

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN



Water and Sociality in Khayelitsha: An Ethnographic Study

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DECLARATION

I, Minga Mbweck Kongo, prepared this original work to meet the University of Cape Town's PhD requirements. I, as a result of this, declare that this is my personal and original research. Neither the substance nor any part of this thesis has been submitted in the past or submitted at any other university or institution. I am aware of plagiarism. Each contribution to and quotation in this thesis from other people's work(s) has been acknowledged and cited and referenced fully. I am responsible for the ideas expressed in this thesis as this project is my work in concept and execution.

Signed by candidate

Minga Mbweck Kongo

Date: 09 August 2022

DEDICATION

To my parents: Minga Mbengele Mikobi and Ngokadi Minga.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

An old and inspiring African proverb says that “It takes a village to raise a child”, and likewise, it has taken “a whole village” of supervisors, research participants and assistants, translators and transcribers, colleagues, UCT, post-doctorate, research fellows to bring about this *Water and Sociality* thesis together.

I acknowledge that a list of everyone who supported me may be very long, but the list may be very long to complete. Starting this PhD and my ethnographic fieldwork before the lockdown and completing it during the lockdown imposed by Covid-19 has been the most challenging but rewarding experience.

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During the fieldwork, I have contacted and talked to many residents from the full range of concentrations and have fielded challenges from optimistic, contentious, independent people unintimidated by their incompleteness, differences in rank, age, and life experience. I am deeply indebted to the community that fully embraced me and created a convivial space that facilitated data collection during the unprecedented time. My sincere thanks to Mrs Mvandaba, Khosi, Mfundisi and his wife who I named Mam Mkhulu, who was always bursting with ideas; also, Nomfundiso, Bonggi, Dabawo and others; their participation extended far beyond their specially made response to include face to face and remote interviews, for which I am most grateful.

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I have worked closely with my colleague Ahmet Sait Akcay, and cannot thank him enough for meeting me regularly, for his enthusiasm and support, and for generously sharing his ideas, knowledge and experience that shape this work.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYM

Aids-Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ANC-African National Congress
AnSA- Anthropology Southern Africa
DA- Democratic Alliance
Covid-19- Coronavirus disease of 19
DWA- Department of Water Affairs
DWAF-Department of Water Affairs and Forestry
DWS- Department of Water and Sanitation
HIV- Human Immunodeficiency Virus
RSA- Republic of South Africa
Stats SA- Statistics South Africa
UCT- University of Cape Town
UNICEF- United Nations Children’s Fund
WHO- World Health Organisation
WSA- Water Service Authority
WWF-SA- Wildlife Foundation South Africa

ABSTRACT

This study examines forms of social relationships created around unequal municipal water distribution in South Africa. Using the case of Khayelitsha, the study investigates residents' use of water to sustain their livelihood and build personhood. Water mobilises the formation of relationships in myriad ways. How residents, collectively and individually, imagine, negotiate and construct their future pathways around resources available to them in a social group is explored. Ethnographic tools are used to address how social formations are created around municipal water in Khayelitsha. The study looks into how inequalities related to access to water in Cape Town are produced with inequitable development patterns. Using incompleteness and conviviality as framework, the study seeks to understand how ideas of social formation, belonging, marginality, and physical and social mobility are produced, reproduced and contested around water. By focusing on the strategies deployed by residents, this study also seeks to describe the challenges of inadequate water access experienced by residents in less-provisioned areas. The multiple relations with, and complexities of, municipal water are chronicled, as well as how Khayelitsha residents think about, relate and respond to water. The empirical data reveal several structural issues characterising the formation of social relations: incompleteness, impoverishment, marginalisation, water access and minimal opportunities. Despite many challenges, frustration, and heavy reliance on communal taps, tanks, water trucks, and hydrants, shack dwellers particularly cherish an ideal of self-sufficiency with the limited amount of water they access. In this quest, they maintain social relations and resistance to the political economy of water. They achieve this by mobility from one settlement to another, maintaining a strong sense of community, belonging, social relationships, and household interdependence, connected to a sense of incompleteness and, to a more considerable extent, Ubuntu. This social practice is manifested in various forms: neighbourliness, water usage at communal points, land occupations, and strikes, amongst others. By combining the structural issues and aspects of social practices provided above, water is seen as a substance that constructs social formations through the phenomena of incompleteness and conviviality. The data were collected during several field visits between February 2020 and March 2021 through observation of interactions and participation in residents' social activities and formal and informal interviews and group discussions with a representative sample of residents in Khayelitsha.

Keywords: incompleteness, conviviality, marginality, social relations, water, sanitation, mobility, informal settlements.

INITIAL REMARKS:
IN MY NAKED EYE COMES THE NAKED REVELATION ABOUT WATER

One of the most compelling results to have emerged from this ethnographic work is the idea that water and the environment play an active role in constructing social relationships. The ‘I’ of this study presumes a particular experience and positionality. As an anthropologist, I adopt one of the merits of the discipline: to ‘write in’ the intimacy of oneself with the residents and those who participated in this research. For ethical reasons this study included and excluded some visual images of the residents who opened their houses or spaces to me to collect data; far from being a passive process whereby I focus on the narratives and specify the results, to examine the state of lacking water in informal settlements that forges social relationships.

I set out to describe the residents’ relationships with water, and water ideas central to democratic South Africa. Due to Covid-19, the methods, in this regard, were more complex. The social, political and economic changes in South Africa post the 1994 period with the current Covid-19, presented a new conceptual apparatus with which to describe social relations, incompleteness¹, and access to essential services like water. Residents’ narratives provided a profound description of the South African context.

This ethnographic study provides a compendium of local current thinking around water in South Africa. Here again, due to the elongated and recurring Covid-19 induced lockdown, the approach was a complex one. I observed, participated, and asked residents to describe their experiences concerning water. I avoided academic jargon while interacting with residents, which was helpful in residents’ responses, and enhanced their participation in the study.

¹ See more details in chapter two

Terms, such as ‘liquid shit’, *iMbacu*, *Limbacwa*, *iTyotyombe*, *eMatyotyombeni*, *EziMbacwini* and *AmaQaba*,² are used in the way that research participants used them to express their predicaments, identify an area or another, and are self-identified. These terms were employed in my conversations with residents. Twenty-eight years since the transition from apartheid to democracy, the South Africans who participated in this research identified themselves and spoke about their identity in terms of ‘clanship’, ‘ethnicity’ and ‘in colours’ and ‘in metaphors’.

I also describe the residents’ predicaments and relationships with water, which consist of a series of challenges that constituted the problem in Khayelitsha. Water and Khayelitsha reflect incompleteness in social relationships; but struggle over access and meaning are crucial components of struggles over the changing nature of residents themselves.

I should point out that, though the majority of participants were women, this study does not claim to be part of, or fall within the discipline of Gender Studies. I describe, reflect on, and analyse their engagement and contributions in detail in the empirical chapters.

How ‘new’ is New Khayelitsha?

Valuable insight from residents’ narratives revealed the post-apartheid government’s relationship with notions of ‘pro-poor’ and ‘service delivery’, social relationships, land, culture, belonging, inequality, and identity, with the idea of banning notions such as racial differences, categories, and hierarchies of classification. A different way to understand the current Khayelitsha is the outcome of an individual strand of thought in democracy itself. For many residents, as for the majority of informal and formal houses, the fundamental challenge remains the same: the challenge against material wants, human dignity, belonging, against the wrongs of the past, representation, and for this study – the ‘challenge for water’.

This thesis set out to examine the challenges of water and the formation of social relationships.

² Most of these terms are derogatory words, they are explained and well elaborated in Chapter Five.

I engaged with the academic literature of Nyamnjoh (2002, 2014a, 2014b, 2017, 2018, 2020), Robins (2013a, 2013b, 2014a, 2014b), Taing et al., (2013); Redfield & Robins (2016) and Jackson and Robins (2018), Enqvist and Ziervogel (2019), Mahlanza, Ziervogel and Scott (2016) for example, or in the work of Chitonge (2020a, 2020b) and Ross (2009, 2015), Rodina and Harris (2016), Von Schnitzler (2014). Norvixoxo, Schroeder & Spiegel (2022) to name a few who have researched and reflected critically on the subject.

Concerning Khayelitsha I ethnographically situate water firstly in the contexts of history, mobility and social relationships (See Nyamnjoh, 2002, 2014a, 2014b 2020; 2018; Norvixoxo, Schroeder & Spiegel, 2022): the specific forms that water infrastructure development has taken before 1994 and during the post-1994 period (Chitonge, 2020a, 2020b). Secondly, I situate Khayelitsha in relation to its political, economic and symbolic position with respect to other residential areas (Seekings 1990; Ndengwa et al., 2007:3; Ndengwa, 2007:5, 21; Tshehla, 2002:48). Many scholars have characterised Khayelitsha as a ‘poor’ or ‘marginal area’. In this study, however, I characterise it as a ‘social space that forges social relationships’ (see Nyamnjoh, 2018: Ncapayi, 2013, Borgatta, 1992:1852). Covid-19 has enabled me to think through multiple ways, sometimes confusing contexts that constitute relationships, incompleteness, and conviviality in the present moment in Khayelitsha. Ultimately, with the above, I framed the dissertation using the title: Water and Sociality, to emphasise the fact that water activates life and mediates social relations.

Due to the lockdown caused by Covid-19, I was confronted by the impossibility of being comprehensive in my coverage - therefore, ‘incomplete’. At this stage, I was affected by Covid-19, which claimed dozens of lives and infected many family members. In part, the selection of narratives was determined by whether I could obtain just the information that I wanted from the respondents. Hence there may be some gaps such as information on state and nation, sexuality, water and menstruation, and water and old age. Ultimately, I make no excuses.

Like me, I hope that readers take this as the start of a conversation that might foster policy direction for service delivery; as a first word rather than a last.

Hopefully, in the true sense of incompleteness as mediated by Francis Nyamnjoh as a never-ending process of coming into fruition, this study kindles more interdisciplinary research interest in water and sociality in South Africa and across the African continent.

Khayelitsha, like South Africa, is multilingual, presenting challenges with respect to translation. Translations were provided by the research assistants, who were isiXhosa speakers. In conversations, some texts have been italicised for emphasis. For South Africans, this study offers an understanding of how I describe myself to myself concerning people and in the process of understanding water and sociality. For observers, it offers a detailed account of the articulation between water and social relationships, particularly in a complex and fascinating social context and historical moment. With this conviction, this mode of thinking and writing is presumably allowed in anthropology. This is part of what Nyamnjoh (2017) emphasises in convivial scholarship, which takes knowledge as intersubjective, collaborative and, therefore co-produced.



Figure 1: Modes of water access in Khayelitsha

Clockwise from bottom left: (a) Communal taps and toilet that didn't work for months. This community of TR section has to walk a long distance to access water. (b) Shacks drowned in sewage water. (c) Water access through a communal tap attached to a wooden upright. (d) Researcher pumping water into a communal water tank from a water truck. (e) Water truck. (f) Accessing water through a pipe dug up from the ground. (Photos by Minga, 9 January 2020 and 14 September 2020).

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CHAPTER 1
THINKING BEYOND WATER AND SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS IN KHAYELITSHA

Introduction

This introductory chapter focuses on people's narratives. It describes and interprets the challenges of municipal water access and their impact on social relationships in Khayelitsha. The chapter sets out the focus and background to the study by introducing the research problem, theorising water and the importance of anthropology in search for water. The chapter provides the challenges of municipal water, and further conceptualises research questions, objectives and provides a significance of the research. It argues that water is an element that forges the formation of social relationships and regulates people's behaviour.

This dissertation explores how water contributes to the formation of social relationships with residents in Khayelitsha. My interest in the experiences of both formal and informal houses in Khayelitsha resulted in the constant navigation between the two categories that have different ways of water access. I am using incompleteness as a framework to examine the role of water in forming relationships amongst marginalised people in Khayelitsha. While this chapter merely touches on various pertinent themes related to the study, I give detailed accounts and unpack the many themes addressed throughout the following chapters, which help reveal different bodies of literature around my research.

As water is studied across and within various disciplines, the study draws from multiple subfields in anthropology, such as social, cultural, and medical anthropology, and contributions from African Studies, Environmental Studies, Gender Studies, and Public Health to understand people's relationships with water.

In bringing multiple voices, the study intends to add to a citational practice that, in the words of Judith Butler, promotes ‘epistemological inclusiveness’ (in Ahmed, 2016: 5) by bringing multiple authors and intellectual traditions ‘into a conversation’ in order to understand the narratives and experiences provided by residents, such as Pheliswa, Tim, Lindela, Sipati, Azile, Bongani, Sihle, Chumani and Selwa,³ to name just a few.

Displaced by ‘liquid shit’⁴

After three months of asynchronous and largely remote fieldwork, I revised my fieldwork techniques by observing the lockdown regulations that came into play during the Covid-19 pandemic. The revision allowed easier access to different places in Khayelitsha and facilitated a richer interface with the research participants. During the winter of July 2020, I went for the second leg of my fieldwork in Khayelitsha. While walking along Baden Powell Drive, with a sun hidden under a dark-grey, thick, dense layer of nimbostratus clouds, I met a strong smell and the largest community gathering alongside shacks covered by sewage water. However, what left an indelible impression on my mind was not the crowded, constrained solidarity on the scene, but instead, the connectedness, the spirit of Ubuntu and heated debate on the water of shack dwellers in Khayelitsha.

The debate probed the question of water and sanitation, marginalisation, poverty and health, Ubuntu and dignity in Khayelitsha, prompted by sewage water and unequal water distribution, by communities of Ethembeni, Jerusalema and other settlements and the consequence of being on the margin was centre stage.

Ethembeni, Empholweni, Covid-19, Sanitiser, Gomora, New Dawn, Social Distance, Pandemic Phola Land, to name just a few, are recently occupied settlements of which some were erected during Covid-19. The lack of water also ignited furore and robust debates on water access and social relationships. Shacks flooded by water reaching halfway up them.

³ The names I provide in this thesis are pseudonyms to ensure protection and confidentiality of all the information.

⁴ Liquid shit is a metaphorical term employed by residents of Ethembeni and Jerusalema to describe and express the ambiguity and predicaments of living in an environment where shacks are covered by sewage water, and visible human waste is everywhere. It is an expression used when sewage from blocked toilets overflows into streets and the people’s yard.

I stopped alongside Baden Powell Drive, next to a construction site with weighty types of machinery – tower cranes and bulldozers. Chinua Achebe (1986[1964]:46) says, “The world is like a Mask dancing. If you want to see it well, you do not stand in one place.” Achebe’s snippets motivated me to examine and understand water from many different vantage points: through seeing, hearing and touching, in other words, by taking pictures, asking, observing and participating.

I crossed the road, went slightly downhill, and saw a group of young men busy throwing construction waste into their flooded area, trying to level the ground to salvage their properties. The first sight was that shacks were inside the water halfway up from the ground, massive stagnant water, as high as one to two metres in some parts. Cars were drowned inside the dark brown pool of water sewage characterised by unbearable smells; collapsed shacks all around. It was week eighteen of my fieldwork under the 2020 Stage three lockdown.⁵ The strong wind from the Atlantic Ocean engulfed the area, while one to two metres of sewage water swamped a large part of Ethembeni. No one reported dying in collapsed shacks. Besides, all sorts of waste from human defecation were also visible in the water. Tim (36), one of the residents, painted the following picture:

We were awoken by the noise of our neighbours screaming, ‘*Amanzi acwele wonke ingawo*’ [There is water everywhere] and when I stood up on the floor of my home, I found my feet inside the water. (Tim. Casual conversation in Ethembeni, 28 July 2020).

I took pictures of the area while listening to him. Next to me was an unemployed man, whom I refer to as Lindela (54);⁶ in his late fifties, of medium build. Living alone, using disability grants as a source of livelihood, a sad, indrawn expression. A lonely man with memories. Brief in speech and the precise speech of a man by habit silent for long periods. Well-spoken, though, with some humour, sitting in front of his shack.

⁵ See <https://www.gov.za/covid-19/alert-level-3-coronavirus-covid-19-lockdown>.

⁶ Lindela is an isiXhosa name, meaning, ‘waiting’. I use this name as a metaphor to illustrate the liminal stage of the older man who was waiting for two things: water infrastructure and water and carrying on with his life.

I introduced myself, decided to speak to him;⁷ Lindela sceptically greeted me back. Sitting on the stoep of his shack, I asked him what happened to the area. In a fury he replied:

[...] a burst pipe that had taken place about a few weeks back. The place has never been the same, even some of us salvaged the most we could, but could not get all our belongings, [...] and some have left the place because of the water's height and the rain adding to the disaster. (Lindela. Informal conversation in Ethembeni, 28 July 2020).

While the tension from anger subsided, Lindela made a joke: 'There are fish that live inside this dirty liquid shit'. We laughed together. I took a shovel lying next to him to work the soil and assisted the group of men trying to level the ground with the rubble. Coming towards me, Sipati, a young lady, mid-twenties, strolling. I stopped working, greeted her, and started a conversation with her. Sipati lived in the area and decided to show me where her shack was – a bit far from us. There are similarities between Sipati's and Lindela's stories, with one slight difference: her shack was deeper inside the sewage water with all her damaged belongings.

Consequently, like many other residents with similar experiences, Sipati found an alternative and relocated for the time being to live with her relatives in the surrounding area.

She stated that it would not have made a difference even if she had bought the rubble; it would have cost her because the amount of water was much higher, and the soil would be sucked by the water. I asked her to elaborate on her survival skill and experience with the flooded homes, combined with lack of water and the Covid-19.

I had experienced many disadvantages with water even before this sewage tragedy occurred here in Ethembeni [...]; I did not [and still don't] have taps and toilets.

⁷ A portion of my principal research participants primarily spoke the isiXhosa language. Most of my conversations in the research process were primarily in isiXhosa, which I have since translated to English. I discuss language issues in the research process in Chapter 3 in the ethics section of this ethnography.

I walk far to get water either from the truck or tank in Island or Emsindweni.⁸ ... To defecate, I have to walk to use the toilets at the taxi rank; at night, I do not go out; I use a basin. It costs R2 to access the toilet, but I cross over to the bush if I do not have the money. Yea, we are at risk of getting infected with other diseases or Covid-19 because the water we drink is filthy, and sometimes I add a little bit of Jik [bleach/sodium hypochlorite]; sometimes, I boil the water. (Sipati. Informal conversation in Ethembeni, 28 July 2020).

Sipati spoke in a monologue for up to ten minutes and possibly more, sometimes in the conversation. Sipati seemed to have been looking for a space to talk, and, indeed, our conversation was long – lasting more than an hour. She shared her predicaments, a passion for my work, and shared more of it. In the passage, Sipati raised some issues that concerned water, dignity and Covid-19. Perhaps the most pertinent question of water has increasingly come to look specifically at water access in the past years in Khayelitsha. How does the municipality get an active interest and better care of their residents? Robins (2013a, 2013b, 2014a, 2014b), Rodina and Harris (2016), Jackson and Robins (2018) and Norvixoxo, Schroeder and Spiegel (2022) observe that water and sanitation patterns within Khayelitsha cannot be addressed and understood if unequal distribution and the reasons for lack of service delivery remain unexamined. The use of, or access to, water occurs in cultural, social, economic and historical contexts and is interconnected with assigned norms and values that commonly differ according to the community.

The above narratives recognise a close relationship between water, sanitation, health, dignity and the mode of access, that forge social relationships.

By then, it was getting late. I said goodbye and promised Sipati to come back again for another visit. One of the benefits of returning to the community where one has previously worked is the opportunity to observe changes over time (Scheper-Hughes, 1985) both at a structural level and at the social and individual level.

⁸ Island and Emsindweni are the settlements opposite Ethembeni, erected in a similar fashion to Ethembeni. Island was established in 2018, while Emsindweni in 2016 just before the Covid-19 pandemic.

Sipati, in this process, affirmed that actual research is rarely ever just a distanced process and ‘is always relational’ (Posel & Ross, 2014:10) and that building relationships is fundamental in social science (Singer, 1995; Nyamnjoh, 2009, 2018).

My bladder was full due to the water I had ingested. To affirm what Sipati told me, I used the toilet at the taxi rank, two hundred metres away from our conversation place. I paid two rand (R2) to use a flushable toilet in a reasonable condition, but without hand sanitiser.

I moved off from Ethembeni; along the way, searching for the burst pipe as stipulated by Lindela, not far from Ethembeni, walking relatively slowly along Baden Powell Drive. Along the left side of the road lay a long pipe that caused the sewage water to overflow. I kept walking; then, I came upon three scattered, isolated shacks. I noticed that the door of one was open.

I decided to go up to the area and see if I can score an interview with anyone. I knocked on the door; a little girl of about nine years of age, opened it and allowed me to enter her home. Inside the one-room shack, a couple in their mid- and late-30s – Azile (thirty-six) and Bongani (thirty-nine) – are busy fixing a hole in the roof. We exchanged introductions and I told them that I was busy researching water and I would like to talk to them about it. The place seemed different from Ethembeni. It is Phola Land, which means ‘to cool down’. We all burst into a laugh.

I asked the couple how they accessed water in an isolated area like that.

Besikwindawo yakwa BB, eli candelo sikulo litsha [...] kwaye kutsha nje sisakha ityotyombe lethu malunga neeveki ezintathu ubudala. Sihamba ngeenyawo ukuya kwindawo yethu yakudala size sifumane amanzi okusebenzisa yonke imihla ekhayeni lethu. Sinenkonkxa ye-25-litre kunye nesitya esinye se-40-litre. [We were in the BB area, this section we are in is new [...], and we recently built our shack about three weeks old. We walk to our old area and get water to use daily in our home. We have a 25-litre container and one basin of 40 litres.]. (Azile. Informal conversation in Phola Land, 28 July 2020).

I asked the reason for relocation from the BB area. Like Sipati from Ethembeni, they left because of homes flooded with the sewage water. Azile offered to walk with me and to see where they resided before relocating to Phola Land.

As we approached the BB section close to the main road, Azile showed me a municipal building that serves as the sewage plant, with the filthy running sewage water. As I was busy recording, Bongani said:

Amanzi owathabathayo ividiyo ngawona manzi amdaka, kodwa sele uza kubona apho siya khona. Lo mzimbo wokugutyula ilindle wavalwa ixesha elide, kwaye amagosa ayazi ukuba ngunobangela wokugqabhuka kombhobho obangele ukuba abantu baphume kule ndawo kuba isiya iba yingozi empilweni. [The water you are taking a video of is the actual sewage water, but you are about to see where we are going. This sewage plant closed down for quite some time, and officials know that it is the cause of the drain bursting that made people move out of the area because it is becoming a problem to our health.] (Bongani. Informal conversation in Phola Land, 28 July 2020).

As we stood in the area, I asked similar questions to those at Ethembeni on how the water situation affects their life and if they have ever experienced any illnesses or diarrhoea because of the water. Azile looked at me without a smile, followed by a most infectious laugh and a chuckling way of speaking and asked me to look at her face and neck.

What was visible were facial rashes, particularly on her neck. Immediately she called Sihle, her nine-year-old daughter, who stood next to Bongani (the father). The latter presented the same skin rashes symptoms, far worse than her mother. Azile stated that residents from the same area have become sick because of the sewage water. She took me to the communal toilets; I heard water running freely through the toilets. ‘There are five toilets here, but only one is working, and we have many residents in this area,’ she said. I took pictures of the toilets. After she showed me where she and her family previously lived, the drizzling suddenly stopped. We walked back to their new home in Phola Land. Phola Land and Jerusalema have similar challenges in terms of water and sanitation service.

