answer any questions you may have.

Who is carrying out the research?

This research is for my Doctorate at the University of Sussex, England. The research is funded by the University. I am conducting the research, and you can get in touch with me or my supervisors as follows:

> **Matthew Beetar**
> mdb29@sussex.ac.uk
> **Dr Sharif Mowlabocus (Supervisor)**
> s.j.mowlabocus@sussex.ac.uk
> **Dr Paul Boyce (Supervisor)**
> p.boyce@sussex.ac.uk

What is the purpose of this project?

This research sets out to understand your experiences of prejudice in South Africa. It considers how you feel like you 'fit in' in the South African context, and engages with you about your experiences of homophobia and xenophobia. It aims to listen to your stories and ask you about the role that the media plays in your life. It gives you the chance to make suggestions about changes you would make in the media. It gives the opportunity to record and present your own personal stories – sharing as much as you feel comfortable with.

You have been invited to participate in a key part of this research: a focus group workshop. In this I am seeking to better understand everyday experiences in South Africa in relation to how you define yourself. I am also seeking to understand the different media forms that you use and the roles that the media plays in making you feel like you belong in South Africa – or feel like you don't belong.

What happens in the workshop?

You will be in a room at the PASSOP office along with me and between 1 and 9 other participants, and 3 staff from PASSOP. Some of these participants may be your friends, but some may be strangers. All of them will identify in similar ways to you, and all interactions will happen in the safe space of the office. We will have introductions and a relaxed, but guided, discussion about life in South Africa. Using drawing, artwork, story-telling and other creative activities we will speak about our shared experiences of homophobia and xenophobia.

*It is important to know that you will **not** be asked to share anything you do not feel comfortable sharing.*

I will ask a range of questions about various different topics. These will include why you came to South Africa; how you would describe yourself; negative experiences you've had in relation to your nationality and your sexuality; how the law protects or doesn't protect you; what media you use; how, and if, you would change things in the media to make life better or easier; what stories you would like the rest of South Africa to know.

You will be asked questions about your own views and your own personal experiences.

*I will **not** ask you about your own private sex lives, or ask you about anything you do not wish to discuss in a group.*

The workshop will give you a chance to share your stories by speaking, by drawing, by writing, or by moving. The workshop will be recorded on a video camera. The video recording will be watched by me and my supervisors, who are highly professional and **bound by the law not to share your information**. The videos will be stored highly securely. I will transcribe the videos and use the notes to feed into my writing.

Free food/drinks and lunch will be provided!

Confidentiality

I take confidentiality very seriously in this project. No identifying information (such as your name) will be included in any of the reports, publications or presentations produced by this project. All identifying information including your consent form will be stored on a password-protected hard drive and/or in a secure filing cabinet.

All information will be securely destroyed and/or deleted at the end of the project lifespan.

I will ask you at the start of the workshop if you would be happy for me to use any parts of the video recording to share your stories. If you do not want anyone to see you on video or hear you on video then you will be given a **red sticker**, and I will make sure that your face and voice never appear in my work. If you are happy for your face and voice to be shown you will be given a **green sticker**.

*The choice to appear in the video is completely up to you. I will not place any pressure on you. Everyone will be recorded for me and my supervisors alone to view, but only if you **willingly choose** a green sticker will you potentially appear in any videos I share (which I talk about below).*

Along with choosing a red or green sticker, as a member of the workshop you will be asked to agree to a consent form. It is important for my work that I hear your stories, and hear what matters to you. Therefore, at the start of the workshop I will read out the consent form, and we will discuss any additional items that you may want to add to the list. We will agree as a group to respect each other, and to keep each other's' stories private. I will write these on a board. We will then take a tea break, and before we start talking in the workshop I will ask you to come sit in front of a camera, and I will ask you if you understand the consent form and if you agree to it. **You will also be agreeing to a confidentiality clause, prohibiting the disclosure of names or any other information by any research participant.** This verbal agreement will be the equivalent of you signing a consent form. This video agreement will not be viewed by anyone other than myself and my supervisors.

All workshop participants will be required agree to a clause that prohibits disclosure of names of other participants or any information given during the workshop. However, I cannot guarantee that other participants will subsequently keep such information confidential.

These are standard procedures employed in this form of research.

How the research gets used.