As we walked, I saw no visible toilet structure; I asked a couple more questions about defecation strategy again. Bongani took his shovel; we walked a few steps away from the shack; I asked if I could take a picture, I took out my video recorder; he started digging the sand out, I heard a noise from the shovel. I saw a wooden door on the surface, and he opened it from below. It is a self-made toilet with five crates deep and below with tissues.

He closed up the wooden door.

Issues arising from the couple's conversations represent what has been much of the focus of this study. These introductory narratives illuminate people's challenges and the risks residents face, and their vulnerabilities when accessing water, specifically through communal means. Many cases are shared in various chapters with anthropological, ethnographic, observation-based and largely informal conversation-driven engagements (although formal interviews were conducted). It emphasises stories of incompleteness and conviviality. Inequalities have created a deep lack in the everyday lives of people who have developed a kind of co-dependent relationship with nature. They need nature to survive, which in turn invades their lives, sometimes in the most violent manner. But again, because of inequality, they need each other, and ironically, nature, again, to survive. In a town that does not seem to have a place for them, nature through creating wetlands that are constructed as inhabitable for the privileged, offered opportunities for these residents to settle, much to the dismay of the wealthy who constantly want to kick them out.

And as a result, they are abandoned and not provided basic amenities such as water and toilets, forcing these residents to turn to nature for water and everyday sanitation needs such as toilets. Hence, the constant interplay of incompleteness and conviviality which is deployed in this thesis.

Like most anthropological research, this ethnography is primarily of detailed individual experiences and stories (Henderson, 2012:28). Observing and participating in social relationships around water and accounts of struggles for municipal water access by residents.

As we shall see in the empirical chapters, several structural issues characterise the formation of social relations: incompleteness, impoverishment, marginalisation, and minimal opportunities. This study argues that, through the lenses of incompleteness, conviviality, mobility and marginality, water is a substance that constructs social formations.

Problem statement

Access to municipal water is one of the most significant challenges in Khayelitsha. Khayelitsha is a space of incompleteness and conviviality. It is one of the largest townships with a fast population and settlement growth but with unstructured town planning. Residents in the different settlements build their shelters in areas that sometimes do not comply with the local authority requirements and that outstrip service delivery. Twenty-eight years into democracy, a portion of Khayelitsha still uses the bucket system⁹ for toilet facilities. There is inadequate access to individual household taps, hence residents' resort to communal taps, tanks, and trucks (Kongo, 2019). Similar patterns of inadequate access to water are observed in other informal settlements (Taing et al., 2013; Robins, 2014a, 2014b; Jackson & Robins, 2018, Norvixoxo, Schroeder & Spiegel, 2022).

The problem of water shortage is confounded by the fact that many areas are unauthorised and are located upon land that has not been assigned for residential use. Lack of water is often a function of poverty and inequalities constructed over time and informed by differentiating mobilities and unequal encounters, which, in the case of South Africa, are racialised (Taing et al., 2013; Robins, 2014a, 2014b; Jackson & Robins, 2018). These account for the townships' poor residents being excluded and marginalised in no small measure, while the suburbs have tended to be priorities regarding access to water.

How then do the residents in these specific areas manage the challenges of water access and sanitation?

⁹ While still use across South Africa, the bucket system is contestable to most people due to its association with the apartheid history of discrimination practices.

I contend that water constructs and sustains social relationships. Because of the severity of lack and the centrality of water to sustain life, community, livelihood and everyday being in Khayelitsha is mainly constituted through water. Without water people are incomplete and with water people are incomplete.

As a result, residents are constantly interacting to find other water, or replacement thereof, and in the process creating relationships. In this study, I intend to contribute to the water and social relationship scholarship; using what I have learnt in Khayelitsha.

Rationale of the study

This study adopts an anthropological approach to understanding the social relations generated by interaction with water. It explores how water, as a moving substance, mobilises social relationships in the context of formal and informal houses. Furthermore, the study seeks to generate anthropological knowledge to explain the dynamics of social relations that develop in situations of unequal distribution of water amidst oppressive structures and systems in Cape Town. It deconstructs the knowledge systems that normalise the scientific explanations around the Cape Town water access and crisis undisputed. By historicising water in the context of people's relationships, marginality, incompleteness, and mobility, one can open up space to look at aspects of access to water and the lived reality that is frequently overlooked.

Research aims/objectives and question(s)

This study contributes to the literature on the relationships people have with water that impact their personhood and everyday livelihood. The study emphasises the physical, spatial, and socio-economic factors that inform people's access to water in informal settlements by focusing on economic hierarchies, formation of social relationships and visibility in accessing water. It further emphasises the forms of social relationships that water affords for residents of Khayelitsha facing challenges with access to water. Consequently, the aim is to focus on people's relationship with water in a changing political and economic system where water as a social good, mobilises social relations.

It also seeks to analyse how the unequal distribution of water resources is produced and maintained in Khayelitsha, and by Khayelitsha residents in their daily mobilities and interactions with other parts of Cape Town, especially those with greater access to water and with more predictable/reliable water-related services.

The study raises the following key research question:

What forms of social relationships does water afford for residents of Khayelitsha facing challenges with access to water?

The sub-questions are:

- (a) How does water, as a social good, mobilise social relations?
- (b) How are inequalities related to access to water in Cape Town produced with inequitable development patterns?
- (c) How are economic hierarchies constructed in social relationships established in the access to water?
- (d) Why are ideas about water produced, reproduced, and contested?

Significance of the study and contribution to scholarship

This study focuses on the relationship between residents and water in the context of informal settlements located in cities with inequitable access to infrastructure and service delivery. It generates a new understanding of water and social relations, allowing us to comprehend how water access is linked politically, socially, and economically to residents' everyday struggles, as highlighted by the 'poo protests' and residents' narratives. At the empirical level, the study contributes evidence from Khayelitsha on access to water and residents' relationship with it. Using an ethnography, the study sheds more light on the perceptions and understandings of water that previous studies may have disregarded.

Background: Why water?

This study sets out to demonstrate the many relationships and complexities of water and to understand how Khayelitsha residents think about, and relate and respond to water, particularly the lack thereof. The study also shows the incompleteness and how questionable life is in Khayelitsha without water. Here, lack and incompleteness provides space for conviviality, which is activated as a tool for survival. Through the residents' lived experiences, this study deliberates how integral and fundamental water is to life in all its manifestations: medical, physical, ecological, spiritual, anthropological, social, philosophical and political. There are several means of social relationships and communication that water can create. Water is a medium that can evoke profound emotional responses. Water challenges the way we experience the world and see things and relate to one another.

Water exhibits a duality: while water has been credited with rendering certain livelihoods healthier, it also has a highly destructive element, as experienced in the recent flooding in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. A single story about water or the way residents in Khayelitsha use and access water can ignite a conversation and trigger robust debate about many issues, like dignity, livelihood, personhood, inequality, incompleteness and social relations (see empirical data in Chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7).

Perhaps an ethnographic study of this kind may, by its nature, inspire a contemporary discourse on how to preserve and interpret water as it is becoming a scarce resource both globally and in South Africa (Kongo, 2019; Chitonge et al., 2019; Chitonge 2020a, 2020b; Stang, 2015, 2019, 2021).

Finally, water is a challenging substance, and it is also associated with sociability and conviviality. Water is used socially as a symbol for re-establishing friendships. The essence of water in Khayelitsha is discussed more fully in the rest of the thesis. Generally, water in Khayelitsha is perceived more as communal rather than a private commodity, and every householder in an informal area is expected to collect water from a public communal tank, tap or truck; however, those in formal houses may see it as a private commodity because some summon water from the kitchen, bathroom, or toilet (see Pasinya's narrative in Chapter 7).

Why anthropology in search of water?

The foundation of water in cultural studies in anthropology contributes to the theoretical framework for the current study, (Orlove, 2012; Stang, 2021a, 2021b). Anthropologists' early works look at the complex interrelationship between culture and environment – how cultures interpret weather, its value, and how people have continued to be resilient and adapt to flooding. Could this resilience also be present in cases of water scarcity?

A plethora of anthropological literature on water exists (Chaim, 2022), but with no specific methods and praxis. Early scholars studying climate changes that affect water explain the uniqueness of the anthropological method that is based on ethnographic work. This enhances the interpretation of thoughts and cultural setting in which community understanding of water scarcity enables them to adapt (Roncoli, 2006).

Many anthropologists advocate interdisciplinarity research when engaging in water research. As Puntenney (2009) writes, “Progress in understanding sustainable systems and acting on this understanding requires collaboration and interaction between social scientists and related disciplines” (317).

Besides, Fiske (2009:288) states, “I suggest that anthropologists now change direction and become actors.” As an ethnographer who has worked with communities in north-eastern Siberia, Crate (2011) argues that understanding the current climate change context needs to focus on ethnographic work within anthropology. Others echo this sentiment on the impact of global warming on water that introduces disjunctions and inequities in water distribution. The above-required ethnographies to show how such imbalance occurs and how water becomes scarce (see Chitonge, 2019, 2020a, 2020b).

In the light of the above, anthropology is critical in studying municipal water in Khayelitsha and its physical environment mentioned above, with its cultural implications, (Ross, 2014; Crate & Nuttall, 2009). Anthropologists' significant contribution to water research, how people react to water scarcity (e.g., Günel, 2016; Kongo, 2019; Meehan et al. 2020), which empowered local peoples to develop adaptation measures to deal with local change.

Furthermore, anthropologists investigate challenges related to water scarcity, displacement, the politics of development adaptation and vulnerability (Lazarus, 2009; Finan, 2009; Green & Raygorodetsky, 2010; Upadhyay & Mohan, 2017). Scarcity of water in South Africa provides an avenue for an anthropological engagement with water and its relation to citizenship (Robins, 2014a, 2014b; Jackson & Robins, 2018; Armitage & Nellums, 2020; Chitonge, 2020a, 2020b; Meehan et al., 2020).

Anthropologists have been at the forefront, in investigating and collaborating on water and climate change issues for policy implementation. For example, the UNESCO Water and Cultural Diversity Initiative found ways to resolve, or add knowledge on, socio-cultural water management (Cisneros & Rose, 2009). The critics of anthropological research are being too persistent and singling out community-based studies of indigenous peoples. Others may argue that more examination needs to be done in this area precisely to develop a conceptual framework, alternative methods of analysis, (see Nyamnjoh, 2012).

Water scarcity is a human security issue (see SDGs, the Sustainable Development Goals). Despite anthropologists' noticeable engagement in water issues, communities face difficulties in realising successful engagement. Some may argue that anthropologists do not have the 'ability' to work in large transdisciplinary projects due to their hermit working tendency and the challenge inherent in including ethnographic methods (Crate, 2011).

Anthropology is based on reflexivity to understand our positionality, assumptions to see "objectively" (Nyamnjoh, 2014b). The current challenge in accessing and using municipal water compelled residents to further reflect on the cause of their predicament precipitated by the human-made disaster (Geertz, 1996:259).

The broader context: Tracing the challenges of water in Khayelitsha

Water is a source of life and a basic human necessity. Therefore, without water humans cannot exist nor protect their dignity, and therefore incomplete. It facilitates social living and the sustenance of life, (Chitonge 2010; Cothren, 2013; Brookes & Carey, 2015; Johnson, South & Walters, 2016; WWF-SA, 2016; Chitonge et al., 2019; Harry & Malepane, 2021).

The well-publicised ‘toilet war’ and the “poo protests” in Cape Town (Jackson & Robins, 2018) are cases in point, indeed, the various forms of the formation of social relations afforded by municipal water can also be understood when one looks at these occurrences, which illustrate some strategies of the people mentioned above. The toilet war started in 2011, a municipal election year (Jackson & Robins, 2018). The lack of privacy of the toilets, which were unenclosed, and the indignities it visited on residents in several townships in the Western Cape became a political tool in the hands of the ANC in the campaign leading up to the elections, and, subsequently, a human rights issue. The ANC Youth League used the unenclosed toilets as powerful political ammunition to stage protests around the toilets (Taing et al., 2013; Jackson & Robins, 2018). Their grievance was for a right to privacy and dignity, or ‘dignifying’ toilets. The High Court ruled that the City of Cape Town violated citizens’ right and human dignity by failing to enclose correctly (Jackson & Robins, 2018).

Two years later, a labour dispute between the City of Cape Town and the sanitation service’s contracted workers culminated in another protest. These workers’ contract arrangement was based on the cleaning and collection of waste from portable toilets in informal settlements. The dispute resorted to a blockage of the traffic on the N2, a major highway by disgruntled residents (Jackson & Robins, 2018). Human excreta were thrown onto the road, and tyres were burnt. In the same year, human excreta were thrown at the Cape Town airport, the Western Cape parliament entrance, the entrance to a government building in the city centre by protesters led by Andile Lili, the former African National Congress City Councillor. These protesters were unhappy with inadequate sanitation provision and decided to throw urine on ordinary citizens’ moving vehicles and local officials’ motorcades as they drove on the N2. Lili defended his action, arguing that he witnessed and listened to residents’ narratives of living in inhumane conditions on the informal settlements, where people endure the embarrassment of defecating in buckets in one-roomed, worsened for parents in front of their children (Robins, 2013a, 2014a, 2014b).

The analysis of water can be used to reveal the safeguard or the violation of a fundamental human right all being the prerogative of the state. In Khayelitsha families struggle to access toilets – and according to the community, residents have held their pee. Pheliswa, a middle-aged woman residing in Khayelitsha site B, stated:

Our government fails to provide us with the water and sanitation we need. We cannot go to the toilet at night because we are afraid of our lives. I don't think this is dignity. [...] It is dangerous to use a toilet at night in our area settlements for residents, particularly women and children, who have enormous challenges. Many residents have to walk a long distance without light to access the inadequate temporary shared chemical toilets. Others have no access to the toilet and release themselves using the fields or bushes. Children must, in most cases, be accompanied by a parent or an adult. (Interview in Site-B, 19 April 2019).

Narratives in the work of Nyamnjoh (2016) support Pheliswa's account. Nyamnjoh (2016) cites the work of Powell (2014). Powell (2014) was an American student doing fieldwork in Langa Township. She was confronted with a challenge of using the toilet at night and provides a succinct description of her experience concerning water and sanitation.

The people she shared the shack with cautioned her to not use the outside toilet, saying, "You don't need to go out, it is too late. ... There is a bucket system!" Crystal Powell was obliged to use the bucket as a urinal. She gives a fascinating description of her experience in her field notes. Briefly, she found the experience painfully humiliating and requiring a tremendous physical feat to accomplish; squatting with nothing to hold onto. "I was huddled over the bucket with my pants down and my knees bent, and I wanted someone to give me something to clean myself so I could get out of the situation." (Powell, Visiting the Shacks. Notes from the field. Langa township, 15 August 2011). She also noted that the women in the shack seemed to regard the whole situation as a 'natural experience'.

Her experience enabled me to argue that our relationship with water is very intimate and contextual (see Chapter 7); because of the way water is accessed across Cape Town. Therefore, one cannot generalise or normalise the familiarity of one's experience to argue that water access is prominent in all parts of the same city. Accordingly, it becomes essential to investigate the forms of sociality that water generates, especially in informal settlements with limited infrastructure. Water is generally crucial and seen as a basic necessity. However, its availability or lack thereof can indicate differential socio-economic conditions (Chitonge, 2020a, 2020b; Strang, 2016, 2020). While some have easy access to water in urban contexts, water is a scarce resource for others. In an environment like Khayelitsha, access to water differs from the suburbs (O'Brian, 2015).

These narratives highlight the challenges in water infrastructure and service delivery in Khayelitsha, a place whose residents would like to consider home despite their experiences of discomfort and being underserved. However, the overpopulation caused by the high influx of immigrants put a strain on resources and space (Tapela, 2012).

Selwa (27), in describing the various types of toilet facilities, reminded us of the hierarchies of mobility and the differentially located inhabitants of Cape Town and inequalities persistent among its residents:

There is a bucket system; in some areas, these facilities are in the form of a container structure called *mshengu* [latrine].... In some places, we have a flush toilet in a brick structure... (Selwa. Interview in Site-B, 19 April 2019).

Bucket toilets are frequently referred to in low-income communities since the apartheid period (Taing et al., 2013; Larson, 2014; Jackson & Robins, 2018). When referring to the type of water, Selwa pointed to water quality, as the communal tap is attached outside the toilet wall, creating the potential for waterborne diseases to the users and making them vulnerable to attacks especially at night (2011 Population Census: Vice, 2015).

The work of Robins (2014a, 2014b; Jackson & Robins, 2018) captures people's experiences and scholarly work in this study. Robins (2014a, 2014b) investigates the complicated relationship between water and sanitation which he refers to as "the politics of 'shit' and sanitation activism". He also explores the private nature of human excrement but because of the challenges it became a matter of public concern. Robins (2013a, 2014b; Jackson & Robins, 2018) states that the challenges of water and human excrement became viral in 2011 when the toilet had indeed become a tool for political and judicial racialisation. For Robins (2013a, 2013b, 2014a, 2014b), communal water access, bucket system toilet models, and waste removal are issues that may cause a health problem in Khayelitsha.

The focus of this study is also to theorise the complexities around people's access to water in the informal settlements and the surrounding well-provisioned formal houses within Khayelitsha and suburbs of Cape Town. The term 'complexity' encapsulates the dynamic relationships that emanate from dependence on communal water taps, water trucks and water tanks.

Although these different access modes can facilitate civility, conviviality and communality, they can also generate conflict among the residents (see Chapter 5). For this reason, the study seeks to investigate the forms of social relation that water affords. The activists' (who come from the informal settlements) relationship to the environment that they refer to as "liquid shit area" is not a relationship that the middle class or those in the affluent area experience. For that reason, Chumani Maxwele, one of a leading activists in the #RhodesMustFall campaign against the lack of transformation at the University of Cape Town argued that "however much one may run from the environment, the shit will always be around you".¹⁰ Informal settlements residents value the places they live in and come from, which some residents termed "a liquid shit area",¹¹. Here, he emphasises the Anthropocene, with a particular reference to the inescapable convivial relationship between residents and nature. Khayelitsha is a place where human defecation flows on the streets, a form of sewage water through open drains, an environment where people walk on sewage water, an environment where the smell of sewage water becomes normalised, an environment without water and sanitation (Robins, 2014a, 2014b; Nyamnjoh, 2016:25; Jackson & Robins, 2018).

The activists' actions were not well perceived; however, their intention was to present their experience of living close to what they called "liquid shit". The embarrassment when witnessing or hearing of such actions may be disgusting, however, thinking through such actions, it challenges our idea of what is morally normal. Politically speaking, protests are an act of disobedience expressed in action that is visible and requires an answer. When the rules that control and deal with defecation are not observed, it signifies a shift towards revolt (Schutte, 2013). The action symbolised something – it was a concrete indication of dissatisfaction with the service delivery affairs (Veneracion-Rallonza, 2014). However, water is central to sanitation, such that the protests also present the complexity of water accessibility in Cape Town's informal settlements.

¹⁰ This response was based on my one-on-one conversation with him during a symposium hosted by the Centre for African Studies.

¹¹ See a conversation and figure with Nomfundiso in Chapter 5.

Activists' and residents' action enables us to understand people's relationship with water, personhood in Khayelitsha. Residents in Khayelitsha cannot escape the human defecation from the open sewage or water challenges in their environment, which pose health hazards.

In this context, the activists used human excrement collected in Khayelitsha to express the urgent need to protect the human dignity of Africans living in shacks. Many residents expressed that, to be respected in the community, a person must be clean and presentable. Symbolically, poo is equated with misfortune in African culture. Wherever poo is used, as in activism, people say *unezote* – an isiXhosa word referring to a cursed person, not likeable or who has terrible energy – which means that the issues are seen as severe enough to warrant using human waste as a protest tool.

In most developing countries, the poor, particularly the marginalised urban poor, are the primary victims of failed service delivery (Hope, 2006:168). This study draws from people's experiences, some highlighted above, to create a framework within which Khayelitsha residents access and relate to water. The focus is on water infrastructure challenges and service delivery, where residents are compelled to use the nearby bush or a bucket for defecation, leading to discontentment, sometimes expressed in poo protests.

Conclusion and thesis outline

The thesis comprises eight chapters. This first, introductory chapter has focused on identical vignettes with different predicaments, where people's narratives are presented to the reader to explore, describe, and interpret the challenges of water access and their impact on social relationships in Khayelitsha. The purpose of this introductory chapter was fourfold: It first introduced the research problem, as enumerated by a few residents who form the bulk of this ethnography as primary research participants. Second, the chapter looked at the current theorisations of water and the importance of anthropology – showing potential challenges to existing understandings and gaps to which this research contributes. Third, it provided background into the current understanding of water, and conceptualised research questions and objectives, showing the usefulness and knowledge that this research adds to the literature through participants' narratives.

The chapter explained why it is essential to look at water as an element that regulates people's behaviour and social importance, particularly through people's narratives. Finally, it presents the thesis structure.

Chapter 2 reviews the literature, situating the thesis within the broader debates on water. The chapter engages and provides relevant conceptual and theoretical underpinnings for the study, including incompleteness and social relationships theory. It argues that, although social relations theory and incompleteness are analytical concepts, they have essential facets for understanding linkages. The chapter shows that social relations are used in various studies, and it helps explain the nature of relations between water and the residents, and the relationships between formal and informal areas. It concludes by showing that social relationships and incompleteness are essential premises for analysing water and how it is accessed in various settlements.

Chapter 3 discusses the research methodology used to answer the research questions and contextualises townships or informal settlements concerning water. The chapter outlines some of the challenges faced during fieldwork, particularly regarding maintaining ethics in the human subject. It also acknowledges the difficulties in situating myself as an outsider and provides a detailed explanation of the study's research methodology.

Chapter 4 explores residents' access to water in different areas within Khayelitsha, with informal sections being treated in terms of informality and criminality, which affects people's level of access to water. It analyses water development and its relation to the residents and how water impinges upon the lives of a large proportion of the Khayelitsha residents because water supplies are limited. It draws on the conversations and debates that emerge from the residents' relations with water and provides forces that enable the formation of relationships incited by incompleteness, informality, precarity, geographic spatiality, unequal water distribution, marginality, and other factors. It also examines how the various ways the post-apartheid government distributes water act as the catalyst for relationships affecting political, social, and economic changes in residents' lives.

Chapter 5 provides the conundrum related to access to water service delivery and examines the question of human dignity, identity and status for marginalized people living in complex environments. The chapter examines how water influenced changes in social relations in Khayelitsha and demonstrates how social practices and the power to act are influenced by the various social, economic, and political means that one possesses, and their dispositions for practice. It further shows the various nodes of power; the collaborations; the conflicts; the emergence, mobility, and expiration of varied powers; and how they all relate. It also interrogates the residents' making of home and community in the settlement within, and regardless of, the different governance structures and processes.

Chapter 6 builds on Chapter 5 by focusing on residents' strategies to access water. It examines how residents in formal and informal settlements exploit and explore social relationships. It also examines the relationships, which individuals, or a group of residents, in both occupied areas and old settlements, have with water. This chapter responds to the 'What?' question. It shows how the diversity these stories depict, adds an exciting layer in how we try to understand incompleteness which cannot be a linear process but is shrouded in a morass that influences how relationships are formed and established within Khayelitsha.

Chapter 7 looks closely at defecation and pays attention to the uncomfortable instances where people must relieve themselves in bushes because of a limited amount of water. It further explains how one conditions one's anatomy in terms of human excretion. It focuses on the discursive practice in response to multiple constraints and examines water and the body. It also covers topics related to water and sanitation, hygiene, Covid-19, sexuality, and defecation habitus due to lack of water. It provides an experience-based measure for water scarcity, building different geographic, social, political frameworks to understand water's impact on health to include both social and psychosocial elements.

Chapter 8 draws together the findings and discussions in the empirical chapters. It illustrates how, within the incompleteness of access to water, people engage in conviviality and mobility to enhance their situations and better their lifestyles. In this process social relations are formed and reformed, which are catalysts to their transformation. The chapter includes recommendations for further study and ends with my reflections on the study and my experiences.

CHAPTER 2
BEYOND CRITIQUE: EXPLORATION OF CONCEPTS AND A CONSTELLATION
OF LITERATURE AROUND WATER

Introduction

This chapter engages with key literature on the topic, namely, how social relations are forged through the phenomenon of water. It does this by looking at relevant studies and related sources. The chapter departs from two premises that inform the study and the contemporary debates on water and social relationships. First, are the concepts of incompleteness and conviviality, which are concerned with how residents see themselves in relation to water distribution and access in different settlements. Second, is social relationships theory that speaks about relationships between water and residents (individually or in groups), resident and resident, group, and group, amongst others; in other words, what forms of relationships communal water provided by the municipality affords. This also necessitates a brief look at the phenomenon of water and its relation to individuals and society (Norvixoxo, Schroeder & Spiegel, 2022). Suffice to say here that water is a highly contested substance due to its unequal distribution, access, and scarcity (Chitonge et al., 2019; Chitonge, 2020a, 2020b; Masiangoako et al., 2022).

As mentioned in Chapter 1, the study's main argument is that, looking through the lenses of the universality of incompleteness and conviviality, mobility and marginality, water may be regarded as a substance that constructs social formations. I take incompleteness and conviviality from Nyamnjoh (2017) to understand water in the formation of social relationships. Social relationships theory, incompleteness and conviviality are contested premises that cannot be applied without critical analysis. All have facets that are important in understanding linkages between water and society, and I use them and the dynamics among them to attempt to explain water in Khayelitsha and its implications for the residents' lives. I will delve into incompleteness and conviviality and the dynamic between them in the discussions below.

This chapter also explores each premise, looking at its development and the arguments scholars present on it. Lastly, critiques of the premises are offered to establish their relevance for this study.

This chapter highlights the main trends in anthropological studies of water and social relationship theory and examines recent studies on the social significance of water as a substance that forges relationships. Water is essential in forming social relationships because it is physically and spiritually consumed and accessed and becomes a vital part of people's lives. As Mauss (1954:1) explained: Water is a "total social Phenomenon". Any remedy to the water crisis that is experienced in many overpopulated urban settlements globally, especially in developing countries, requires interventions that take culture, society, and social relations of power seriously (Mosse, 2005). The chapter is divided into two parts. Part one discusses the key concepts and part two engages with the literature review.

Part I

Incompleteness as a way of being human

Nyamnjoh (2017) attempts to explain the meaning of incompleteness using Amos Tutuola's lived experience as an illustration. Nyamnjoh (2017) provides a concise and clear interpretation of the life and work of Tutuola, but, at the same time, marks their importance in the debates on the study of Africa. Nyamnjoh (2017) presents more creative alternative ways to understand relationships based on this concept. Of particular interest, Nyamnjoh (2017, 2019, 2020, 2022) focuses on the real-life experiences of ordinary people using fiction as ethnography. Inspired by Tutuola, Nyamnjoh (2017) articulates the idea of incompleteness on both individual and collective levels. According to Nyamnjoh (2017), a state of incompleteness has two aspects: first, collections of more or less completely dynamic elements that are, hence, more or less vulnerable, and second, these incomplete entities seem to enhance themselves through extensions of a technical or relational nature.

These are characteristics that this study sought to identify in Khayelitsha in different settlements, on an individual and collective level: an emphasis upon relationships and a capacity for living together, supplemented by an openness to experience them in their various forms.

Nyamnjoh (2017) provides many arguments about incompleteness. He argues that the ideas of what constitutes reality in Africa are rich with ontologies of incompleteness. Such concepts of incompleteness, as a social reality dependent on interconnections, relationships and multiplicities, are both exciting and inspiring at personal, group and collective, political, and scholarly levels (Nyamnjoh, 2017:2). In this sense, this study uses one of his arguments to frame incompleteness to understand water and formation of social relationships in Khayelitsha. According to Nyamnjoh (2017, 2021), incompleteness and conviviality foster release of potential and inspire creativity. Thus, who we are or seem to matter enormously, simultaneously; incompleteness can be a matter of the encounters. Although incompleteness always involves “things and being”, something else – collective and history – may also be at stake. This study seeks to demonstrate how each situation in Khayelitsha is relational and illustrates how incompleteness affects real human experiences: it is the ordinary thing and can also be the most extraordinary. Regardless of social status, incompleteness seems to matter, particularly in accessing water and the formation of social relationships in this study.

Incompleteness is not a static concept; Nyamnjoh (2019, 2017, 2022) explains that “every social, organisational category—be it race or ethnicity, place or geography, class or status, gender or sex, generation or age, religion or beliefs is incomplete without the rest of what it takes to be human through relationships with other humans and non-humans – or probably what Mawere (2015) termed ‘other beings’ – in the natural and supernatural worlds” (Nyamnjoh, 2017:2). Using the above analogy by Nyamnjoh (2017), the study seeks to explain how the formation of social relationships are forged because of water in both formal and informal settings. Though inhabitants of formal houses are provided with municipal services, like water, they are still incomplete without the rest of the people in their world: the inhabitants of the informal houses or shack dwellers. Similarly, those in informal houses or shack dwellers are incomplete without those in formal houses; both are incomplete without social relationships among them. Incompleteness is therefore about interdependence.

Many of us often associate incompleteness with a complex of inferiority or lack of something in a negative way. I do not use it in this sense. In Nyamnjoh's words: "Things, words, deeds, and beings are always incomplete, not because of absences but because of their possibilities" (Nyamnjoh, 2017:256). Also, Lategan (2015:82), writing on this idea by Nyamnjoh (2017) posits that the "conclusion Nyamnjoh draws [is] the incompleteness of human existence. This incompleteness does not arise because of absences but because of possibilities." We all seem to be aware of who we are, our relations with others and how these relationships influence our lives, whether through similarity or difference. Drawing on Tutuola's lived reality, Nyamnjoh (2017) also demonstrates the principles of being human. There is also an assumption that human beings should be collected and discernible. This is strengthened by the fact that no one person can possess all the material wants or be present simultaneously (the omnipresent); here I am referring to accessing resources. However, there are occasions where incompleteness becomes an issue of temporary permanence¹² in terms of water access or access to other basic services. Nyamnjoh (2017) states that incompleteness touches on all facets of human existence (Fine, 1993; Allen, 1997; Tschemplik, 2008; Howatson & Sheffield, 2008), at individual as well as collective levels, and applies to humans and their relationships with non-humans. Its dimensions include relationships, openness, improvement, humility, and engagement.

One may ask if incompleteness matters in the formation of social relationships. South Africa presents a perfect answer concerning Ubuntu: we are who we are through others. In other words, because we are incomplete as individuals and communities, it is only because of relationships we have with others (be these individuals or groups) that we can be activated to enhance ourselves in one way or another, even if such enhancement is always situational and can never complete us. Therefore, our aspiration is not to seek completeness, for this is unachievable and can only make us worthless and exploitative of our relationships, but to encounter and draw sustenance from others in all respectfulness while simultaneously allowing them to draw on us – hence conviviality.

In this sense, conviviality speaks to the enriched selves that make us composite in our incompleteness and identities as never settled – a permanent work in progress.

¹² There is a situation that is so long standing and ongoing that there is a sense of permanence for the people who are experiencing it, but it can change.

At this point, I look more closely at the concept of conviviality as it is used in anthropology. Conviviality is a product of social relations and can be defined as the ability of individuals to mutually interact and autonomously connect with others and their space to respond or satisfy their own destiny or needs. Nyamnjoh (2018) provides us with alternatives on incompleteness and understanding, communities and social relations through the notion of conviviality. Nyamnjoh (2018) shows that conviviality reassures individuals and groups' empowerment, which involves conciliation and contesting agentive forces within a community.

First, and most fundamentally, there are doubts about whether incompleteness causes behaviour. As a fundamental starting point, incompleteness involves our relations of understanding who we are and understanding who others are in the relations; a multi-dimensional understanding of the human experience collectively or individually (Nyamnjoh, 2017: 120). Incompleteness, in this study, involves seeking and reaching out to connect, and networking, as it is prone to complex entanglements. According to Nyamnjoh (2015, 2017, 2019, 2020, 2021), incompleteness and conviviality invite individuals or communities to reach out and explore ways of thinking, living socially, connecting, reconciling, and networking to make the impossible possible, to respond to the predicaments they encounter. Nyamnjoh (2017) further states that acknowledgement or acceptance of incompleteness opens the door for independence, active participation, and mutual fulfilment. Lategan (2015:82) sums up this view of Nyamnjoh succinctly: "He shows how we constantly strive to overcome the constraints of our own limited experience."

The study takes from Nyamnjoh's (2015, 2017) concept that, if for no other reason, incompleteness is important in this study because it is the fundamental mechanism through which residents form fulfilling relationships. It is the motivation for social relationships: how we know who and what.

Nyamnjoh (2020: 94) points out that “the reality of incompleteness [is] a normal way of being and becoming. Such a reality is one that privileges interconnections and interdependencies, as well as an idea of power that is disabused of the illusion of permanence.” Because things are constantly changing, individuals and groups need to be mobile and agile to navigate these changes in the quest to enhance themselves, their identities and to satisfy their needs. This constant changing is encapsulated in Achebe’s metaphor of the world as a dancing mask (see above). Mobility in this study is not restricted to physical or geographic movement, but also, and more significantly, includes social, mental, and emotional mobility. Using residents’ narratives and Nyamnjoh (2015, 2017), the study recognises that incompleteness is often most consequential. Finally, the study adopts a critical stance towards public discourses about ‘incompleteness’ rather than simply telling them at face value. Incompleteness as a concept is at the centre of all social theories and is commonly presented either as a cultural, environmental, economic measure of living conditions or as a rights-based framework that measures people’s political and legal influence.

Conceptualising marginality in relation to water in Khayelitsha

Marginalisation, geographic apartheid, or spatial disparities present themselves in multiple dimensions, and the most impactful is the physical dimension. The physical arrangements, hindrances, and piping infrastructure maintain unequal water distribution at a deeper level than physical barriers preventing residents from accessing water in Khayelitsha. For example, in an informal setting, people have to share a tap with up to ten other households, yet just within or across the road are formal houses or settlements of bonded properties where each house has a minimum of three taps installed in or around the house. This is one of the manifestations of marginalisation or spatial disparities where service providers and government act as though a monolithic situation prevails.

Residents on the margins of Khayelitsha also experience political marginalisation. The exclusionary use of language when communicating the water challenge in Cape Town is one of the reasons that there was a separatist model of understanding when it came to what the residents of Khayelitsha are expected to contribute to relief efforts.

Simply because almost all the residents of Khayelitsha do not speak English as either their first or home language, many do not understand it at all. For those who speak English, hedging techniques and scientific jargon to explain the water challenges remain a tool used by authorities to exclude residents from discussions, which increases inequality as people cannot question what they do not understand. Interestingly, exclusion and inclusion are therefore constantly interacting.

While the city does engage community leaders, this is done in ways that leave the ‘average’ citizen unaware of the crucial decisions made on their behalf. Mahlanza et al. (2016) Masiangoako et al. 2022 found that many residents clearly did not understand the implications of having water management devices installed, but the city officials did not explain it to them adequately and made them sign for the water management devices even though they failed to understand how they would affect their access to water. In addition, the residents adopted the same language that the city used when referring to them (Rodina & Harris, 2016 and Masiangoako et al. (2022)). The residents of formal houses see themselves as legitimate residents entitled to services because they pay for them, and they view their counterparts in an informal setting with the same lens of illegality and illegitimacy that the city perceives them, contributing to their social marginalisation.

Marginality is also manifested in people’s self-identities. Rodina and Harris (2016) found that the people who lived in shacks in the informal settlements of Khayelitsha perceived themselves as ‘undesirable citizens’ since water provision in Khayelitsha followed the formalisation of housing processes, which were characterised by the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) houses being equipped with water and sanitation infrastructure. Residents perceive the state as neglectful because their basic needs are not being met. This idea is also used to support the use of incompleteness and findings of this study. This unequal water distribution expresses itself uniquely when we analyse the treatment people in formal settlements receive compared to those in informal settlements. While structural racism affects both formal and informal settlements, class differences are responsible for the disparities in people’s access to water.

Marginality of settlements and perception of incompleteness in South Africa

In some way marginality and incompleteness are complementary. I have previously stated that townships – spaces like Khayelitsha and other informal settlements – would, in a democratic South African context, be spaces of incompleteness. Perlman (1976:91) makes a point by stating that the ideologies and stereotypes associated with the concept of marginality affect the lives of the poor residents and shanty town dwellers (in her study, the favelas)¹³ in Brazil, particularly the urban squatters in Rio de Janeiro. Marginality is a matter of degree of lack of possibility (Perlman, 1976:129).

The above idea is also emphasised in Fonchingong's (2013:92) study of Nigerians in Cameroon, where he acknowledges that Nigerians are not economically marginalised but they are politically marginalised. There are different degrees and different aspects to marginality. Furthermore, as Pearlman learned about *favelados*, some people choose to live in squatter settlements as an economical preference even when they have stable employment (1976:244).

Dissecting theories on incompleteness by several scholars, Nyamnjoh (2017, in 2020) points out that most incomplete qualifications are unjust. Where a place of residence, employment status, and ethnic and racial hierarchies, among other things, are used to determine incompleteness, other qualities are widely overlooked. This blindness makes it hard to believe, assess or associate other parts of the township, which are equally valid and should also be known.

There seems to be a common link between townships, which ultimately suggests shacks for most people and marginality, as townships are less desirable spaces for South Africans to occupy and must, therefore, be occupied only by the socially, economically and politically marginally impaired in the country, who can afford no better.

¹³ A *favela* is the generic Brazilian term for a squatter settlement (an illegal land occupation), and *favelados* are those who live in them. (Pearlman 1976: xv).

Mugny and Perez (1991:4) suggest that majority influences take on the form of compliance, meaning that individuals will outwardly accept what the majority believes whenever the majority is psychologically prominent. In other words, despite their ability to survive in what others may deem as unpleasant conditions, finding work, raising children, enforcing school attendance and attempting to instil moral values within their community, the overwhelming presumptions of their incompleteness, marginality and social inferiority in Cape Town might encourage their 'compliance' to their expected behaviour, opting to beg, lie or steal (Jahoda, 2001; Mugny & Perez, 1991) even when they have proven their ability to survive otherwise. Stereotypes, then, affect both the perpetrators and the victims. Because of their many stereotypes, townships are generally accepted as marginal spaces and, to some extent, incomplete. These stereotypes contribute to Cape Town's (negative) perceptions of township residents and sometimes force its occupants to act in a way that works to prove their incompleteness.

Khayelitsha comprises South African locals from the Western and the Eastern Cape, and African immigrants who have different cultures. This perception also applies to South African citizens from the Eastern Cape. This, too, leads to the sometimes-unjustifiable conclusion that Khayelitsha is an incomplete and marginal space as the cultural difference can be used to identify specific groups as ethnic minorities whose practices are deviant to the majority (Perlman, 1976), contributing to their perceived marginality. The concept of incompleteness presents a negative picture of those considered as such that is sometimes far from the reality (or the absolute reality, as I learned in Khayelitsha). It paints a picture of the described population that is often malicious and unreasonable (Dean, 1977). Studies often investigate the negative aspects of Khayelitsha life, such as HIV/AIDS, drugs, teen pregnancy, livelihood, and informality; it is not uncommon to make assumptions about their incompleteness. Khayelitsha, with its different settlements, is not a homogenous dwelling. The people are not all marginal and should not be treated as such.

So far, I have tried to explain the reasons for Khayelitsha's (and other townships') presumed marginality. Acknowledging the factors attributed to any individual or group marginality, I can understand Khayelitsha's categorisation as such in a post-apartheid South African context.

The above assessment does not mean that I agree with it as my research has shown (see above) that Khayelitsha and its residents do not meet the requirements of a marginal population as stipulated by Perlman (1976), at least not homogeneously, if at all. Incompleteness and marginality are not caused by poor housing or specific characteristics of an individual or group. Marginality is, instead, created by personal beliefs against the Other and is often maintained through historical treatment of them by others (Perlman, 1976). As part of my research, I observed the relationships between a local resident and African immigrant residents from the Eastern Cape in Khayelitsha. The observations of these relationships revealed individuals or groups that are marginal within Khayelitsha.

“Being Marginal is Not Necessarily about Being Disconnected from Others” Powell (2014) cited by Brudvig (2019). In her book on ICTs and rethinking marginality Powell (2014:21) reminds us that, “Being marginal is not necessarily about being disconnected from others, yet the tendency to equate marginalism with disconnection is subtly present”. Water access has become an incredibly challenging and highly contested element in the context of mobility, where people connect through the different water access points. Connectivity empowers individuals or groups to reach out and make strategic and informed choices.

Conviviality as a way of reaching out

Drawing on conviviality by Nyamnjoh (2017), the study focuses on the role of water in fostering social interactions and encounters in Khayelitsha. This approach helps to undo stereotypic representations of Khayelitsha by exploring how water matters from the actors' points of view. That being the case, residents from newly occupied areas are finger pointed for occasioning urban social fissures. Despite such complexities, residents also can communicate and exchange across social divisions. They survive despite the challenging vulnerability conditions that incubate when they move from one area to another.

As stated above, the study intends to examine how residents of Khayelitsha make and maintain social relationships around water, giving a closer look at what happens if social relationships fail and why some people fail to make such connections. The development of new social relations is an essential aspect of place appropriation.

The focus on the above-mentioned issues will add a new dimension to understanding conviviality and practical perspectives relating to exceptional levels of unequal water distribution driven by incompleteness.

Conviviality in this study relates to how residents in Khayelitsha interact at the communal water standpipes without the connotations of homogeneity (Nyamnjoh, 2017). Conviviality is not limited to social bonds but includes lived differences in proximity (Nyamnjoh, 2017). It is a spontaneous social pattern produced by urban social groups living close to each other (Nyamnjoh & Brudvig, 2014). As stated earlier, this study examines how water forges relationships through mobility – what Francis Nyamnjoh calls ‘nimble-footedness’.

In that climate, this study aims to contribute new knowledge by focussing on how economic and subsistence conviviality allows residents to occupy space in Khayelitsha. To achieve this, the study examines how residents who have settled and re-settled redesign Khayelitsha borders, form relationships and make connections through conviviality. Conviviality is the capacity to engender and sustain social relations with people who are not necessarily related. It is indicative of the actual and potential social relations that incompleteness provides. Conviviality also highlights the different modes of water access, which is based on the ability to create contacts from resources such as toilets, objects, access, and emotions. This study does not delineate a single research site to define formal and informal categories. Beginning from formal and informal-based identifications (e.g., Covid-19, Sanitiser, Gomora, Empholweni, Ethembeni, Island, Emsindweni, Makhaza) curtail the kinds of questions about group and identity formation and may cause short-sightedness in understanding the density, intensity and range of relationships that residents may draw on.

High mobility and the erection of shacks in Khayelitsha create demands for basic services and the potential for social conflict within the different spaces to which people are moving (Appadurai, 2011; Alhaj, 2014). However, a move to an urban area is often expressed in terms of improved income opportunities and service access for those who move.

Investigating conviviality as a currency for settlement and survival of residents within ever-expanding and overlapping everyday urban social engagement is arguably an area that has remained unresearched.

The significant growth in Khayelitsha social life is portrayed as routine, complex, ambivalent, and intricate has been defined in the work of Seekings 1990; Ndengwa et al., 2007:3; Ndengwa, 2007:5, 21; Tshehla, 2002:48; Robins 2013a, 2013b, 2014a, 2014b; Rodina & Harris 2016; Redfield & Robins 2016; Jackson & Robins 2018; Kongo, 2019.

Ethnographic studies of social relations in mobility-induced diversification have gained ground (Wessendorf, 2014; Vertovec, 2015). It indicates the growing research interest in which diverse social actors negotiate everyday social relations and navigate different socio-spatial contexts (Karner & Parker, 2011). Amin (2002:959) indicates that “much of the negotiation of difference occurs at the very local level through everyday experiences and encounters”. In the same way, this study draws attention to residents’ conviviality that enables them to sustain and, if possible, better their livelihood. This means it draws on residents' incompleteness that is not entirely economical but is made up of socio-cultural aspects and routines vital to understanding their everyday lives (Chabal, 2009). These everyday experiences and practices feed into the processes of social practice and provide important entry points into understanding the subjectivities created by unequal water access. Residents' diverse and context-based experiences of relationships with water are reconfigured or replaced by new ones during mobility.

Residents in newly occupied areas similarly develop social relationships according to such experiences of interaction at the communal water access. This study captures the everyday life of individual and group lives from the point of insertion in Khayelitsha to give importance to those areas.

By relying on conviviality, residents are in a position to negotiate and navigate life in Khayelitsha. This action helps them to mobilise resources.

Co-reliance has the potential to describe social interactions in environments characterised by population diversity. Rapid urban expansion occurs around Cape Town, and different areas in Khayelitsha have become increasingly diverse. Co-reliance describes a type of social life in Khayelitsha. Co-reliance is not only about bonds but includes lived differences in proximity: 'an unruly, spontaneous social pattern produced by social groups living near each other (Back & Sinha, 2016: 522). I connect conviviality to investigations of how residents and communities “bond together” (Wise & Noble, 2016:423). However, co-reliance does not guarantee that unequal water distribution or other forms of entrenched oppression have been resolved or can be resolved. It means that there is unpredictability in how people live together. Adaptation or maladaptation by residents calls for solid social relations embedded in them as human beings.

Nonetheless, residents cultivate various types of relationships such as neighbourliness, siblings, landlords, friendship networks, and marital relations, among others, to access water and toilets. Cultivation of such relations is premised on what Nyamnjoh (2015) describes as conviviality. He describes conviviality as a pursuit of sameness and commonalities by bridging divides and facilitating interconnections (Nyamnjoh, 2015: 263). Such relationships allow residents and communities to deal with individual and systemic shocks and stresses caused by a lack of water.

Theory on social relations

Social relations theory represents a complex set of inter-relationships in a social system that has been of anthropological interest. Many scholars have used social relationships theory to understand society. Amongst them are Nyamnjoh (2017), Radcliffe-Brown (1952), Barnes (1954) and Firth (1954), to name a few.

When Radcliffe-Brown (1952:190), for example, defined social structure as “a network of actually existing social relationships”, he was not using “network” in an analytical way. How he used words evoked an image of the interconnections of social relationships, but he did not specify the properties of these interconnections, which could be used to interpret social actions, except at the abstract level of “structure”. Barnes (1954) uses social theory to introduce the idea of a social network by describing an order of social relationships in understanding the social behaviour of people. Firth (1954:4-5) uses the theory but warns of the danger in representing persons as nodes in a network and the complex relationships between them as lines to caution against taking a metaphor which the notion of ‘networks’ subsumes.