The overall aim of the project is to develop an evidence-based understanding of experiences of prejudice in South Africa. Beyond this it also looks to understand how you use the media, and how the media could be used to change any negative perceptions and experiences. It aims to give you a space to share your stories in whatever form you choose.

The workshop will feed into my PhD project. This will presented as one large thesis, to be handed in to the University of Sussex on the projected date of September 2016. The thesis will include analyses of **initial findings**, and explanations of some of your stories.

Your stories will be included in my project as a way of making sure *you* are heard. This project is about working **with** you to change perceptions and make people aware of what happens every day. How you choose to share your stories in the workshop will determine how I include them in my project. However, all forms of sharing are subject to the same confidentiality agreement and privacy protection regulations.

Some of the work may be adapted to presentations for conferences or non-profit organisations who wish to be involved in providing assistance or support – the type of support will be based on what you recommend in the workshop. Only my notes on the workshop will be used for these, unless you consent for videos of you speaking to be shown. **If you do not wish for anyone else to see the videos of you then I will not show them.**

Until I type up the project you are free to withdraw at any point.

If you are interested in my reports and discussions of the work I will gladly email you copies. Alternatively, I will make some of the stories available online if you wish, or send them to your local community centres.

It is anticipated that the project will be typed up in draft form by January 2016. If you wish to withdraw at any point, please contact me before this month, as after this time I will be unable to remove your stories from my data. After the PhD has been completed the information will be stored and then destroyed.

In summary:

- *Your participation in the workshop is voluntary.*
- *You will <u>not</u> be asked questions regarding your own sexual history. You will only share what you are comfortable sharing.*
- *Your name will not be used in research publications.*
- *What you say in the workshop will be recorded.*
- *What you say in the workshop might be quoted but will be anonymised.*
- *Videos of you will only be used if you explicitly allow me to use them.*
- *All participants must consent via private video at the workshop.*

- *All participants must agree to abide by the confidentiality clause set out in the consent form but the researchers <u>cannot guarantee participant's subsequently hold to this agreement.</u>*
- *You may withdraw your involvement in the research at any time up January 2016.*
- *You will be provided with free food and drinks at the workshop.*

Appendix B: Informed Consent Document

Experiences of Prejudice in South Africa – Workshop Participant Consent Document

Read this consent form <u>after</u> you have understood the information in the Participant Information Sheet, before you attend the workshop. This consent form will be read during the workshop. As a group we will agree to this, and add any additional guides we feel are important. These additional guides will be placed on a whiteboard. You will then be asked to agree to this form in front of a camera (which will not be shared with anyone). This verbal agreement will be substitute for signing this form.

In verbally agreeing to this form, you are agreeing to the following statements:

- *I understand that in agreeing to take part in the workshop I am willing to discuss my life in a group setting.*

- *I understand that topics of discussion will include my own personal experiences of prejudice – violence, discrimination, hatred – and my own identities.*

- *I understand that discussion will occur in a safe space.*

- *I understand that my participation in the workshop is completely voluntary, that I can choose not to participate in part or all of the project, and that I can withdraw at any stage of the project up until 01 January 2016, without being penalised or disadvantaged in any way.*

- *I consent to the audio recording being listened to by Matthew Beetar, Sharif Mowlabocus and Paul Boyce. I consent to the use of sections of a fully anonymised transcript in publications.*

- *I understand that any information provided by others in the workshop is confidential and I agree not to discuss, share or divulge any of the contents of the workshop to a third party.*

- *I understand that no information that I disclose will lead to the identification of myself or any individual in the project reports, publications or presentations.*

- *I understand that choosing a green sticker, as explained in the participant information sheet, means that I am willing for video of me in the group to be shown to other researchers and activists. I understand that choosing a red sticker means that I only want video of me to be seen by the researcher.*

- *I consent to the processing of my personal information for the purposes explained to me. I understand that such information will be treated in accordance with the terms of the Data Protection Act 1998.*

- *I consent to the guidelines formed by myself and other workshop participants which were visible on the whiteboard.*

I have read/listened to this information, and the information on the participant information sheet. By giving the following information in front of the camera I realise that I am verbally agreeing to all of these points:

> *Date:*
> *Name:*
> *Age:*

I may be contacted by the researcher **only** as follows:

Name:

_____

Email/number/chosen form of contact:

_____