Most scholars usually describe social relationships as a mechanism enabling non-social ends or as constraints on the satisfaction of individual desires. Fiske (2014) presents an alternative contemporary theoretical paradigm, supporting evidence on social relationships, arguing that people are fundamentally sociable in terms of how they organise their lives in relations with other people. This study uses the theory in more contextual, specific, and defined ways. Fiske (2014) states that in the context of communal sharing relationships, society involves treating resources as things they have in common. In most of these kinds of societies, the sharing of resources is common amongst close kin and, sometimes, amongst other people involved in what Fortes ([1963] 1978, 1983) termed ‘prescriptive altruism’. Polanyi ([1944] 1957:53-54) termed it ‘householding’, and Sahlins (1965) termed it ‘generalised reciprocity’ (Levi-Strauss, 1961). Kropotkin ([1890-1902] 1987) was amongst the first scholars to trace the history of communal mutual aid, which he articulated, and emphasised such relationships.

For decades, there have been different anthropological studies with two main theoretical approaches to studying social relationships using food and drink in society in the post-functionalist period. The first was the ‘structuralist’ approach represented by Levi-Strauss. Levi-Strauss’s approach was based on the relationship between cooking as a set and system of the symbolic message and other symbolic structures in society. Such relationships are embedded in “deep structure” rather than simply observing behaviour, generally through binary analysis, to find universal meanings of food. The Levi-Strauss approach makes us understand the structure of human thought in general. The practical experience becomes a means to this end (Leach, 1970:42).

There is no doubt that water is also a symbolic system that encourages social relationships and conversation and reflects the significance of Levi-Strauss' work. Therefore, it becomes important not to separate symbols from the social realities of their relationship with other symbols. Levi-Strauss neglects human action or 'practice' but emphasises the underlying or unconscious symbolic dimensions, for which he was criticised (Douglas, 1975:259), which suggests that, to make progress, we should focus on the comparative study of micro-scale social realities – on things like eating and drinking. This study uses different sections of Khayelitsha to understand such realities.

This study illustrates and unravels the underlying narratives around water without using the 'deep structure' approach but relates these narratives based on daily social relationships. In Douglas's (1975:249) work, these narratives are found to exhibit "different degrees of hierarchy, inclusion and exclusion, boundaries, and transitions across boundaries". Douglas (1975) represents the second primary post-functionalist approach to food called the 'cultural' approach. She uses assumptions similar to Levi-Strauss, which state that food is a code containing messages, and its use is culturally patterned. It requires anthropological intervention to understand the code, reveal the hidden narratives in the pattern, and identify and analyse its structure. I use these ideas to further explore how social relationships were unveiled in the sharing of water amongst residents in Khayelitsha during my study.

The binary between formal-informal

The use of formal/informal dualism has sparked much controversy; it has been problematised as reactionary by scholars, such as Francis Nyamnjoh whose concepts are central to the argument in this work. The term originally drew attention to the limitations of a specific approach to understanding social processes. Economists and intellectual bureaucrats' formal analytical concepts rest on a conception of social life as rationalised and open to enumeration. Nevertheless, there lies a peril in naming that the 'informal' becomes yet another form: "a residual category for everything which escaped the conceptual grid of administration and academics" (Nustad, 2000:1). The term 'informal' may be an abstracted 'form' but is necessary for conceptual thinking if forms do not exist. Nustad (2000:2) argues that the term has reduced people to sensual impressions devoid of meaning.

Pure forms do not exist, neither formal nor informal. I concur with Nustad's argument that the term 'informal' is a problematic but beneficial form of thinking.

Castells (1998:101) describes how modern forms developed by colonial administration for technocratic supervision have mainly failed or as Nustad (2000) shows in his case study, they have been turned upside-down and inside-out by the recipients of aid. This understanding of informality as a form imposed by outsiders is problematic to my water analysis in Khayelitsha and its development.

The representation of people or places through the term, informal, is problematic. The challenge arises from my interest in understanding the term, informal, as regards 'the informal economy', 'informal settlements', or 'informal space' to understand social relationships around water and position myself concerning the use of this concept in anthropology. I have examined the term 'informal' as part of the formal/informal binary of forms developed for water distribution. In South Africa, 28 years into democracy, the formal/informal binary has been reinforced in class segregation, increasing wealth disparities (Bond, 2003). The disparities are probably due to the absence of representation inherited by traditional mapping that evolved due to a city administration, which was seduced by planning with the 'Masterplan', which was put to fair use as a vehicle for apartheid segregation.

The increase of segregation in Cape Town comprises many factors. First is the inadequacy in administration transformation to realise traditional planning approaches (Watson, 2001). Second, the geographic misrepresentation of people living in the 'informal' world is excluded from water distribution. (This is expounded in Chapter Five).

African cities are predominantly based on informality (Nyamnjoh, 2014a). If the representation of Khayelitsha is complicated, the question is: What is informal? Simone (1997) offers an alternative, more relevant answer and theoretical understanding of what makes up an African city. In his working papers for Codesria in 1997, Simone (1997:1) elaborates the foundation for "a multinational research network on" "urban processes and changes in Africa". He proposes a closer look at the social economy and urban cultures that seek to re-open questions about the aspirations and practices which configure specific instances of African urbanity (Simone, 1997:1).

Simone (1997) calls for appropriate research that responds to the questions. Nyamnjoh (2014a, 2014b) critiques the Western assumptions of African cities grounded in a narrow view of society, which is not universal.

There are examples to be learnt from people's mobility and urbanism in Khayelitsha, like some sections of the metropolitan city, where there is a great deal of 'informal' land occupation in between formal middle-class residences, land-use is mixed, and people living next to each other are of varying social classes and religions. Khayelitsha is an excellent place to examine in order to find out what transpires when there are multiple modes of accessing water directly from the house, yard or communal taps, tank or truck. The research question enables me to better understand the informal neighbourhood's nature and how residents struggle to improve their living conditions within the existing historical context that has been established as a means of survival. In many African cities, including South Africa, the current mobility and urbanisation rates lead to 'informal living'.

Liminality: Caught betwixt and between

In his seminal work on liminality and rites of passage, Van Gennep (1960) suggested that the life of an individual in any given community is an intrinsic part of life. Thus, the old saying that it is darkest before the dawn reflects a series of experiences accompanied by passages from one stage to another (Van Gennep, 1960:3). The greatness unfolds when our physical and mental capacities are put to the test; according to Van Gennep (1960) rites of passage may occur in different forms to include life events such as: childhood to adolescence, birth to death, pregnancy, marriage and divorce, circumcision, initiation, baptisms, etc. Furthermore, "a rite of passage starts by 'breaking relationship' with a previous social position or status, followed by a phase of ambiguity or uncertainty where persons caught themselves 'in-between' social positions, and ends with 're-entry' or 'rebirth' into a new social position" (Hockey, 2002 cited in Blows et al., 2012:2156). Liminality, thus, may be expressed as transition from one state of being to another. It can, therefore, be said to epitomise people's state of being as, within the masquerade of incompleteness, they are constantly in a state of transition.

Turner (1967, 1969) suggested that rites of passage are not limited to “ascribed social statuses” like infancy, adolescence, birth, death, marriage and divorce, rather they can apply to one’s entry into a “new status” or belonging into a certain group. Turner (1967:97) explained that liminal actors are invisible – they are no longer classified and not yet ‘classified’.

Liminal stage is often described as peripheral, marginal or on the edges of society. Using the ideas above on liminality I argue that upon settling in an occupied area characterised by lack of water, the liminal state commenced; in the case of Ethembeni and Jerusalema, Empholweni, Sanitizer, Gomora, Social distance to name a few. As stated earlier most residents become mobile due to water, toilet, unemployment and some due to sewage leaks after, thus entering the liminal phase, and some ending it by moving out of the informal settlements. This thesis looks at both those who relocated and those who remained in the area.

In this study, liminality has served as a framework for understanding resident’s subjective understandings of time, especially in relation to water access and, ultimately, incompleteness that they need for survivorship. At no stage do I assume that water challenges, as every experience of unequal access is, to be unique and contextually contingent in Khayelitsha. However, there are aspects of liminality which apply to the experiences and the currency of time. My point here, in the context of Khayelitsha, liminality refers to the incompleteness of one’s mobility and people’s livelihood being disrupted through lack of basic service such as water and toilet. Incompleteness, uncertainty of ‘not knowing’ when and how to access water, maps onto the “betwixt and between the normal, day to day cultural and social states”, which Turner (1979:94) so aptly described. It is through liminality that residents employed metaphorical words to describe incompleteness. Here again we can see the entanglement of incompleteness in things and being.

Lakoff and Johnson’s (1980) seminal work on metaphor, although now over four decades old, Resonate with the empirical data presented in this chapter. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) Theorised that people often use metaphor as a way of interacting with the world, but also extend that theory further to describe metaphorical language to talk about something that cannot be physically defined or has no physical reference, in other words, “abstract concepts”. As human beings, we employ concepts and contexts to help structure our lived realities; however, we hardly consider those concepts and contents.

Metaphor helps structure, makes sense of, or clarifies what one desires to convey. It also makes complex concepts, emotions, or experiences more accessible.

Sontag (1986, 1991) was critical of the usage of metaphor to explain illness but object to acknowledge the practical and often taken-for-granted benefit metaphorical language enables. Liminality, just like ‘liquid shit’, can be a metaphor to describe ambiguity, uncertainty, confusion, purgatory. The burden of time incurred through waiting is clearly described by many residents. Residents embraced liminality and ‘liquid shit’ as metaphors to interpret (and make sense of) their predicaments.

Through the narratives, residents of Island, Emsindweni, Evosho and many other areas explained the endless hours of waiting – waiting for the city’s authorities to provide water, waiting for the communal tap to be fixed, waiting for the tank to be filled, waiting for the truck to come, and lastly, waiting for the title deed. Sibbet (2004) also explained that liminality served as a productive metaphor with which to speak about thresholds: between life and death, a cure, or survivorship. Liminality has also been described as a “fructile chaos, a fertile nothingness, a storehouse of possibilities...a gestation process...” (Turner, 1986 & Dewey cited in Sibbet, 2004:6).

Recalling Sontag (1978, 1991) criticisms of metaphor in this section reaffirms the *practical use* of metaphor in language. Residents in different settlements employed water-related metaphors and watery references out of anger or pragmatism, not superficiality or superficial reductionism. As stated earlier, metaphor use by residents is a way to express incompleteness or difficult situations which were seemingly beyond their control.

Part II

Water in society

Water is a challenging substance, and is also associated with sociability, conviviality, commensalism, communal harmony and neighbourliness, particularly in areas where access to water is a struggle. It is an essential theme in Khayelitsha and is discussed more fully in the rest of the thesis.

Generally, water in Khayelitsha is regarded as communal rather than a private commodity, and every householder in an informal area is expected to collect water from a public communal tank, tap or truck; however, those in formal houses may see it as a private commodity because some summon water from the kitchen, bathroom, or toilet.

In her study in Worcester, Reynolds (2013) explains a discussion between Fiona Ross and participants by drawing a connection between dignity and behaviour. She indicates residents believe that a respectful person needs to be clean and presentable (see Reynolds, 2013:151), for which water is essential. In her ethnography, Ross (2010) points to the undesirable state that is to live a 'raw' life and speaks about her participants' desires to live or act in specific ways and meet certain expectations of the community in order to be perceived as '*ordentlik*' (decent, respectable). The word '*ordentlikheid*' is a form of respectability closely associated with defining oneself and humanity and therefore linked to Reynolds (2013) understanding of 'dignity'.

Ethnographic engagement to probe relationships through water

This study explores how water provided by the municipality is influencing social relations in Khayelitsha. Borgatta and Borgatta (1992:1852), argue that social relations embedded in class, race, and gender, influence how people interact. Social relations dynamics amongst groups of people often result in oppression of the have and the have not (ibid). The differences in social status are mostly dedicated by ownership to resources and factors of production (Johnson, 2000:285). For this study, social relations are informed by modes of water access and the social formations that emerged among Khayelitsha residents because of the challenges in accessing water. Incompleteness is a fundamental theory for the study because of how residents capitalise on their social relationships to fulfil their inadequacies. Qhobela's (2014) study focused on the (re) structuring of social relations around a communal tap in Imizamo Yethu. Qhobela (2014) argued that water encourages people to exchange stories, foster relationships and strengthen communal bonds. However, one cannot assume that these social relationships are all positive; indeed, they are not.

Accessing communal water through trucks, communal pipes and tanks, creates a complex space where residents can make both friends and enemies when conflicts emerge around water access. The study will investigate this aspect.

Although cultures and relationships are formed around water, Geertz (1972) asserts that water produces different forms of social hierarchy within societies. In other words, water can make some people either visible or invisible. The redistribution of water reproduces the different forms of interdependence and mutual exchanges among/within societies. Zug and Graefe (2014) have demonstrated the importance, and a different form of, social relationships through the reciprocity of water as a gift with other basic needs such as sorghum and other forms of monetary exchanges, within communities in Khartoum, where water vendors who have donkey carts or bicycles provide water to a community in need. The forms of reciprocity reinforce social relationships and encourage a sense of belonging among communities in such exchanges (Appadurai, 1988). It does not mean that water sharing within communities can consistently produce positive social relations, particularly in cases of water scarcity, where each member of the society strives for survival. Focusing on the tensions caused by water scarcity, Ibe-Lamberts (2013) study provides an illustration of Nigeria and states that a rural village of Ikoyi in Nigeria also practises reciprocal water exchanges, but due to water scarcity, more conflicts emerged among people and influenced social relations (Ibe-Lamberts, 2013).

This study conceptualises water as an element of social relations. Morehouse (1970) emphasises Mauss's (1954) water concept as a total social fact as she perceives water as an essential element in religious use, thus a metaphor in a cultural context. By applying water to its role in society, Lewins (2007) sought to understand the link between water and social relations. Lewins (2007) asserts that water cannot be understood outside social life. In India, Dirks et al. (1980) study revealed that social relations changed with conditions such as starvation and resource scarcity. People solidified their relationships during periods of starvation, shared the resources and took care of those in need. However, their relationship was put to the test as resources became scarce due to uncertainty. Similarly, a study by Legg (2010) about adults living with aphasia (brain dysfunction) revealed how health challenges also constrained social relations.

Anthropological understanding of relationships with water

An anthropological understanding of water is not limited to water as a human need only. Strang (2013) and Orlove and Caton (2010) examine water within the natural environment and how it shapes the landscape in numerous ways, particularly around how specific cultural landscapes are formed as water flows over the earth. Orlove and Caton (2010) and Orlove (2009) work are essential in understanding water and environment from a cultural perspective. They argue that anthropologists can provide ethnographic insight, which, they suggest, could be the missing link that science needs when engaging with various water challenges. They conclude that communities are like living archives; they hold histories and stories of faith and healing about water use. Anthropologists have primarily taken water as an element of inquiry. Perhaps due to its apparent multiplicity and uniformity, water has become a critical substance of concern that can create tension between policymakers, corporations, and various user communities.

Over the past decades, anthropologists have looked at water as an element of contestation and conflicts arising from unequal access and usage. Rasmussen and Orlove (2015:12) have indicated that water had never been given much attention, particularly in its analysis, yet ‘water was part of a contextual backdrop of human culture’ and a site of cultural practices. The recent anthropological work on water has focused on mobility (Gupta, 2010, 2016; Yon, 2011; Alff, 2021), circulation and the various water processes in the urban environment and the implications of humans, infrastructure, and technologies (see Chitonge, 2014). Concerning the environmental impact in Spain and Ecuador, Swyngedouw (2004) provides an example by looking at water in modernisation and development in urban spaces. Swyngedouw (2004) argued that water circulation as a physical and social process highlights broader political, economic, social, and ecological processes. He demonstrates, through fieldwork, how these processes have – in the context of the Ecuadorian City of Guayaquil – shaped urbanisation (See Chitonge, 2020a, 2020b).

Gandy (2004) uses the ‘ethno-scape’ concept provided by Appadurai (1990) to draw the link between the City and water.

Gandy (2004) conceptualises the City as a metabolism that needs water for ideas, power, and capital to flow. The idea of a city as metabolism allows him to perceive the City as a living organism that needs to care for itself, similar to what we do for our bodies. Water is a crucial component for all living organisms and facilitates the immune system's functions by carrying different minerals across the body and cleansing the body internally of any toxins. Similarly, the flow of water in the city is essential to sustain its everyday functioning of the economy that, in turn, influences social relationships and the movement of people.

Anand (2012, 2017) examines the repercussions and politics around water technologies and infrastructure in Mumbai, focusing on the urban areas using dams and canals to redirect rivers from one area to another. Moreover, the challenge in sewage works and infrastructure presented many issues for Mumbai. Similarly, Von Schnitzler (2008) explores the water prepaid metering system as an infrastructure used by the state to control and manage the population through this notion of them being 'ideal' citizens. She indicates a link between citizens and the state under various neoliberal developments. In the current capitalist-driven society, the value of water has gradually been defined by those interested in water flow as a commodity. Unfortunately, this has occluded other non-economic, non-political stakeholders and systems of knowledge, such as religion, from the spaces where water allocation is decided. Therefore, this work is to bring to our attention the contradictions that arise in the relationship people have with water by locating it in this growing field of anthropological study.

Water as an agent that mobilises the formation of relationships

This study focuses on the formation of relations resulting from a scarcity of water provided or engineered by the municipality through communal taps, tanks, and trucks to highlight the issues that led to the emergence of new settlements, identity formation, and marginality to understand incompleteness and conviviality.

Although access to water can create conflicts (Smith & Hanson, 2003), social networks can play an essential role in enhancing the residents' conviviality.

Given the water challenges in Khayelitsha, this study sought to understand how residents create relationships between themselves and water to survive. Places such as Khayelitsha, diverse in water challenges, can be experienced as spaces that forge incompleteness requiring trust, interdependence, solidarity, and mutual support to survive (Nyamnjoh & Brudvig, 2014a cited in Nyamnjoh, 2017). Using Nyamnjoh (2017), water communally accessed and shared in Khayelitsha can generate social relations as residents interact and develop social norms that facilitate everyone's access to the limited resource – water.

This study draws from the concept of incompleteness to understand the formation of social relations, in which mutual relationships are supported by scholars like Nyamnjoh (2018) and Ross (2015), to name a few. The study uses these scholars' seminal works mainly because they fit into the contemporary South African context and concept in which this research is located. Conviviality is a product of social relations and can be defined as is the ability of individuals to mutually interact and autonomously connect with others and their space to respond or satisfy their own destiny or needs. Nyamnjoh (2018) provides us with a way to think of, and understand, communities and social relations through the notion of conviviality. This study is not blind to the contestations and conflicts that can emerge from the shared access to communal water taps, trucks or tanks. However, Smith and Hanson's (2003) study shows that conflicts often arise when those not considered proper infrastructure beneficiaries try to access water and sanitation facilities in neighbouring areas. Nonetheless, all these circumstances make it attractive for this study to focus on water and the forms of sociality it creates.

According to Nyamnjoh (2018), the community's social relations depend on social networks based upon shared values and mutual trust. Using Nyamnjoh's (2018) idea, sharing spaces and resources like water in Khayelitsha encourages negotiation, tolerance, and respect among residents, influencing community relations. It is assumed that social relation allows a community with a diverse social background to deal with social contradictions and tensions to maintain a homogeneous survival (Monson et al., 2012). Nyamnjoh (2002, 2018) asserts that everyday conviviality is based on interactions and socialisation. Besides, Nyamnjoh (2002, 2018) affirms that conviviality is also a way to understand how the sense of community comes together by negotiating social dynamics in mutual ways.

In the context of Khayelitsha, relationships emerge through difficulties in accessing resources whereby residents become unified by mutual interest and value systems as their survival strategies.

Nyamnjoh (2002) demonstrates that no one can claim a monopoly over others when conviviality is present. It involves negotiation within a community and encourages individuals' empowerment within society. In most social groups, diverse social relations are shared through a belief system (Gluckman, 1940). Convivial relationships in this study capture water sharing that enable community members to consider themselves as a collective and not as independent individuals, but somewhat interdependent through social relations shaped by the lived experience of using the communal water tap (Kongo, 2019). This social relationship is taken from Gluckman's (1940) work, which examines the common usage on a bridge by diverse social groups, where there are negotiations of coexistence and interdependence.

Water, health, and state control

Wutich and Ragdale's (2008) study preceded those of Goldin (2010) and Stevenson et al. (2012). Wutich and Ragdale's (2008) study has indicated that a significant lack of water impacts health. Goldin's (2010) findings from South Africa suggest a possible connection between water and health challenges resulting from water access and citizen engagement. Ethnographic work by Stevenson et al. (2012) further established the relationship between water scarcity and psychosocial challenges in Ethiopia. Stevenson et al. (2012) have indicated that understanding the social aspect of lacking water is essential because it allows interventions to improve water supplies based on well evaluated and informed decisions. How might the relationship between access to water and health influence how individuals improve their access to water, mainly in contexts where the government is a custodian and responsible for providing water to its citizens?

While examining two South African communities, Goldin (2010) found a health distress link to water, influencing citizenship engagement on service delivery issues.

Conversation to improve water infrastructure and services delivery appeared to be connected to health states, followed by confusion and irritation. The finding by Goldin (2010) indicates that communities and individuals do not show interest in government political economy, partially visualised through lack of water infrastructure, and, in addition to feeling confused and irritated, at the same time felt humiliated, and, as a consequence, were more reluctant to use their citizenship and to take part in civic engagement to improve their water situations. Such action has been supported by Robins (2013a, 2013b) and Von Schnitzler (2008), who examined the relationship between water and citizenship in post-apartheid South Africa. There is agreement among scholars that water played a critical role in defining social relations in African societies at colonial contact (Bundy, 1979; Maylam, 1986; Hammond-Tooke, 1993).

Water is crucial to people's livelihood (Barnes & Alatout, 2012; Meinzen-Dick & Zwarteveen, 1998). It is associated with a society's survival, and livelihood (Jackson & Robins, 2018); Chitonge, 2020a, 2020b); (The consequences of inadequate water supply to a community were highlighted in Chapter 1.) However, despite its centrality to human life, developing countries struggle to provide finance and investment in sufficient water infrastructure (Calderon & Nguyen, 2016; Chitonge et al., 2019). In contrast, financial aid for water related projects has declined since the mid-1990s, (Chitonge et al., 2019; Chitonge, 2020a, 2020b). The urgent need for water services for the poor is more significant due to deficiencies in education access. Water-related illnesses put severe burdens on the health service (DHS, 2012:13). The United Nations recognised the right to clean and safe drinking water as a human right in 2010 and obliged states to prioritise "those most in need" in achieving universal access to water (UN, 2019).

According to Smith and Hanson (2003:1530), "Under the South African constitution, local authorities are obliged to ensure access to water for all citizens." The government's water supply provision targets include the desire for "all people in South Africa to have access to an adequate and basic water supply facility by 2014" (Department of Water Affairs [DWA], 2013: 24).

Research on prepaid water metres and water pipes shed new light on citizenship (Anand, 2017; Millington, 2018; Von Schnitzler, 2016).

Von Schnitzler (2008) indicates that, in South Africa, the marginalised experience water challenges, while those with more resources enjoy unlimited safe water flows. Von Schnitzler (2008) states that, in addressing the challenges, we must consider a conviviality to prioritise human life rather than focusing on the capitalistic idea of maximising profit. Swatuk (2008) and Cothren (2013) indicate that the current challenges with water accessibility in South Africa cannot be delinked from the apartheid system of racial planning and development.

To address this disparity in water access, the democratic government introduced the Free Basic Water Policy in 2001, which is assigned to providing water to those who are on the margin (Cothren, 2013). Despite the efforts, townships, including rural areas in South Africa, still face difficulty in terms of water access. In their study, Cousins, Smith & Chauke (2007) demonstrate that water provision services in the Bushbuckridge Municipality in Mpumalanga Province, located directly south of Limpopo Province, is problematic. The reliance on water supply in the area varies greatly – for instance, in Hlalakahle village, community members report that the communal taps only work for 75% of the time. In contrast, in Seville C's village, people report having access to water 98% of the time.

Sustainability in service delivery requires that water be managed as a scarce resource with economic value and social value (Chitonge, 2020a, 2020b). Literature review in this study has shown how water as a commodity mobilises social relations and how the lack of solid institutional structures and poor planning has resulted in huge disparities between access to water among the rich and the poor communities residing in the same City (Chitonge et al., 2019). Chitonge 2020a indicates that South African water distribution is linked to service delivery's racialised architecture under apartheid. Water facilitates connectivity, and there are various ways in which water is being accessed in Khayelitsha. Chitonge (2020a) illustrates that the urgent need for basic water services for the poor assumes even greater significance when linked with other aspects of poverty, such as poor education. Water-related illnesses put severe burdens on the health service (DHS, 2012:13).

Water and the overwhelming inequality of accessibility have received much in-depth research, particularly across the African continent, (Chitonge, 2020a, 2020b).

It has been suggested that access to water enables social relationships, expertise and consumption by people who use it to improve their lives (Hastrup & Hastrup, 2015). Though studies have shown that access to water is beneficial not just for its practical uses to improve lives or to enable households to work with others more frequently and simply, it is also helpful for social relationships between users and their body or devices and the perceptions of their devices by others. Thus, Shearman (2003:5) states that access to water in itself is insufficient, “rather it is what is and can be done with the access that makes water meaningful.”

Scholars like Chitonge (2020a, 2020b) argue that not only can water facilitate economic and developmental growth, enhance lives, and empower citizens; in addition to bringing about social change, it is also expected to solve problems, particularly among those stricken with poverty. The alleviation of poverty most often relies on relationships and the agency enhancement of the poor. As argued before, water, then, needs to be considered in terms of its (potential) facilitation in enhancing social formation, agency, acknowledging the experiences of mobilisation and innovations. The proponents of water argue that water is associated with increased livelihood opportunities (Chitonge, 2020a, 2020b; Masiangoako, Khunou & Potter, 2022).

Often presented as ‘unambiguous positive flows of globalisation’ (Carmody, 2010:112), research has shown that water usage across the continent has indeed been associated with increased livelihoods of many populations, offering a variety of ways to achieve goals that were nearly impossible before its introduction, more than its value as a communication alternative (De Bruijn, Brinkman & Nyamnjoh, 2013; Carmody, 2010). For particularly marginalised populations, water is becoming a desirable necessity for the possibilities it offers them to relate, communicate and in how it facilitates the production, reproduction, and transformation of social networks, social status, and hierarchies (Nyamnjoh, 2020). Marginalised populations are increasingly finding new ways to acquire water and use it for their benefit.

Among most groups, I would imagine, but within marginalised groups, it is believed – believed by many but a reality to few – that those who have access to water can significantly fulfil their wishes, such as recreational activities and health (Jackson & Robins, 2018, Schutte, 2015), making difficult water access, for example, an understandable object of desire. Water maintains its value and is widely regarded as an essential means of meaningful survival. However, as water has been associated with enhancing relationships of individuals, it can also be viewed as stepping stones toward bodily functions. The lack of water can encourage social formation and increase levels of agency that may have formerly been lacking.

Many decades ago, Wittfogel (1957) exposed a fundamental power dynamic between state power and the control of water and its ownership (Strang, 2020a). Several academic discourses of social and theoretical development have highlighted these, and equally demonstrated that exclusion from the ownership of natural resources, like water, exemplifies a form of marginalisation that impacts the individual civic right in social development discourse. Anthropologists have constantly explored the relationship between social hierarchies and cultural belief systems in a given society (Stang, 2020b). Strang (2020a, 2020b) states that the narrow legal definitions of property have been problematised and challenged by considering diverse ways of owning and controlling resources.

The anthropological analyses of culture have provided us with an understanding of how it extends human agency and the composition of social hierarchy and relationships. Such methods can be applied to water and its usage and how it has been managed. Drawing on ethnographic research on water in Australia and the UK, Stang (2015) traces changing relationships between infrastructure, social and political hierarchies, and societal beliefs. Stang (2015) suggests that current privatisation with transnational water ownership possibly engenders the emergence of contemporary autocratic regimes. In terms of societal beliefs, Stang (2015) provides a succinct summing: throughout history and across cultures, the human species has often worshipped and treasured water as the most indispensable substance and a source of reproduction, wealth, and health maintenance.

Many scholars have agreed that there is a crucial relationship between power and the control of water, and closer analyses of how water intersects with social and political relations have revealed a more complex picture recognising that many kinds of power, in most cases, are enabled through its control and management (Von Schnitzler, 2008). Helmreich (2011) points out that there are multiple ways to understand the value of water. Further, Caton and Orlove (2010) observe that water flows through and connects many realms of social life. These multiplicities produce various institutions and processes for managing and distributing water resources, expressing social and political relations.

Strang (2020a) emphasises the relationship between water and power, addressing, in particular, the role of infrastructure in this dynamic control. She draws on several areas: recent work on the many different ways water can be owned, concepts of human-environmental relations, and theories concerned with agency and materiality. She further notes that a crucial element – often neglected in analyses of water and power – are the underlying cosmological beliefs and values (religious or secular), reflecting and affirming societal arrangements. For example, her idea draws attention to a significant relationship between the development of large-scale water infrastructures and religious deities (Stang, 2014a).

Sanitation and toilets design

Access to water borne toilet systems without proper sanitation systems is a health hazard (Bond, 1999:54). Therefore, water provision and sewage management go hand in hand. Limited access to affordable water compromised the household's sanitation (Tissington, 2011:68). Redfield and Robins (2016) examines the complicated relationship between technology and human need and argue that cost efficiency overrides the provision of efficient sewage systems in weak states. Redfield and Robins (2016) further state that political imaginaries are associated with access to state resources like water and sanitation and demand for social justice.

Redfield and Robins (2016) state that the sanitation problem consequently classifies human populations as depicted in South Africa, where sanitation distinguishes population's social level. Redfield and Robins (2016) use an anthropological metaphor and indicate that "everybody does it, just not in the same way". Through the lens of the South African context, they suggest and reveal the structures of feeling hidden depicted by infrastructure (Williams, Williams & Williams, 1977).

Many scholars, including Redfield and Robins (2016), disagree on what that future should be envisaged. Such disagreements enable them to indicate and reveal significant tensions related to the material politics of infrastructure. They contend that relations to waste are a product of both economic, cultural, and power relations in society (Redfield & Robins 2016:147). Their case studies focus on the concept of dignity, rights, citizenship, and expectations of modernity (Ferguson, 1999). Through the case studies, they recall a history of inequality and distinction (Bourdieu, 1984), effectively and sensorially embodied in the humble toilet.

From an anthropological perspective, Redfield and Robins (2016) note that sanitation issues are linked to the expansion of human settlements and population growth. They state that humans are social beings, and it is clear that, as people live close to each other in more significant numbers and closer together, waste disposal becomes an issue when poorly managed. According to Robins (2014) and Schutte (2013) human waste, especially faeces, evokes a range of visceral reactions. From the vantage point of urbanism, sensibilities in places like Cape Town, Jackson and Robins (2018), Redfield and Robins (2016) and Schutte (2013) indicate that human by-products pollute, making a significant difference in people's living conditions. Thus, the disposal of human waste is not only technical, but also political and moral.

Access to water in South Africa

While water is central to social life, its access is often riddled by inequalities and shortage as experienced by residents in informal settlements (Robins, 2014; Masiangoako, Khunou & Potter, 2022).

In the context of Cape Town Smith and Hanson (2003:1531) revealed that “households with standpipe access living in informal settlement areas have extremely low consumption levels.”¹⁴

They further noted that informal settlement households consume an average of 17 litres per individual, per day, which is well below the 25-litre-a-day South African standard” (ibid.) Thus, they concluded that the local authorities were failing to fulfil their mandate of water delivery to residents in settlements.

According to Chitonge (2020a, 2020b), disparities in the distribution and access to water are among the primary underlying determinants of social inequalities. Indeed, the urgency of improved access to water is captured in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), established in 2015; Goal 6 aims to guarantee “water availability and sustainable management of sanitation for all” (Chitonge et al., 2019). Furthermore, several statements and resolutions have adopted access to safe and adequate water as a human right (Chitonge, 2020). The UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, for example, highlights the human right to enough safe and adequate water to sustain life (Lane, 2004:5). This right is also enshrined in the Bill of Rights of the South African Constitution (RSA, 1996).

Aside from the fact that sharing a communal water source is not amiable in contemporary times, it also presents a challenge for water access, an aspect that should be provided for (Cousins, Smits & Chauke 2007; Cothren, 2013). Smith and Hanson (2003) revealed something important about the complex forms of the formation of social relations water affords to residents in poor sections of urban areas. They observed that the “inequalities in the distribution of infrastructure services had generated distrust and conflict within communities” (ibid:1529). For instance, numerous community conflicts arose in Langa township when residents in the Joe Slovo informal settlement tried to gain access to water or sanitation facilities from hostel units across the road and from water taps in Settlers Way homes.

¹⁴ Also see Masiangoako, Khunou & Potter (2022).

As mentioned in Chapter 1, Cothren (2013) highlights the impact of inadequate water access on the individual's quality of life.

She quotes a participant in HaMakuya, Limpopo Province, South Africa, as expressing his dissatisfaction with a distant water source since it impacted the constrained children's school time and by extension, the community activities (Cothren, 2013:56). Similarly, Anderson et al. (2012) revealed similar challenges to water access in Guyuni in Limpopo Province, South Africa.

The challenges included constraints with carrying buckets on one's head for women and children and the fact that village taps only supplied water on weekends and the inefficient maintenance that would sometimes take days if the system broke down. People hence have access to less than 25 litres of clean water per day below the recommended quantity (Kemerink, Ahlers & van der Zaag, 2011). The review above reveals different facets linked to access to water. For this reason, it becomes crucial for this study to investigate the various forms of social relationships that water accords in informal settlements.

Access to water in Cape Town

The Western Cape has been classified a water constrained region and this is due to several factors such as agricultural activities, population growth, pollution of water sources, high activities on irrigation, and lower than expected rainfalls (WWF SA, 2016; Ding, Gilligan & Hornberger, 2019). Agriculture in the Western Cape is estimated to consume 59% of water while households use 12%. Ironically, the province concentrated water savings in households with no alternatives for agricultural use (Business Tech, 2017). Besides most bottled water in leading retailers such as: Woolworths, Shoprite, Spar and Pick' n Pay is derived from farming areas of Lower Paarl, Citrusdal, Heidelberg, and Franschhoek within the Western Cape Province that experience the highest levels of drought.

A study by O'Brien (2014) in Cape Town showed that the white population had more access to water in their homes compared to the Africans.

The African who had access to water lived in affluent neighbourhoods such as Camps Bay, and Sea Point, while those in Khayelitsha, were limited to inadequate municipal water delivery (Kongo, 2019, Jackson & Robins, 2018).

Given that water is a social rather than an economic good, provisions were made to construct dams to ensure adequate supply (Socio-Economic Rights Institute, 2020a: 48). However, it gets sold at market prices further confounding the situation of the impoverished township residents (Chitonge, 2020a, 2020b; Maclennan, 2021). The controversial pre-paid system experimented in Johannesburg Soweto Township is now used as a cost recovery mechanism of the neo-liberal government. This limits the access to water and instead commodifies it with grave implications for urbanised poor in townships (Von Schnitzler, 2008).

Access to water in Khayelitsha

To understand water management, Chitonge (2020a, 2020b) and Masiangoako, Khunou and Potter (2022) state that water access is a challenging exercise because most residents of informal settlements do not adequately access safe water, and the municipal authorities' capacity to meet the growing demand is severely constrained. This scenario is present in Khayelitsha where tensions are evident due to the insufficient water supply at communal taps, tanks, and water trucks (Socio-Economic Rights Institute, 2020a; Masiangoako, Khunou & Potter, 2022). By access, the study means the ability for one to derive benefits from water regardless of the factors that restrict this access such as those vested with the power to control it (Ribot & Peluso, 2009). Through access, the emergence of social relationships is evident and depicted in their power to control the distribution of resources. Thus, access to sufficient legal right and claim over the use and benefit of a resource (Moyo, 2019; Masiangoako, Khunou & Potter, 2022). Power is therefore central to people's access to things, and such powers are enshrined in law, customs and social relationships that facilitate or inhibit people from benefiting. But the access to necessary amenities in Khayelitsha is confounded by City of Cape Town's known historical constraints in service delivery especially due to the high levels of urbanisation and rural-urban migrations (Socio-Economic Rights Institute, 2020a, 2020b, 2020c; Masiangoako, Khunou & Potter, 2022).

Conclusion

In conclusion, I will outline the framework for this study, scaffolding it on what I have drawn from the literature.

Historically, townships in South Africa have been dumping grounds for black people. As part of Apartheid's racial infrastructure, these areas were deliberately situated on the margins of urban areas to separate them from the more privileged – in effect, 'white' – communities, while, at the same time, close enough to access the places where their labour was needed. This historical separation is being perpetuated by policy makers.

On the margins of most townships themselves, in turn, informal settlements sprang up, and continue to do so, since democracy has lifted the restrictions on the movements of people, previously imposed by colonialist governments and, later, the apartheid state. Presently, the majority of residents in the informal areas are migrants from rural areas within South Africa and further afield. While the concept of informality is problematic, I have found it a useful lens for this study through which to make sense of the unequal distribution of water in such areas, and, particularly, in Khayelitsha. Residents of marginal informal settlements are regarded as 'outsiders' and Other, not worthy of the same treatment as those in formal areas. Besides, in the context of water having become a commodity and no longer simply a necessity of life, to boot, they do not have the means to pay the municipality to provide the service of water piped directly to their homes. These factors then underpin the unequal distribution of water in formal and informal settlements. In the latter, the nature of domestic water is communal, being provided through communal taps, tanks and trucks, collected communally and the collection thereof managed communally by means of social relationships among the residents. These social relationships are formed through the residents' interaction with the water sources and each other. This is just one example of the kinds of social relationships formed through water.

The question that now comes to mind is: How can we go about understanding this phenomenon? I have chosen to view the phenomenon through the lens of incompleteness as it throws much light and clarity on it. Incompleteness embodies a desire to constantly enhance oneself physically, materially, emotionally, spiritually, and socially.

This can only be done by encountering others through conviviality, expressed in individuals' creative interactions with one another and the environment to satisfy their needs. In South Africa, the concept, Ubuntu, stands as an example of how people are formed through relationships: 'We are who we are through others. Mutuality, reciprocation, and support freely given within kinship and clan relationships, and even among strangers, are the pillars on which Ubuntu rests, because we are all humans who cannot thrive, or sometimes, even survive, in isolation. However, to activate the desire to enhance themselves, people need to be mobile – physically, spatially, mentally and emotionally – in order to make or grasp opportunities that will lead to the enhancement they desire. They are able to do this only through engaging with others in their quest; that is, through social relationships. In the process, they also go through stages of liminality as they transform or are transformed.

One has to bear in mind that no-one and nothing is ever complete, and the state of incompleteness is ever present, making the ability to transform endless. In the context of this study, the struggle for water can be viewed as an aspect of incompleteness.

The following chapter discusses the method used to collect and interpret the empirical data and understand the various forms of the formation of social relations that water affords.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCHING WATER RELATIONS: SEWAGE WATER AND PATHWAYS

Introduction

This chapter discusses the research methodology used to answer the research questions and contextualises townships or informal settlements concerning water. The chapter outlines some of the challenges faced during fieldwork, particularly regarding maintaining ethics in the human subject. It also acknowledges the difficulties in situating myself as an outsider and provides a detailed explanation of the study's research methodology.

This chapter delineates the framework that informs the methods employed to answer the research question posed in this study. Lockdowns forced by Covid-19, staying at home, quarantine and remote-working regulations subsequently posed many challenges to undertaking in person research, which is at the core of ethnographic deep immersion and conviviality. Because of the pandemic, researchers have been forced to come up with creative ways to conduct fieldwork research while adhering to the prescribed instructions from national health authorities, and while also observing research ethics. The lockdowns have also highlighted the problem and incompleteness of conventional research methodology. Through mobility, conviviality has helped me employ a diverse method approach to researching water in Khayelitsha (see below). As a way of beginning to engage with this ethnographic study with a list of issues, attempting to capture and say something different and meaningful, I begin by providing some pointers about the kinds of experiences and ideas that inform my approach. The great majority of my research experience has been under the African Studies umbrella, which emphasises multi-disciplinarity and its determination to scan a broader field.

The ethnographic approach gave rise to encountering the residents' feelings, virtues, and passion of the mind – a complex puzzle – when I researched the water, through observing, participating, and listening to the challenges people were experiencing. Exploring Khayelitsha meant paying particular attention to what I saw, sensed, heard, smelled, touched, and spoke.

I used what Fiona Ross (2009: Chapter 3) calls ‘sense-scapes’, that is - my senses, seeing, hearing, smelling, touching, and tasting, attempting to increase possibilities of enhancing myself in my incompleteness of understanding water in various aspects of social relationships, which Nyamnjoh (2015, 2020, 2021) termed “incompleteness of being”.

I decided to be mobile in Khayelitsha and to seek to understand the complexities of everyday life, using ethnography to find points of orientation to make sense of water in Khayelitsha, both in the particularity of its history and as a large and complex informal settlement. In tracking Khayelitsha in its historical development of service delivery (see Chapters 1 and 5), consulting secondary sources – journal articles and government documents – proved to be profitable, and delivered valuable data about the unequal nature of the habitation – formal/informal – and service delivery prevalent in the township. I was concerned with how people’s current location, mobility, inequality, incompleteness, conviviality and water availability shape social relationships in formal and informal settlements.

Blended learning approaches

The study utilised a qualitative research design because it emphasises those being studied through the informants’ personal experiences. This method facilitates the interpretation of data from the respondent’s perspective. It enabled me to record the voices and perspectives of the participants, their views, appreciation, fears, relationships, and concerns about accessing water in Khayelitsha. The research design suited this study as it enabled me to understand the various forms of social relations that water affords in the ‘formal’ and ‘informal’ settlements, the latter being where households share water through communal taps, trucks, and tanks. By employing ethnography, I examined the various forms of social relationships that water affords to Khayelitsha residents. The approach enabled me to interrogate the relationship between theory and empirical evidence. Incompleteness and conviviality enabled me to use ethnography to understand how the formation of social relations are created. Furthermore, how different residents access and manage water from different informal settlements. I combined participation observation data with interview data to “explore” or “explain” the formation of social relationships around municipal water in South Africa from other viewpoints.

Data collection

Establishing connections with the gatekeepers

My Master's study involved people in Khayelitsha's adaptation to water crises. In 2019, while preparing for my PhD fieldwork, I went back to look at what was happening in mostly newly occupied areas. I started by visiting new areas to establish links with the community. I visited different study areas to observe and interview more than 45 residents and some who work and reside in the area (based on links established previously). These included community leaders, who take up water provision challenges. I also conducted interviews and group discussions with selected residents from the community (see participant sample in the appendix). Focus group discussions formed part of my data collection.

The sampling method to select participants for the study was snowball techniques with the aim of finding three to four appropriate residents from each of the different sections chosen. The primary stratifying variables were gender and age, followed by the type of housing and mode of access to water. The sections chosen were in formal areas representative of different housing types, and in informal areas, distinguished by the means of access to water. These represented a heterogeneous population, divided into homogenous subgroups. The primary criteria were by far the larger number of people who live in informal houses.

Due to the extensive lockdown, I spent thirteen interrupted months in Khayelitsha between February 2020 and March 2021. I was mobile, I undertook several shorter visits, usually four or five days a week, spending seven hours on each visit. I was not alone during the fieldwork. Kotso, who was amongst the first young isiXhosa-speaking research participants and assistants accompanied me on the first stage of the fieldwork.

I later replaced Kotso due to Covid-19 and his reluctance and fear to be infected with the virus. I then got valuable assistance from three research assistants: TaZuks, an independent taxi driver with his partner Philazo, whom I have known since 2017; the other, a twenty-six-year-old woman, Tumisha, who is an unemployed graduate and the daughter of my neighbour in Gugulethu. TaZuks introduced me to many formal and informal sections of Khayelitsha within the occupied area in Khayelitsha. These three assistants are also isiXhosa speaking.

Although they were not from Khayelitsha, they had relatives living in Khayelitsha, and many residents related to them as insiders. Their presence played an essential role in data collection and security and bridged the language and cultural barriers between the research participants and me. As indicated above, I had worked in some sections before. I had a fair knowledge of some of the people there and that it was easy for me to have ready contacts. Being accompanied by insiders ensured that residents were more open to talking to me than could be the case were I alone. Connected to this was that an insider's presence would limit the chances of my facing security threats.

Knowledge gained through the field is described as a co-production between me and their subjects (Nyamnjoh, 2012; Ersoy, 2017). All of the above set the scene for rich engagement with residents in Khayelitsha to tap into their lived realities as they concerned water access.

Ethnography as research methodology

Ethnography is a tool that emphasises anthropologists' skills in "being present on the field" (Nyamnjoh, 2012; Ross, 2014). This study shifts somewhat from the single-site to multiple sites such as "formal houses and informal houses", "authorised and unauthorised areas" and "legal and illegal" in "occupied land" (Marcus, 1995) due to Covid-19 and the entanglement of settlements. I was compelled to engage in multi-sited work and study residents in their many layers of interdependencies to get a broader view of the water challenges, as they appear to be prominent in sections of Khayelitsha. The multi-sited strategy reveals a lot on the field. Krauss (2016) indicates that this strategy I used covers an element of apparently unrelated developments, relationships, and access to water.

My mobility and experience of changing ethnographic snapshots in the field taught me to embrace the challenges as evidence of incompleteness of the social world that I inhabited. Referring to Gupta and Ferguson (1997:3), who suggest that the problem with ethnography is in the reality that "the world being described by ethnographers has changed dramatically...". I acknowledge that some of my ethnographic ideas would have changed by the time this study is complete, but that does not mean that ethnography is not worth doing. It only alluded to what Nyamnjoh calls incompleteness of "things".

I immersed myself in the field

Before the lockdown, I visited the community on holidays, weekends, and weekdays. In some areas, I was aware of, and limited by, the danger of violence and threats in the community. Additionally, people learned that I lived in a township fifteen kilometres away from Khayelitsha. Because of my proximity to the research site, I frequently went there to say ‘hello’ and chat.

During the 2020 lockdown, I covered many settlements, and I conducted WhatsApp and telephonic interviews. A large amount of information was obtained simply by walking and talking and participating in community work (see Figure 3.1).

For the first seven weeks before the lockdown, I pursued the relationship between water rituals because my entry point was *mgidi*¹⁵ – this was in the C and BM sections.¹⁶ I later moved to Ethembeni, Emsindweni, Island and other newly occupied areas where people collect water for various functions. I approached people who collected water at the communal tap, tank, and truck, spoke to them, sought out people deemed to be knowledgeable or who had performed a collection of water, and interviewed residents who had.

With this technique, I managed to collect a lot of data, but I realised that there was something missing and seemed disconnected because the information was based mainly on observation.

¹⁵ A traditional celebration when a boy is coming from the initiation school.

¹⁶ These are names of sections in informal settlements situated in Khayelitsha featured as one of the case studies in this thesis.



Figure 2: R
Emsindweni (Picture taken by research assistant, 20 August 2020).



Figure 3: Water being pumped into a jojo tank by municipal contractors during Covid-19 lockdown (Pictures taken by Minga, 20 August 2020).

After we moved from stage five to stage three of the lockdown, I returned to the sites and found an intensive and unstructured land occupation coupled with the erection of new settlements was happening on unauthorised areas. Slowly it became possible again to follow the water activities of residents in some of these areas. My presence in these areas made me realise that water was crucial in these newly occupied areas. I spent many weeks studying water, the subject of my study. The discussion around water usage in this work comprises different kinds of water access and various other actions. After realising the significance of water, I started to visit these areas more regularly and understand them better. Initially, a wide variety of social relationships around water emerged, accessed for various purposes, and frequently named accordingly.

To understand the mode of accessing water, I had to identify its structure, which seemed to be linked to the reason for the incompleteness¹⁷ and social relationships. Another significant observation was all the talking, debate, discussion, and other kinds of conversations that marked water access and usage. There were frequent lengthy and intense arguments also, more orderly speeches (see conversation with Nomfundiso in Chapter 4). Later, I realised how people were connected, what made them connected, who was connected to whom, who were important independently of what was said.

Through conviviality, I was able to get to know a fair number of truck drivers, municipal contractors, traditional leaders, pastors, young and adult members of each separate area, including those from each adjacent settlement, like the newly occupied areas.¹⁸ The advantage was that I eventually identified most people present at the different communal taps, water trucks and communal water tanks, homes, *mgidi*, churches, and funerals. I recorded with relative ease: understanding who lived where and did what, who sat where and who spoke, and who was allocated water. At the traditional gathering, I observed who called whom for a sip (before Covid-19) and during Covid-19, how water was dispensed at a funeral.

Most of the data were obtained first-hand by observing, attending, and participating in community work, churches, funerals. Detailed digital notes were taken, and I then understood the social relationships and the importance of the conversation at all events, including at the communal tap, communal tank, and communal water trucks. The attendance and participation enabled me to compare the relationship water can afford to other events (see Chapters 1, 4,5,6 and 7).

Participant observations

Despite Covid-19, it was essential to participate in social relationships that speak about other forms of water access. For instance, I participated in water collection and distribution from communal taps, tanks, and trucks.

¹⁷ See Chapter 2, the conceptual framework.

¹⁸ See Chapter 1.

Traditional celebrations, church and funeral attendance were also unavoidable. This method encouraged me to observe water and the dynamics of livelihood. I employed a deep hanging technique: this methodology allows a solid engagement with the residents, helping to limit being a visible researcher. According to Ross (2010), participant observation requires being aware in research, avoiding preconceived research ideas. Through deep 'hanging out' participant observations, I observed different activities as they occurred and in my presence.

My experiences in other research areas were different because my assistants and I did not know anyone from there. I chose these diverse areas for the reasons provided above. The most important one was that the informal place offered a situation where the people living in the squatter community had challenges to access water, sanitation services, or even having limited services. I knew some of the backgrounds of the area since I had conducted research there in the past, and they are near my place of residence. I took for granted my incompleteness of being an outsider and that I would not experience any problems getting access to some of the areas. I was wrong on both counts. Although I had witnessed a mushrooming of shacks, I was ignorant of the area and the internal social hierarchy and did not find access to this place as easy as I thought I would.



Figure 4: Researcher pumping water from the water truck to the tank during the lockdown (Picture taken by research assistant, 20 August 2020).

***Asiyithembi le ndoda*¹⁹ – Interviews and informal conversations**

Initially, a few residents in some areas were not interviewed without their religious leader's approval. I concurred with their reluctance and unwillingness to be interviewed. Even those who accepted to be interviewed were, to some extent, suspicious of my research. They thought I was working for the state, municipal office or as an undercover law enforcement agent, and they assumed that it was the state that had sent me to collect internal information. Their reluctance was based on fear, given that some of the residents in these informal areas came out of a former informal or formal section of Khayelitsha, resided on unauthorised land and illegally connected water and electricity.

¹⁹ We do not trust this man.

The interview guide consisted of a few open-ended questions. The questions focused on the forms of social relations that water affords to the residents, how water mobilised relationships, how inequalities and economic hierarchies were produced concerning access to water, and how ideas surrounding water were produced, reproduced, and contested.

Due to Covid-19, interviews and informal conversations were initiated on level three of the 2020 lockdown. Informal conversations enabled me to gain an understanding of the circumstances under which the residents were living. I spoke to residents of different ages and gender about their life histories. According to Nyamnjoh (2013), narratives validate the research data analysed and interpreted by the researcher (see Chapter 4,5.6 and 7).

Lived Experiences

With our acuity in cultural issues (Leclerc-Madlala, 2014), anthropology focuses on in-depth study, and prioritisation of life history was best suited for my study because of disciplinary concern with chronicling and contextualising experiences (Friederic, 2011). As Fassin (2007: xiv) has written: “We must strive to grasp representations, practices, social facts themselves as inscribed in local history and apprehended by local actors.” I recorded the life histories of respondents insofar as their mobility within the settlements was concerned. Life history is defined “as a whole life is told using careful interviewing techniques” (Bernard, 1998:75). These stories explained how and why residents moved to settle in the areas they did, and the importance of household belonging in either formal or informal areas. In this case, life histories helped me understand how residents accessed water, exchanges, and social relations at water access points, which are central to this study. Life histories were important in situating the lives of my research participants (Nayak & Kehiliy, 2008). Morgan, Marais and Wellbeloved (2009) note that life histories help in understanding how people came into their being. Indeed, Morrison (1993) states that narrative is “one of the principal ways in which we acquire... information”. The research moments thus provided my participants with an avenue to speak through and mull over specific experiences.

I remembered sitting with a group of people, predominantly male, and asking if one of them had ever performed water collection or been present at some communal tank or truck.

Some scratched their heads and replied, “Yoh ...yes”, obviously trying to recall the experience of something that had happened perhaps a time earlier. I learnt more about a few areas, adding to what I knew before. I elicited secondary data from residents to fit a pattern of questions I conceived based on only the little knowledge I had. In asking about people’s relationship with water, I let the conversation happen naturally to determine the study's direction, rather than asking many questions.



Figure 5: Researcher walking in muddy pathways that make it difficult for water trucks to reach residents within the settlement (Pictures taken by research assistant, 20 August 2020).

Focus group discussions

Focus group discussions were conducted towards the end of my fieldwork because they allowed residents to recall explicit issues related to the inquiry. The first discussion group consisted of men. The second discussion was with women near the communal water tap. These discussions were vital as they helped boost my understanding of how water was perceived in these group categories.

The storyboard and map

My experience working in the architecture industry provided me with some skills in mapping the space. The storyboard is helpful for visual media but less articulate with text; I used it during lockdown stage five as a tool to test concepts for “informality”.²⁰ I developed the storyboard as a mind map that offers insight into the data collection – a visual alternative to the text’s linearity. It was an opportunity for lateral thinking, to sketch out and test the progress, a visual means of inquiry, which allowed me to ground my reflection in a group discussion. My choice of representing people and their activities is crucial to how I understand it, hence examining the map and its power through the storyboard.

I examined examples of mapping activity on the ground as a research approach and to measure de Certeau’s “*pedestrian speech acts*” (1984) and Lewis’ “*ordinary landscape*” (1979). I chose the map as an alternative method of inquiry because it provided insights into the research and about Khayelitsha relating to water. It also offered a broader theoretical framework through an alternative view of the informal city and appropriate research approaches without having to be present in the field. The use of the methods by Ngugi (1998) and Scott (1990) refer to the concept of the ‘informal city’ as a post-colonial text. Their work on post-colonial issues helped create a framework for hearing the marginalised voices. I also thought that using a map might help illustrate how residents use the space and conceptualise water. I tried to group various settlements.

The mirror image of Khayelitsha

In many ways, photographs were used during the lockdowns as one of the methods. My 2020 fieldwork began with a single image of two residents, each collecting water; these are residents I knew before the lockdown. I juxtaposed the pictures: a sieve or screen lies between them. To the left side of the photograph is Mpho with a bucket; to the right is Zuki.²¹

²⁰ See Chapter 2.

²¹ The use of names might have ethical implications; the people referred in this study provided explicit permission to use their photos, but all names provided in this study are not the actual names of the people in the photos.

Both became my crucial informants. The photographs were taken in Khayelitsha in different sections on the same day at some point in the early morning of 09 March 2020. It is very salient that Mpho is a Khayelitsha resident living in a formal house, just as it matters, in different ways, that the second figure in the photograph is Zuki, also a Khayelitsha resident, but living in an informal house. In these photographs, the materiality of the images appears evocative at a certain point: it appears to be as loaded with latent meaning as one could want. Mpho registers a composed presence while Zuki holds a bucket in her right hand, turning her face away from the camera, although we knew each other. I noticed the directness of a pair of residents' gazes, which snags the eye and forms what Barthes (2000) would call the image's punctum. It pierces and holds my attention. I return the camera's gaze (simultaneously the gaze of the viewer). With what in my expression? Challenge? Reproach? At the same time, it is as though something is going on in these residents' lives; a facial expression hangs in the air.

As a research method embedded in social history, the photograph reminded me of the current political and social contexts of Khayelitsha: access to water as a political force around this time and the imminence of water inequality. As in the picture, this method invited me to think about what water means in different local contexts and the kinds of water access practices. As a fragment from the fieldwork, I selected a few images among dozens of similar images looking into the present, evoking challenge and curiosity; it reminded me of water's role and incompleteness and conviviality in shaping this study. Finally, what I remembered about the two residents is not the distance between them but their connectedness.

Two figures grouped around a sieve, engaged in their everyday task, together in their predicaments but apart, divided in lived experience and by the history of inequality, in how water is accessible within the settlements.

I [Fowler] am not that the camera lies, but that there is no ideologically neutral way of holding the camera. Stepping away from the question of textual significance for the moment, I examined the visual element in the pictures taken. In this examination, Roland Barthes work was indeed beneficial as it provided me with the tools to analyse images. According to Barthes (1977: 15-31) photograph, "transmit[s] (...) the scene itself, the literal reality". In essence, the photograph provides a "perfect analogon" of the object represented, and this "direct representation" is the photograph denoting a message – in other words, "It is what it is."

Furthermore, Barthes (1977:15-31) states that the photograph also carries a metaphoric message, which is “the manner in which society to a certain extent communicates what it thinks of it”. Since words cannot “duplicate” the image, a new space of significance is created “in the movement from one structure to the other [where] secondary meanings are inevitably developed” (Barthes, 1977). These secondary meanings can also be called “ideology”, and in this case, that would be the idea behind the media text, the “secret” (or sometimes not-so-secret) agenda of its producers. When spotting the different ideological discourses present in an image or/and a text, one can also start to decipher the dominant opinion of the newspaper readers. Most of the time, research text is designed with a particular meaning in mind-hoping that audiences decode their text in a certain way; in essence, the text has been produced with a “preferred meaning” in mind.

As an ‘outsider’, my analysis can be both a positive and negative aspect. Positive in the way that because I am a so-called outsider, perhaps it is easier for me to be more objective, but then again, certain aspects of the thesis and photographs might be wholly lost to me – in another word, incomplete – my positionality can render me blind to a few features. It was vital for me to remember that my positionality might impact my analysis, something that is, of course, true for anyone doing any research on any matter.

Then there was the matter of the colours when I changed a few images in black and white; I did that on purpose to concentrate my storyboard in these two colours. Black and white came to be very symbolic the more I looked at it. Firstly, there is the aspect that one cannot ‘see things in only black and white’, secondly, there are so many nuances to an image, although the colour scheme is mainly black and white. I observed thousands of different shades of grey, and there is so much more to an image than first meets the eye; Barthes (1977:15-31) connoted messages in these phenomena. Finally, there is the apparent connotation of black and white people: 1990 saw the fall of apartheid, but 1990-1994 saw the aftermath that still speaks in colour – black, white and coloured.

I consider incompleteness a social reality that enables me to know how water is accessed in Khayelitsha, reproduction of entanglement, dependent on interconnections, relatedness, and multiplicities suggested by Nyamnjoh (2015).

My little knowledge of Khayelitsha and its residents inspired limitless creativity and confidently recaptured a more inclusionary understanding of water and the people in Khayelitsha. As Nyamnjoh (2015) put it, incompleteness is a usual way of life. My outsidership enabled me to enhance myself to reach out to research assistants for data collection and accept my limitations of seeing Khayelitsha as separate from other cities or townships in South Africa – or what Nyamnjoh (2015) would call it, ‘incompleteness’.

Re-enactment videos, voice elicitation, secondary sources, selection of sites and participants, and data analysis

The re-enactment videos method was used to document everyday practices in public and, often, in their homes. I asked key informants to make a video of themselves. I followed them around in a few instances, asking questions as they collected water from communal taps or other activities related to the water topic (see Pink & Leder Mackley, 2016). Because of the lockdown, I asked potential participants to record themselves using a smartphone and share with me. I provided them with questions or prompted them to direct their recordings and documentation (see Ahlin & Fangfang, 2019).

Narrative analysis was used to capture and reflect the ‘quality of lived experience’ of residents. Field notes were taken either whilst still in the field or immediately after and used during data analysis. These notes were used to consolidate the recorded and transcribed data collected for analysis. Besides these, notes on observations were used to supplement the information obtained during fieldwork. Recorded interviews were transcribed for analysis using NVivo for analysing qualitative data. As Angrosino (2007:63) put it -these themes highlight common issues and differences in the participants’ experiences. Data analysis included reading and analysing primary interviews. Academic publications were important in understanding the arguments and debates on the efficacy of water distributions in South Africa. They also provided information on the case study.

Ethnography as problematic – Challenges encountered and limitations-

Ethnography is like a good story with its conflict; on the field, I found that conflict made this research challenging. As the research unfolded, I dealt with structural violence.

This term was coined by Paul Farmer (1996, 1999, 2003) and defined as systematic ways or arrangements that “put individuals and populations in harm’s way...The arrangements are structural because they are embedded in the political and economic organisation of our social world.” The conflicts I encountered reflected the masquerade that is incompleteness as people mobilised in their efforts to enhance their access to water, while enhancing themselves to achieve their ideals relating to lifestyle and livelihoods.

Poverty, a characteristic of life in many different areas and fear of violent crime and Covid-19 infection, which probably is a subjective feeling, had influenced how the interview process was conducted while maintaining its validity: as an outsider, minimising the chance of being the victim of Covid-19 infection or a violent attack. I had a hand sanitiser with me, and I always wore a mask and carried an extra one with me; in a few instances, I had to offer a mask to an interviewee who did not have one. My fieldwork dilemmas draw particular attention to the more significant confrontations anthropologists face when trying to understand and interpret the lived reality of the worlds of people on the ground. Although anthropology continues to translate others' social realities, it also begs the question of how anthropologists reflect on the issue, when the analysis is locked in interpretation? What are the challenges and limitations of reciprocity when working with disenfranchised residents with limited access or storage of water, paralysed by chronic unemployment? How do these realities affect the research ethic? Therefore, reciprocity limits were an ever-present hallmark of my research with residents, such as of different ages and gender. Moreover, a life made even more complicated by Covid-19 when I, as the primary investigator, do not live in the area.

The first challenge was based on the lockdown imposed by Covid-19. On 23 March 2020, President Ramaphosa declared a ‘State of Disaster’ which required a national lockdown. He advised South Africans to make fundamental changes in individual behaviour and hygiene to reduce the spread of infection. The country went on lockdown from 26 March, which restricted movement and required all of us to abstain from social events, work from home when possible, and observe social distancing. These regulations put a strain on my data collection development. However, they were logistically almost possible on the population in the suburbs, but particularly impossible to follow by residents living in an environment like Khayelitsha. With the fieldwork coming to an end in January 2021, President Ramaphosa announced the adjusted lockdown level three regulations.

It was a setback; I had in place all the necessary procedures and protocols. Under lockdown level three, I continued my fieldwork begun during level four of lockdown and data collection follow-up, observing physical distance. I remained alert to the reality of increasing infections in the country and kept contact with my research participants.

The second challenge was a death from Covid-19. In February 2021, death knocked at my door, offset plans, and left many family members in an emotional upheaval when a senior family member passed away from Covid-19. The reality of death did not sink in even when the body of the deceased was taken out of the house. The next day, I was depressed and confused by what I perceived as an experience entangled in “thick” contradictions. When a relationship with a family member comes to an end for a reason beyond my control, I do not have something to replace it with. The recovering period was a difficult one, where my heart cried out for closure. Death came like a thief, and I got lost in the matrix; I rushed about in a blind fury, believing that the actions would make things better. Three days after the burial, Covid-19 infected another family member. Fortunately, she was attended to by an excellent medical doctor the same night that she had developed symptoms and recovered more quickly than expected with a short period of side effects. Since the beginning of Covid-19, the virus had become a dominant player in the family; it stole the joy and the courage to write up my thesis.

The study did not include interviews with persons under 18 years. I felt that it would be unethical to obtain consent to participate from minors (see below). Yet, children informed important observations made during fieldwork as adults and young people were not always fully separated in social life. Lastly, as no children were interviewed, inevitably, there were issues of memory in relying on accounts accessed retrospectively. The things participants did not remember raised interesting conversations about why certain events were more vividly memorable than others. While these limitations existed, my research added specific insights into the lives of residents, updating and providing a more nuanced perspective of the historical research record on water, and underscoring the importance of a life-cycle approach to understanding water and social relationships. The intersectional nature of my work further added a level of complexity that is often tackled separately.

The scope of the study focused on Khayelitsha residents' relationship with water and featured several limitations. As an outsider, some respondents were not open to participating or providing the data required. Being a male researching water with women also poses some challenges, particularly regarding the intimacy of 'water and the body' (see Chapter 7). However, to address some limitations, male and female assistants familiar with the area and who could understand and speak the isiXhosa language fluently, assisted me.

Asithethi nabantu abathetha isiNgesi – We do not speak with people who speak English

I had a challenge communicating with a few people within formal and informal areas since isiXhosa was their first language, which impacted their understanding of my questions or limited them from fully articulating their responses. That, in turn, influenced my perception of their answers. These tensions between insider and outsider accounts were manifestations of my incompleteness in reaching my ideal of collecting the data I wanted.

However, through conviviality embodied in the help of assistants, I referred to earlier – TaZuks, Pilazo and Tumisha – most interviews revealed many people's relationship to, and perception of, water. I communicated in both English and isiXhosa, but my assistants helped with translation on some key issues. My skills in isiXhosa helped me not to rely entirely on the translators, but the lack of English speakers in informal settlements demonstrates the resentment towards the language. However, for some, it was more comfortable to express themselves in their home language.

Research ethics and positionality

Ethical approval was granted by the Department of Anthropology. This work also adheres to the Anthropology Southern Africa Ethical Guidelines (AnSA, 2005) so as to not cause harm to participants. The major ethical challenge encountered was the constant presence of children. One way in which I countered this, was to use observations made with children, to have conversations with primary participants about their own childhoods, experiences and observed changes in Khayelitsha's socio-cultural context. I concentrated on three main ethical questions in research, specifically when dealing with humans as research subjects.

Informed consent, confidentiality, and power dynamics were three important themes I observed, and which shaped the methodologies I employed and detailed the ethical considerations and the methods employed. I obtained permission from individuals, relevant local authorities, and household heads to conduct my research. I walked on the streets of Khayelitsha, trying to get a feel for people's consciousness in the area, pondering new ways to present this study and myself. Firstly, I examined the language used with residents who participated in the study. Language helped shape the theoretical framework and methodological insights.

As a scholar conducting research during the pandemic, it might have been problematic if I glossed over and oversimplified matters, blended as they are, not only by difficulty of understanding the experience of another, but also by the ease and the misleading comfort of a retrospective historical illusion.

In fact, observing ethics on the field provided me not only with insight but relief in avoiding distance myself from water challenges as a past which remains foregrounded in residents' lived reality; at the same time, I avoided being blind to the historical results of that past by reducing its obscurity to a paradigm of readability. Ethics and an understanding of ethical obligations towards those I worked with and myself, as a researcher, are situational. Understandably, I paid much consideration to situations that might arise in research involving human participants, resulting in ethical misconduct and harm to participants or researchers themselves. However, the problem was how I managed an ethical challenge, the follow-up, and the result, for all involved.

Before conducting any interviews, I informed the residents of the study's purpose and obtained permission to interview them on video or voice recording. All respondents were notified of their continued right to retract their willingness to participate and all information at any given point. Anonymity and confidentiality were guaranteed to increase the quality of the participants' responses, and to meet my ethical responsibilities. The study explicitly cites the information I received from these sources in a way guaranteed not to divulge their identities. My living in the township allowed residents to trust me more and think I understood their predicaments. The security issue was a concern since I am an outsider, I was always accompanied by a research assistant. As per our agreement, the assistants were given a financial incentive at the end of the research project.

I thought of conducting workshops on water-related matters to give back to the community, but it was impossible because of the pandemic. I made sure of the accuracy of the collected data. Follow-up interviews were conducted where necessary, with triangulation providing reliability of the data collected.

Interactions with respondents were not static; as an outsider, I continually negotiated processes. It was the beginning of venturing into less familiar territory. Research on linkages required in-depth analysis more often than intrusion on people's lives; thus, it entailed building relationships with respondents. I achieved this by being present and taking the initiative in the field. I invested time in building relationships with households in both formal and informal areas.

Conclusion

This chapter outlined the research techniques I used and reflected on some of the challenges encountered during data collection in the field and how they were overcome. As we have seen, the challenges which confronted me can be viewed as manifestations of incompleteness, both in myself and in the environment in which I had placed myself. I foreground two examples of these. Covid-19 and the ensuing lockdown with its restrictions on movement were one such challenge. I navigated around it, for a large part, through meeting with interviewees at the communal water-collection points, and various social gatherings. Using my mobility to gain access to these groups and conviviality in which I engaged with the participants ensured the collection of valuable data. The incompleteness of inadequate communication skills in the interview process, both on my part and that of the residents, was navigated through the conviviality amongst my research assistants and me. Thus, my methodologies sometimes stemmed from incompleteness, mobility, and conviviality. It also introduced and described the research site and how I gained access to it.

To sum up, this chapter aimed to demonstrate practical experience to understand complex social issues by looking through a local framework. It discussed the qualitative research methods utilised to gather data. It also emphasised residents' engagement in gathering data to avoid challenges, such as misrepresenting communities. Besides the traditional method – participation, focus group discussion and interview – I use multiple other research methods:

storyboards, photographs, a visual mind map and re-enactment videos, voice elicitation to develop concepts to understand water and the formation of social relationships in Khayelitsha around water. The complex methods have also forced me to re-examine the research and ensure that the results are unbiased but reflect the residents' lived realities. The chapter concluded by outlining the ethics of the research engagement that underpinned this study among human subjects. The following chapter looks at the landscape of water linked to apartheid's racial planning and water distribution development which act as catalyst for social formation.

CHAPTER 4

WATER AS A CATALYST OF SOCIAL FORMATIONS

Introduction

This chapter draws upon narratives and debates that emerged from the residents' relations with water, and foregrounds forces that enabled the formation of relationships, emerging from incompleteness and characterised by conviviality, informality, marginality, mobility, liminality, unequal water distribution, and geographic spatial and other factors. It also focuses on the various ways the post-apartheid government distributes water, which act as catalyst for social formation affecting political, social, and economic changes in residents' lives. Understanding the forces that lead to the formation of social relations is essential to the central argument in this thesis, especially as relates to conviviality as survival strategy. I consider scholarly work on water and sanitation (Taing, et al. 2013; Farrar, 2014; Robins, 2014; O'Brien, 2014; Rodina & Harris, 2016; Redfield & Robins, 2016; Jackson and Robins, 2018; and Enqvist & Ziervogel, 2019) which also suggests that 'substantial numbers' of shack dwellers are not provided with adequate water infrastructure. It implies that a portion of the informal settlement has different relationships and experience with municipal water supply. I elaborate on how the formation of social relations that occurred because of a limited amount of water infrastructure highlights myriad issues that led to the erection of newly occupied space. I also interrogate the impact of the following on social relations: communal taps, tanks, water trucks and hydrants; *umgidi* and funerals, siblings, and neighbours; intra-mobility; commodification and water disconnection; church; and lockdown.

With the above understanding, I therefore, present three interrelated arguments:

- (a) Space, environment (that is, one's surrounding and context) and mode of water access are central to defining social relations and conviviality in Khayelitsha.
- (b) water access in Khayelitsha, which manifests and continues to be manifested in a form of communal taps, water trucks, tanks, fire hydrant, communication water access can only be understood if located within the context of unequal distribution related to access

to water in Cape Town with inequitable development patterns or geographic spatial inequality, water governance, and services delivery.

This is underpinned by an old apartheid policy of exclusion and separate development; where conviviality is restricted to one's racial classification and class.

- (c) access to, or lack of water or being exposed to the wrong type of water (such as sewage water, standing water, muddy, dirty pools of water, etc.) defines how residents in Khayelitsha activate conviviality and relate to one another. This relatedness demonstrates different forms of incompleteness and hierarchies which translate into how residents without water often rely upon those with water, and vice versa. Among the factors translating into incompleteness is the installation of a limited number of communal taps to control water in the municipal demarcations or 'recognised areas'. The lack of water infrastructure subordinates residents that are dependent on social relations as they make the means to access water in other contexts – by siblings, neighbours, truck, water, tank, fire hydrants and communication water pipes. It is important to note that incompleteness can be understood differently and residents in this study, including those in the spaces, whether occupied legally or illegally, are not homogenous. As stated in Chapter 2 I do not consider, associate, or use incompleteness as something pessimistic. Therefore, everyone is incomplete in whichever context, hence the need for physical and social mobility resulting in encounters and relationships of *ubuntu* or conviviality. Conviviality is about connectivity and reaching out, and interdependence are central to incompleteness.



Figure 6: Residents of Sanitizer collect water from C-section (formal houses (Picture by research assistant, 14 September 2020).

Setting of the study



Figure 7: Map of Khayelitsha, sites and sections
Source: SA 2011 Census.

Notorious for its rapid growth, Khayelitsha is one of South Africa's biggest townships after Soweto in Gauteng Province (Seekings, 2013:4). Khayelitsha is a township with both formal and informal houses that accommodate mainly black South Africans and immigrants. It is located on the margin of the Cape Town metropolitan area. Khayelitsha settlements first sprouted in 1984 (Seekings, 2013). Over the years the township has not only become overcrowded but characterised by underdeveloped and inadequate municipal services such as water and sanitation management (Turok, 2001; Seekings, 2013; Affordable Land & Housing Data Centre, 2014). It is for this reason that I see it as a place of intensified conviviality, where being overwhelmed by social encounters is a key element of everyday life.

People and things are always present. Khayelitsha is situated close to Cape Town International Airport between the southern, southern eastern and north western winds during springs which increase the water evaporation rate (Reuther & Dewar, 2005:102).

Established in final year of apartheid, Khayelitsha is shaped by apartheid legacy of racial segregation and segregated urban policies; which meant taking people away from intensified encounters in certain spaces and forcing them to intensify their conviviality in other spaces/places. Khayelitsha is therefore a reflection post- apartheid urban policy compared to other townships. It may be true for those parts of Khayelitsha – i.e., Town 2 (including Mandela Park, Harare and Endlovini) and Town 3 (Makhaza, Kuyasa and Enkanini) – that were substantially developed after the end of apartheid (Seekings, 2013:2).

Despite frequent claims in the media that Khayelitsha’s population passed half a million in the early 1990s and 1 million by about 2000, successive population censuses conducted by Statistics South Africa have found much smaller numbers of people – in 1996, about 252,000; 2001, about 329,000;²² 2011, about 400,000. These figures are estimates because the Statistics South Africa census enumerators collect incomplete data, which requires a revision upwards according to estimates of the under-count derived from a “post-enumeration” sample survey. These figures contrast with the figures reported online and in the press. In January 2013, for example, the BBC reported that Khayelitsha had a population of about 1 million, including ‘thousands of South Africa’s poorest people’.²³

In 2001, the Development Bank of South Africa reportedly estimated the population at 420,000, and documents produced as part of the Urban Renewal Programme put Khayelitsha’s population at 600,000.²⁴ The Social Justice Coalition provides a figure of 700,000.²⁵

²² 1996 and 2001 data from City of Cape Town (2005), A Population Profile of Khayelitsha.

²³ Mark Lobel, “Khayelitsha Fire: End to South Africa “s Shack Life?”, BBC News, 10 Jan 2013, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-20962623> (accessed 14 Dec 2013).

²⁴ ‘Business Plan for the Urban Renewal Programme’.

²⁵ SJC, “Report of the Khayelitsha “Mshengu” Toilet Social Audit”, 10 May 2013 (<http://www.sjc.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Social-Justice-Coalition-Report-of-the-Khayelitsha-Mshengu-Toilet-Social-Audit-10-May-2013.pdf>), p5.

The census data are also broadly in line with the estimated population in the second half of 2005, produced due to an attempted headcount of the population (commissioned by the provincial government).

Two-thirds of Khayelitsha was covered, although with various complications. The ensuing report estimated the total population to be 407,000, living in 108,000 units.²⁶ Taking the 2011 population as about 400,000 people, then approximately 10% of the population of Cape Town and 27% of Cape Town's African population live in Khayelitsha. Khayelitsha has almost the same population as the other significant set of 'African' neighbourhoods in Cape Town: the Gugulethu/Nyanga/Crossroads/Philippi complex to the west of Khayelitsha (Seekings, 2013:2). Using the above trend, the population may be estimated to be over 2,400,000 in 2020 (my estimation). Khayelitsha is a challenge to the idea of a place as being complete. Intensified and constant mobility means that people are constantly moving in and out, and sometimes as a result of precarious conditions such as water, sanitation, floods, fires and other insecurities that force people to change location. It epitomises Nyamnjoh's concept of being as incomplete. On the one hand, lives have been rendered incomplete because of lack. On the other hand, this incompleteness activates a push for relationships to be formed in order to exist, hence conviviality. People are always crossing borders, and therefore constantly on human frontiers.

In Khayelitsha old areas are divided into subsections which are named (see map, Figure 4.1). The old formal areas that were built by the apartheid government and included Thembani, Bhongweni, Ikhwezi Park, Khulani Park, Khaya Park, Zolani Park, Washington Square, Graceland and Ekuphumleni. The newer areas were built within the older areas by the post-apartheid government, including Litha Park, Site B, Site C, Green Point, Mandela Park, Makhaza and Harare. These areas contain many unaccounted-for informal settlements, RDP²⁷ houses, and informal backyard dwellings (mainly shacks) within the current unstructured occupation and expansion.

²⁶ Maverick 358 cc. 2006. Population Register Update: Khayelitsha 2005 Department of Social Services and Poverty Alleviation. https://www.westerncape.gov.za/other/2007/10/kprufinal_2005_october_2007_publish_date.pdf.

²⁷ RDP means Reconstruction and Development Programme, a socio-economic framework in which an 'inclusive approach to developing and implementing policy' for public services was espoused (RSA, 1994).

Informal settlements in Khayelitsha include Enkanini, QQ Section, TR Section, RR Section. Areas, newly occupied since the pandemic, are filled with shacks, with a few formal houses scattered irregularly among the shacks. Self-help groups formed by residents have built most of the houses and shacks. Most households (57,4%) live in shacks, with only 30% living in formal state-subsidised houses on separate stands. Eight per cent of households live in informal housing in the backyards of the formal houses (Affordable Land & Housing Data Centre, 2014²⁸).The above description of Khayelitsha with different estimations of population from various sources, enables us to see how incompleteness also plays out in statistics through the lens of population counts (census).

²⁸ www.alhdc.org.za/static_content/?p=91.

Gender dynamic and water



Figure 8: Researcher and one of the research assistants showing the graffiti on the wall of the water pump station situated at the entrance of BM section (Photo by research assistant, 09 September 2020).

In this study, women's narratives are not discussed sequentially, without implying that the narrative's accounts of female lives in the context of inequality are schematically evident. Characters and dialogue in this chapter glow with the vitality and features of fascinating human beings making crucial choices, facing dilemmas, and intensely discussing their options. The subtle language used by women and the complexities of their predicaments are evident in every chapter. Because women are more engaged in water issues and relationships with water, they become associated with water. We need to ask the question: Why is this so?

UN Water reports that “[a]cross low-income countries, women and girls [<15 years] have primary responsibility for management of household water supply, sanitation and health.” Collecting water and firewood, and carrying things, such as the firewood, grocery purchases, domestic crops, etc. are regarded as low-status work, and, thus, are relegated to females. The graffiti on the wall of the water pump station in figure 4.3 depicts or metaphorically represents the lived reality of Khayelitsha residents, particularly women. *Amanzi bubomi*, meaning water is life, is reflected in women's relationships with water: the carrying of it on the head, doing laundry and watering the garden so that water can reach the roots.

This situation highlights the position of women and girls at the bottom of the social hierarchy. Data from UNESCO (2016) shows that “About three quarters of households in sub-Saharan Africa fetch water from a source away from their home and 50% to 85% of the time, women are responsible for this task” (UNESCO, 2016 cited in UN Water, n.d.). In Malawi, the report from the UN estimates that women spend about 54 minutes on average collecting water while men spend only 6 minutes. While in Guinea and Tanzania, average water collection times for women were 20 minutes, double that of men (UNICEF, 2016). UNICEF further reported that 17 million women worldwide spent 200 million hours a day collecting water (ibid). This time accounts for the loss of schooling for girls, and employment opportunities for women and robs them of downtime and time to spend with their families, or nurture themselves. It is not surprising that women are often in the vanguard in taking up issues of scarcity of access to water in Khayelitsha. They are also the ones to navigate water scarcity through mobility and social relationships formed through conviviality and *ubuntu*.

Women’s relationships with water may suggest that this study is like women-oriented research. Since they are more engaged in domestic water and sanitation, the study has more women respondents and one, therefore, presumes that the way they interact is oriented in a more gendered way. However, the study is not part of gender studies, though it comes across as women-oriented research. I saw gender-specific differences; unlike men, women in this study talked more, kindly elaborating on a question.

The incompleteness of water in Khayelitsha

On September 21, 2020, I walked through newly occupied areas in Makhaza to observe how water was being accessed. It was, as already stated, a place of incompleteness. Inconsistent service delivery from the municipality and ambiguity or lack of water was the norm. Later I went to site C and walked around the area that was teemed with sewage water on little pathways. I wanted to see conviviality, encounters and the formation of relationships around water and checked around the communal taps and tanks where people were congregating for opportunities to engage.

The research assistant and I walk to BM in an area called France. Our entry point to the area is a little pathway next to a water pump station. I observed water running freely into the paths separating the BM and France sections. Lungisani (male 43 years old) provided us with more information

about the area and escorted us. The area is characterised by a strong smell of drain and sewage water. As we walked inside the BM area, I noticed blocked and unmaintained toilets coupled with the smell, which I presumed to be part of the challenges residents of BM section encounter every day. We walked deeper into the BM section to a house where a group of unemployed residents were sitting and chatting. We introduced ourselves; I questioned Lungisani (21 September 2020) concerning water and the lived reality of accessing water through communal taps:

“No precautions are taken, people stand in a queue waiting for water, and they do not wear masks or practise social distance for safety. As a father of three, the lack of having taps close by is a challenge ... and the sad part is that there are not even enough taps to use. The DA keeps making false promises. They look at conditions but do nothing about it. ... [D]isadvantage[s] of these portable toilets [are] that they are often not emptied and not everyone owns toilets, so we have to share them. [They stink and are unhealthy.] I don't think things will ever change for us” (Informal interview with Lungisani, BM Section, Khayelitsha, 21 September 2020).

Lungisani provides the advantage and disadvantage by unintentionally using the concept of *ubuntu* in ‘so we have to share them’, this in the absence of water-borne sewerage. However, in a context of hygiene, sharing one toilet with five households can be detrimental to people's health. Lungisani's narrative, together with my observations, sums up much of the incompleteness of water in this space at the same time providing the tension and challenge of *ubuntu*.

Afterwards, we walked around the area, looking for a casual conversation with the other residents. Along the street, Ta Bhiza (49) is standing. I asked him if he had a few minutes to spare. He agreed to talk to me. Introductions were made. I explained the purpose of my presence in the area and Lungisani's response; Ta Bhiza had a different view on the water challenge:

“Yes, this area has many disadvantages, but complaining would not help the government do something or make me continue living. I decided to install a tap inside my shack; besides the toilet issue, since I have illegally installed the indoor tap, I never experienced any problems that the other people were

experiencing. I am one of the fortunate residents of the BM section that is not experiencing water problems.” (Ta Bhiza. Informal interview, 21 September 2020).

Ta Bhiza’s action is one example of how conviviality and mobility interact with incompleteness of water in Khayelitsha. He has engaged his mental and physical mobility and conviviality and his own incompleteness in relation to water to enhance himself (and his family) in the issue of water through his own agency. Ta Bhiza’s attitude is in stark contrast to that of Lungisani, which demonstrates that residents are not homogenous.

Ta-Bhiza’s action is in line with Nyamnjoh’s (2015, 2017) concept of incompleteness and conviviality that ‘invites individuals or communities to reach out and explore ways of thinking, living socially, connecting, reconciling to respond to the predicaments they encounter’ which opens the door for independence, active participation, and mutual fulfilment. In the words of Lategan (2015:82), incompleteness enables Ta-Bhiza and Lungisani to overcome the constraints of their own limited experience.



Figure 9: Men, women and children collecting water from a water truck (Photo by Minga, 14 July 2020).

Tapping the spaces where water flows

In Khayelitsha, the communal water tap embodies the social aspects of the community, as do the tanks and trucks that were introduced later in various areas. On 1 October 2020, I had a conversation with Mfundisi (32), who stated that water tanks were introduced long before Covid-19. Later, during the pandemic, water trucks were introduced by the state through the municipality to further relieve some of the pressure on access to water and avoid the spread of the virus.

Minister Lindiwe Sisulu, who oversaw housing and water and sanitation, announced that her department had procured 41,000 water tanks for national distribution to ensure water supply during the lockdown. She also expressed her concern that “the threat and risk of coronavirus in our informal settlements are real and that we have to make haste so that we do not find ourselves overwhelmed”. Sisulu says the government's current initiative to supply water to distressed communities in South Africa has met with obstruction and sabotage. However, water distribution was improved by implementing centralised service delivery of water to communities (Mail & Guardian, 2020).

Communal taps, tanks, and trucks are central meeting places where people from different households share stories and collect water. They also share ideas and thoughts. These spaces contribute to the formation of social relationships. For instance, I observed that men use communal taps for car wash business while women discuss their livelihood and exchange ideas about availability of work. Women generally perform most household chores and frequent the tap in groups. Young men also use this social space to meet young women, forming intimate relations. Moreover, most importantly, residents' exchanges influence their hopefulness, stabilising life's unpredictability experienced through their precarious situations. As a central meeting place, the communal water taps are the birth of social networks among the users. Some conversations reflected pride in their different achievements. Women talked about the success of their families and relatives. During a conversation with elderly women, they described the communal water tap area as “a place where we talk about everything about us”.

Young women that I hung around with during research also conversed about their homes and dating challenges. Indeed, women talked about their daily experiences, but close observation revealed that most women also spoke of things that exposed their families' dismay.



Figure 10: Municipal contractor pumping water into tank (Photo by Minga, 9 July 2020).



Figure 11: Mrs Mvandaba collecting water from a water truck in Emsindweni (Photo by Minga, 14 September 2020).

The interactions of the (mostly) women at the water collection points promote sociality and conviviality to reduce incompleteness. This is done through reaching out to provide support to the group members who regularly meet there, and which they might not have had if they did not. The incompleteness of access to water thus opened up possibilities for development of positive social relations. Through conviviality, individuals are able to freely interact and connect with others while using their space to satisfy their needs (Nyamnjoh, 2018). Women's conviviality is captured through their activities and their practice around water and challenges they face with water scarcity. Their shared experiences at communal taps strengthen their bonds although not all interaction is positive.

However, not everyone had an easy time accessing water from these sources. Many residents of Site-B and Ivosho expressed deep troubles and neither group has had a pleasant experience with the water access through trucks as some spend every day waiting for a water truck that comes unannounced at irregular times.

In the conversation I had with Fezeka (31) on the 9th of December 2020, she reveals the unreliability of the water truck concerning the area she occupies, which is a contested area far from the N2 highway:

“[T]he water truck parks on the N2 and Baden Powell drive anytime of the day for two hours and leaves without some of [the] resident[s] being served with water. The challenge is that the water truck contractors and municipality do not provide us the correct time it comes. But what we know is that we keep our ears open to listen to the truck hooting, then we mobilise our neighbour to go collect. So, imagine if you are far from the road, you are stuck. Or you must walk to the nearest communal tap in Enkanini to collect water.” (Fezeka. Informal interview, 01 December 2020).

Fezeka shows how incompleteness enables her to mobilise others to be aware of the truck station on the N2 highway. She also shows the privilege of being closer to the highway and the everyday water access performance through the truck. Siphokazi (29)²⁹ concurred with Fezeka’s view. The actions of residents in calling their neighbours when they hear the truck points to supportive social relations forged by water. Fezeka’s narrative cuts across the grid, and through her disappointment by the time water is brought to the community reveals the challenges women go through. Inadequate water access in her area depicts the troubling disorder of the service delivery.

²⁹ See Siphokazi’s narrative in Chapter 5.



Figure 12: Figure 4.7. Researcher serving water to residents of Island and Emsindweni (Photo by research assistant, 14 September 2020).

Although thus far I have dwelt on the positive aspects of the social relations engendered by water, there is a negative side. Different conversations at the communal tank depicted both social cohesion and contention by envy that was brewed by show-off as heard through conversations. There are instances of these envious talks going viral, and people gossiping about other areas that sought to collect water from a communal tap situated in a different area to where they live.

It created conflicts among residents. Conviviality is not just about endless harmony. It is also what Radcliff-Brown refers to as "joking relationships", where people tease each other, and as well provoke tensions through gossip. The examples below illustrate further. Mrs Mvandaba (34) who is Khosi's wife related the following:

We are close friends who support each other, but we become enemies because of water. This water thing becomes a vicious cycle that promotes conflicts. (Interview in Emsindweni, 19 August 2020).

Khosi (36) gave more detail:

Residents in Emsindweni would not allow us to collect water from their communal taps and tanks as if it was theirs. Eventually, such confrontations led to broken trust among residents. As soon as jealousy and envy are brewed, there is no trust, affecting individuals, the families, and other friends around but we fought them, you see now we have water. (Interview in Emsindweni, 19 August 2020).

The conflicts over the access to water in this instance show how water shaped the social relationships which deteriorated from friendship and neighbourliness to enmity. Also, here again, residents engaged in mobility and conviviality to restore the level of their incompleteness which had been disturbed by others. The lack of access to water gave rise to the social relations required to do this.



Figure 13: Busiswa, Asakhe and Mbulelo doing washing at the communal taps (Photo by Minga, 15 September 2020).



Figure 14: Dabawo and her friend doing laundry at communal tap (Photo by Minga, 15 September 2020).

Moving forward in incompleteness

The new water provision operations – water tanks and trucks – signified a change in this social group’s character. While queuing at communal tanks or trucks still means the limitation of water facilities, by doing so, some residents outgrew their status as residents who had relied on family to access water and toilets to become independent through using water from these sources and having access to a communal toilet. Being aware of other areas with indoor taps and water toilets, particularly in the formal houses, struggling residents pleaded with the government to provide additional communal taps and toilets, particularly in the newly occupied areas; to break down the residents’ dependency on their kin or a neighbour located far from their settlement. Ma Mkhulu (29) reported that no one helped residents with water and sanitation. The attitude of authorities regarding water access to marginalised people in the informal settlements on the fringes of society is demonstrated by this narrative.

In addition, during the rainy winter period, some areas are affected either by flooding sewage water or rainwater. Seeking assistance from the authorities has decreased because many residents must relocate to other areas until the water dries. Introducing water tanks or trucks in some sections does not fully resolve water access. However, extra measures are taken by residents who force themselves to access water in the adjacent neighbourhood – putting their agency into action through mobility and conviviality.

In addition to the inadequate water infrastructure, there were also concerns about how some areas are prosperous in competing development, and the inequality in water provision. Developments of water in these occupied land areas are becoming the focus of debate as water infrastructure becomes a challenge. Nevertheless, emerging narratives from residents from different areas challenge the arguments presented by the city and scholars regarding the ‘water crisis’ and contradict that there is any water crisis in Khayelitsha only poor water governance that has led to the unequal distribution. The narratives demonstrate that, due to Covid-19, by late 2020, water pipes were installed in settlements like Emsindweni and Island that saw residents having access to water through the communal tap and not trucks. There is enough water, but not enough means to access it (See also below in Bending and laying down the pipe).

Therefore, new social spaces of encounters are created at these water points through these dynamic social ties aimed to facilitate survival. Water provides the basis for social interaction among residents. These interactions promote what Nyamnjoh (2018) calls conviviality, which enables residents to tap into the possibilities of possibilities to create and reimagine their reality. As Orlove and Caton (2010) put it, water creates a basis for social life. Orlove (2002) presents an ethnographic account of the Peruvian highlander whose cultural knowledge has been activated through communal fishing and argues that human relations are sustained by dependency on virtual resources such as water.

Bending and laying down the water pipe

On one of my walks in different areas between shacks, I noticed that a water pipe connecting one informal area to the next has been cut. In Khayelitsha, there is a saying: ‘bending and laying down the water pipe’.

Though one cannot bend the pipe to access water, however, there is a possibility of bending the water regulation to access water. Bending the pipe is a metaphorical term referring to the coping strategy of how water is being accessed through other (illegal) means from the main water pipe and fire hydrants located within the settlement or along the roads. The empirical evidence indicates there is currently more that is convincing in the debate in Khayelitsha, connection to water through other means, like fire hydrants and communal water mains, is strictly illegal. However, this manner of mobilisation becomes a facilitator of social relations formation. It is an argument advanced by looking at the infrastructure and the mode of water access in Khayelitsha. The current view is most challenging in its implications on how residents access water through the method presented above. However, the study's critical point is that fire hydrants are also essential tools enabling residents to form relationships in Khayelitsha.



Figure 15: Water collection from a pipe lying on the street (Photo by Minga, 15 September 2020).



Figure 16: Communal taps and toilets that have not worked for months (Photo taken by Minga, 21 July 2020).

‘Drink water and be consoled’

In search of water and the formation of social relationships, I attended many funerals. At the house exit of one funeral were two large basins containing water used by mourners to wash their hands while exiting the house. The washing of hands symbolised a purification ritual that was meant to cleanse mourners of bad spirits associated with death. “So that death should not follow us...,” one member exclaimed. Water, in this practice, is used as a substance for purification and the removal of evil spirits.

Funerals and rituals are other catalysts that facilitate the formation of, and cement social relationships and engender a sense of belonging. Funerals are essential for Khayelitsha residents because they enable residents to connect. Funeral gatherings enable the celebration of life and relationships of the living and the ancestors (Isaak, 1998:59). Social practices are used to maintain a collective identity among a group of people. Traditionally, water is used in beer, *umqombothi*, for imbibing at the ceremony after the burial. Hence drinking ‘spree’ at funerals is also used to confirm and strengthen social relationships (Cohen, 1985). Drinking at funerals also symbolised residents' ability to adapt to circumstances (Collman, 1979). In Japan Sake drinking symbolised influence (Moeran, 1984) and authority and in other studies, drinking created and maintained economic, political and kinship relationships (Trouwborst, 1973; Gilmore, 1985; Pinson, 1985).

Water is also a cultural ritual substance used in mourning. Solomon (1987:33) describes it thus:

“After a week has passed there is the ritual of “the washing of spades ... It is also called the “drinking of water” by the mourners – *ukuselwa kwamanzi*. This ceremony is regarded as the explicit expression of acceptance of what has happened. When the Xhosa people console one another, they usually say “drink water and be consoled” – *sela amanzi uxole.*”

Residents have to collect municipal water in order to perform these rituals. Their successful performance is dependent on people having access to water, and, without water, they would be deprived of the social benefits of engaging in these rituals with others.

Therefore, water can be seen to be essential in forming/maintaining social relationships in this context.

Furthermore, people who have limited or no immediate access to water must rely on their social relationships with kin and/or neighbours to reduce the impacts of their incompleteness in relation to water through mobility and conviviality, the essence of *ubuntu* relationships. The same applies in the case of churches.

‘Holy water’

“We use water a lot [...] and the church does not really struggle with water or electricity, but we struggle a lot with toilets and have been to the municipality a lot of times requesting toilets as a community as well. ...we do ask community members for help to use their toilets during working days and on very busy days.” (Mam Mandaba, 54-year-old church member. Interview, 23 October 2020).

The above excerpt provides an understanding of community and church being enmeshed in an urban milieu. This implies that it is becoming impossible to study a church and the community without referring to incompleteness of church and community based on water, which influences the formation of relationships. The church in this community plays many roles, amongst them as a place that contains spiritual and religious significance in its ability to heal and connect people and the community and as a contributor to the formation of social relations. I proceed to report on the usage of water and the role it fulfils in relationships within the context of the Saint John Apostolic Mission Church.³⁰ Besides the relationships churches afford to people, Mam Mandaba further stated that church members’ use of water was vital as it acted as a medium to repel opposing forces and physical intrusions in the body responsible for illnesses. This narrative contends that cultural and spiritual knowledge and water usage provided an alternative way of thinking about the environment as a sacred entity.

³⁰ The St John Apostolic Faith Mission Church is known as one of the largest Christian churches in African Initiated Churches in Southern Africa, with hundreds of branches cutting across South Africa, Botswana, and Namibia, to name a few (Sundkler, 1961).

Churches provide the ideal space for relationships to form, which strengthens the sense of belonging and the social relationship with water within the church (Strang, 2009).

What initially sparked this study's interest was the work of Sundkler ([1948], 1961). Sundkler (1961) classified Zionist churches, of which the SJC is one, as a 'water church'. It was because purification rites and baptism are practised in these churches. For this research, I chose the branches located in Khayelitsha. By attending churches, I suggest that churches and their followers are like living archives. They hold faith and healing stories about using water engraved into their memories. This partially documented body of knowledge and how people related to water physically and spiritually was significant. Hence the chapter expands on this growing body of work and discourse on water and the formation of social relations using an anthropological perspective by contributing to the literature that has mostly silenced the significance and meaning attached to water in religious systems within the African Initiated Churches context of Khayelitsha. These examples reflect the significance of water in society and the way it gives life to a community. It was also interesting to note that some churches perform a cleansing ritual at the end of funeral services by sprinkling the congregation with water that has been sanctified.

Landlords, siblings, friends, neighbours, and water

Relationships existed between former landlords and former tenants, siblings, friends, and neighbours, which facilitated access to water and, sometimes, sanitation. This form of relationship is related to the African tradition of *ubuntu*. Former landlords residing in formal houses provided their former tenants, who were now living in informal settlements, to collect water from their premises. It applied to some residents in the occupied areas like Covid-19, Sanitiser, Gomora, Evosho, New Dawn, and Social Distance. Siviwe (26) and his siblings are a case in point. Siviwe is a young man who used to live in Kuyasa (formal area) renting a backyard shack with his brother Gabriel (29). They moved to, during the lockdown. They were forced into this situation because they could no longer afford the rent.

Siviwe relates their narrative below:

“It has been three months since we moved here [New Dawn – an informal settlement in Kuyasa]. I am the one working but due to Covid-19 my salary has decreased... When the situation got out of control, we could not manage rent, so my brother and I decided to join everyone to occupy land. [We] fixed our shack so we could survive. We have a sister, who had to move with us because she got pregnant and could not go to work. Gabriel is not currently working too. Toilets are scarce. My siblings and I actually have to go to the place we used to rent to access the toilet because we are still on good terms with our landlord, and she understands our situation.” (Siviwe. Interview in New Dawn, 01 October 2020).

Siviwe’s narrative illustrated how siblings and their families also constitute the most significant social relationship and network formation.

Also in New Dawn, I saw people busy settling into the area in the few shacks already erected. I spotted a young woman to whom I refer as Sibongile (36) entering her house with a 25-litre container on her head. We followed her. Her shack door was halfway opened; we knocked. She welcomed us into her home and warmly greeted us. This is her story:

“We got to this area about a month ago without water or toilets around here. We must walk a distance to get water and use the toilet. Our neighbour not far from here is an employed single mother with a three-year-old son. ...the woman allows us to use her toilet.” (Interview in New Dawn, Sibongile 09 December 2020).

While walking around France, in an adjacent pathway, I saw a pair of female twins roughly two years of age playing in front of their home. We greeted them. In the interview 09 December 2020, with Busiswa, the mother, who was busy with household cleaning, invited us into her yard. She had a different story about living in the area and dealing with difficult water access alluded to that her neighbour gets water from her because her husband connects it from the main water pump. Siphon (45) added to the litany:

“We do not have taps in this area, we get water from neighbours’ yards, far from us. Our tap is broken. Some taps were closed by the Municipality because children break them.” (Interview in Site-B, 18 November 2020).

This kind of reciprocal relationship is common in Khayelitsha. A further aspect of the appeal for Khayelitsha residents in informal settlements of this kind of relationship is the ultimate unknowability of its water and sanitation infrastructure; the peculiar mix of the profound challenges to which Siviwe and other residents refer. It makes it a fertile space for research. When set in contexts of accessing water through landlord, siblings, neighbours, and friends, I saw a set of people's arrangements whereby its agents understand themselves to be environmentally marginalised and spatially distanced from the toilet and water access.

It becomes a breeding ground for the most pointed of ironies, the most cutting ambiguities, the most revealing. I observed that the landscape of the lived reality of lack of water and the predicament of many settlements are familiar everywhere in Khayelitsha. What emerged through the narratives and observation was a picture and a possibility of talking about incompleteness generally without having to individualise it or without empirically saying this was in Makhaza, Harare, Site-B, Enkanini or Site-C. Through narratives and my observations, I saw a similar picture of lives coupled with marginality and vulnerability throughout the informality in Khayelitsha. A picture where residents' lives were characterised by interdependence, lack of water and toilets, poverty, unemployment and shacks, uncertainty, and fear. However, retrievable from the narratives and observations was the emerging picture of black lives and their lived experience under Covid-19, which is characterised by elements of 'incompleteness', which people found ways to alleviate through mobility and conviviality – once again, *ubuntu* in action.

Shortly after our conversation, we decided to walk to the park to assess the distance residents must walk to access water. It was a lengthy walk of about five hundred metres. Many scholarly works, like Armitage et al. (2013, 2020), O'Brien (2014), Redfield and Robins 2016, Jackson and Robins (2018), and Kongo (2019), have already discussed some of the above points mentioned in the narratives regarding water access and sanitation in Khayelitsha and the pressure of living under such conditions. The above narratives stressed the challenge or failure of the historical development of water and how such lack shapes the ideas of physical and social mobility, relationships, dignity, and the choices of living in such areas.

Much work that has been done on water service delivery, among other challenges (see Mkhwanazi, Stern and Mashale, 2011; Redfield and Robins ,2016; Robins, 2018), shows what

was limited was a consideration of the development over time using socially and historically focused ethnography that considers the importance of water and social relations in a water-deficient setting like Khayelitsha, as well as social production over time. Siviwe's story sheds light that, long before water infrastructure in the area, already residents were learning different survival skills, including dealing with defecation. It begged the question of what it means to access water from a long distance; and expectations around what residents should do with lack of water that many of them still experienced long after they moved into a new area.

Moving from homogeneity to complexity

In the democratic South Africa, the conversations that dominate much public discourse still reflect colonial, apartheid, and inequality history and its systematic exclusion policy which enabled the rise of civic society.³¹ Many of these crucial conversations have brought to the fore contributions and understandings about the gains of the post-apartheid dispensation under the leadership of the ANC and opposition parties, as well as the limitations, especially when it comes to water, people's mobilities and class inequalities. Increasingly, South Africa cannot avoid having conversations about social structure group stratification, especially class differences. As Hooks (2013:2) observes, class differences disrupt notions of unity. By studying water holistically, as advocated by Robins (2014a, 2014b), an account can be given for differing social categories, like age, gender, and class, and how these categories contribute to shaping the environment. I observed what I call 'moments of complexity and uncertainty coupled with marginalisation and incompleteness in Khayelitsha'.

We are moving away from homogenising thinking to holistic approaches that recognise complexity. Fischer (2009) rightly maintains that any moment of uncertainty and complexity requires an ethnographic examination of the characteristics within groups that may have been considered homogenous.

³¹ Paper read at The Third Annual Binational Civil Society Forum on Plurality and Diversity: The Living Reality of Civil Society sponsored by The Centres of Leadership and Public Values at The University of Cape Town and Duke University held in Cape Town on 22 November 2004.

However, what may also be necessary was considering the process and different ways of accessing water as a fraught 'place of precarity' (Robins, 2014a). I did this by drawing from what Posel and Ross (2014: 5) call "first-person narration and frank conversations" in producing work that is "personally rooted and situationally animated" in sharing parts from the residents' predicaments of living in informal settlements. The empirical data demonstrate that many residents in Khayelitsha found themselves in a difficult position because of reasons such as poverty and lack of employment. As a result, they face many challenges regarding accessing water and sanitation.

Many young men and women cannot find jobs close to their home to support their livelihoods. Covid-19 has exacerbated their employment situations and living conditions. Thus, adaptation required that some of them decided to occupy the land and moved to different sections across Khayelitsha to avoid hopelessness. I further argue that residents of Khayelitsha, whether employed or unemployed, are incomplete due to their vulnerable status and uncertainty about their future. Although through their incompleteness they are able to form relationships to seek temporary or permanent comfort as they adopt different survival strategies to cope with everyday challenges.

As I examined the relationships water creates; several factors make this a fruitful exercise; including the richness and complexity of the narratives recorded, the extreme nature of the forms of relationships found in this part of Khayelitsha, how the access to water and its usage and imaginaries of deep time have served as a space of contestation for several directly social forces and relations. In short, all the overdetermined, interesting practices and ideas that emerged when residents of all sexes and ages of a given experience and tradition set out to provide their experience with water during this difficult period forced by lockdown. At various periods in its development, residents in Khayelitsha provided a point of conciliation. Many residents understand the predicaments of being vulnerable by continuously negotiating their legitimacy as it has been a critical source of commentary on notions of service delivery.

The constant interaction and relationship with nature is intense, as people "reach out" (Nyamnjoh, 2015) to meet their various needs. Some residents develop a defecation method like bush usage around the area due to the lack of water and toilets.

Those without a personal water source, continued negotiation activities such as using the water from the neighbour or kin.

They also reached out to make full use of the neighbour's sanitation facilities, which in turn increased the drain blockage (see figure 4.11). Moreover, the large numbers of residents in these newly occupied areas who had children allowed them to defecate in a basin in case of an emergency. Such practices forced some residents to resort to protest to improve their living conditions (see Chapter 1). As protest continued, they barricaded major highways with burning tyres and stones to ensure their grievances reached the authorities. In response to the challenges, the government introduced measures into the community to supply limited water and sanitation service. Innovations like these assisted some of these residents not only to survive and but thrive amidst their harsh living conditions.



Figure 17: Evidence of overflowing drains on the street (Photo by Minga, 19 September 2020).

Lockdown and intra-mobility

After the first month of being in the area, I identified patterns which ran throughout the research. I could distinguish two kinds of mobility, all part of the process of reaching out in order to enhance livelihoods.

One refers to migration (mobility) from areas beyond Khayelitsha, the other moves within the boundaries of the township, which I termed 'intra-mobility'. Macroscopically, migration from within the Western Cape and the Eastern Cape contributed to the number of residents who sought greener pastures.

According to Siphokazi, mobility from the Eastern Cape to Cape Town normally consisted of 'relative referrals', with relatives supporting moves from outside and/or making connections with relatives already established in Khayelitsha. With intra-mobility, one traced a resident's movements through a constellation of settlements; Sites B and C, Ethembeni, Empholweni, Enkanini, were names I heard often. The formation of social relationships fostered by incompleteness are critically important and still relevant, especially in Khayelitsha. Lockdown and intra-mobility act as catalysts of social formation, where most residents are experiencing unemployment, political disillusionment forced by a severe economic recession resulting in marginalisation, social insecurity, and pessimism, necessitating moves to other Khayelitsha areas in order to survive.

The empirical data show a strong sense of pessimism in Khayelitsha (see Lungisani's narrative above), where the government contributes little if it contributes to social welfare in terms of economic support for most people on the margin (mostly black). One, therefore, asks, what is sustaining the poor people given that they have little or, in most cases, no economic backing? The above can be answered by examining people's social capital; who does what for whom? What kinds of support do relatives and neighbours provide for one another? What is the nature of mutual support, assistance, or interaction? Between whom is the support given? Is there not any kind of obligation a receiver has to a giver? Are there no differences in perception of the social relation between those living in shacks (the very poor) and those living in formal houses (the well-off with municipal infrastructure)? The responses to the above questions enable one to see how incompleteness can promote reciprocal relationships, which Nyamnjoh (2018) calls 'convivial relations'. The nature of such relations was determined and shaped by a broader context. The Khayelitsha context might not be the same as elsewhere because of the peculiar nature of the environment and community.

I maintain that water plays an essential role to the formation of relationships, and, in turn, relationships provide individuals with resources – economic and otherwise – they enable individuals to adjust to precarious conditions (Nyamnjoh, 2018).

The continuity of the Lockdown 2020 enabled more self-built shacks to emerge in these newly occupied settlements. Small foreign businesses emerged and have had to resort to paying protection fees to gang organisations to survive. Their protection fees become wages for the collectors. Such taxation is met with resistance when South African citizens are targeted. On the other hand, the better-off residents exploited the changed extortion situation, leading to intensifying police involvement. The sanitation service struggles to introduce new methods of communal shared toilets in the area. Thus, the formation of relations intensified in the area during this period. As conditions of lockdown in the deteriorated area continued, the Municipality reacted by establishing a communal tap in Island. The narratives highlight issues such as the severe lack of water infrastructure, degradation of communal taps, and an increasing number of people occupying Khayelitsha.

Lockdown due to Covid-19 also contributes to the water challenges ; poverty is widespread, and mostly affecting women. Mvandaba explains the situation as potentially explosive in the locations. Poverty is acute following the loss of jobs due to Covid-19; hundreds of women and children depending on social grants or handouts since then. According to the data, social relations such as these, which are forming due to the predicaments, led to the organisation of Khayelitsha meat vendors, including women, in the Makhaza area. These relationships were established as a result of inadequate water provision systems.

Like migration, intra-mobility affects one's economic and political life and exacerbates the mushrooming of new areas. Adjustment will have to be made to one's economic life as well as relationships and political association. Intra-mobility within and to Khayelitsha is a feature in post-apartheid South Africa. People move from the Eastern Cape and into Khayelitsha in multitudes to seek dwindling job opportunities. Unemployment in South Africa is a prominent feature of everyday life. Since Covid-19, millions more people are unemployed and are even unsure of their next meal. Individuals are confronted with the spectre of poverty.

To crown it all, an increasing number of people lack access to basic needs such as water and sanitation, neither a roof over their heads. Khayelitsha is witnessing the emergence of squatter communities. They are, as Lomnitz (1977) labels them, ‘marginal communities’, the inhabitants of which are primarily unemployed, destitute, and homeless.

This precarious situation in Khayelitsha is an undisputed reality that the government cannot overlook. Lockdown sparked by Covid-19 development contributes to revitalising and redesigning the formation of social relations as a coping strategy when confronted with impersonal and alienating experiences. Empirically speaking the data show that, while the lockdown disrupts residents’ way of relating to one another, the formation of relationships was resurfacing as an important adjusting mechanism. I suggest that studies of this nature should be undertaken in many settlements. Given the nature of the prevailing conditions brought about by Covid-19, one would have expected that there would be a large body of literature dealing with relationships during the pandemic, showing how the social relationships are manipulated by people for water resources, as illustrated in Chapter 6.

As stated above, Khayelitsha is a product of people’s mobility as it has become home to more and more shacks occupied by black Africans. Residents’ narratives demonstrated that, as soon as the area was occupied, relationships were formed, an illegal connection to Eskom was established, sanitation service was awarded to contractors through a responsible government tender process, and water infrastructure remained a challenge. Being targeted by law enforcement, residents use a different approach to land occupations that engender mushrooming of new settlements. The centre of the social relationships occurs as a different social group, though with limited water and sanitation facilities.

Residents are not homogenous and are differentiated according to their settlements and level of access to water and operations. In a conversation with Siviwe, he adds that ‘families form part of the social capital’. It is not easy to measure the average size of the space occupied by everyone, which families worked with their children to build their homes. Children participated in clearing land for construction relieving undue stress on labour. Furthermore, young couples and families settled permanently in the area. Such practice illustrates the agency within the residents of Khayelitsha, as they used mobility as a catalyst for meeting their needs. Substantial scholarly literature exists on the mobility of residents in South Africa (Lamb, 2019:369).

The commodification and disconnection of water

Water is historical and geographical and before it runs through a pipe, it has already participated in the formation of social relations. But when it enters the pipe, its social meaning is transformed and it takes on more materialistic status (Swyngedouw, Kaika & Castro, 2002; Forsyth, 2004; Von Schnitzler, 2008). This introduces the concept of the “production of nature” (Harvey, 1993; Castree, 1995; Swyngedouw, 1997). The authors argue that cultural ideas are too ideological and hence out of touch with nature and society. Similarly, commodity biographers argue that initial meaning of objects are not changed by the prevailing political and economic conditions (Appadurai, 1988; Kopytoff, 1986).

Thus, in examining water usage we are able to capture the activities of both men and women in relation to water. Observation of behaviour at the water source shows that they are main users. In formal engineering while scarce, their needs dictate the changes to physical infrastructure, access, and payment arrangement. The empirical data demonstrates that residents’ households were disconnected from water access due to no payments.

As a result, they become mobile from one area to the other in search of water either from their neighbours, friends, siblings, communal taps or tanks, or water truck. As Von Schnitzler (2008) put it, the commodification of water goes together with introduction of the water device control (water cuts), which challenges the notion of water as a social good. The narratives of Bonggi (44) (Informal conversation, 18 July 2020) and Pasinya (36) (Informal conversation, 27 March 2021), who are both residents from formal houses, illustrate how this commodification plays out:

Pasinya:

“Yeah, we do have sink water inside and tap inside, but the problem is, they just have changed our metre now because we could not afford the normal one. We used to have a lot of debt; they had to change it. They made us a deal to change our metre to what you call a prepaid one. They now give us 350 litres per day. Furthermore, if you finish the 350 litres before the end of the day, you stay without water until the next day. Maybe when you have a funeral or some gathering, you must go there and ask for another 350 litres only for that time. After that, it goes back to normal.” (Informal conversation in Khaya, 27 March 2021).

Bongi:

“We are many in the family; we try because what happens before the lockdown right now? There was something wrong. The people from the municipality disconnect water. We only get drops when we open the tap; water does not run. We go to report the matter, [but] they have never come. ...now, what happens? We clean the bath. Close it and leave the water dropping until it is complete [ly full]. We worked out ways to manage our water. Sometimes the water ends before the end of the day, and I must ask Zami, my neighbour, for water to wash my body.” (Informal conversation in C-section, 18 July 2020).



Figure 18: Filling of Bongi's bathtub to have water for the household (Photo by Minga 18 July 2020).

Von Schnitzler (2008) enables us to clarify Bongi and Pasinya's narratives, as she argues that water commodification has been used for a few reasons: for capitalist means to maximise profit, and to save water.

Conclusion

This chapter explored the role of water in the formation of social relationships and encounters in Khayelitsha. It has delivered on the promise, stated at the outset, to engage with the social relations that emerged during the study from the following: communal taps, tanks, water trucks and hydrant; *umgidi* and funerals, siblings, and neighbours; intra-mobility; commodification and water disconnection; church; and lockdown. Thus, we have seen social relationships and their importance through various life cycle challenges in informal settlements in Khayelitsha. In this regard, water has many faces and spaces and exhibits its centrality in a range of political and social relationships. I will mention a few that I dealt with in the chapter to underpin this conclusion. Firstly, there were residents' relationships with the authorities, who have commodified water, as opposed to it being a social good, and control the flow of water into and within the township. Residents have mobilised to create their own (illegal) water connections, thumbing their noses at the authorities as it were. They have mobilised with the authorities to enhance their incompleteness with water through appeals and protests, albeit to no avail. Then we come to the social relationships within the township.

Essentially, the availability of water, or scarcity thereof, for domestic and ritual consumption and sewerage was central to the incompleteness witnessed in the township and experienced by its residents. They engaged mobility and conviviality to enhance their situations. The nature of their conviviality can be aligned to the phenomenon of *ubuntu*, a specifically African, and particularly South African, concept. The formation of social relationships I referred to are reciprocal obligations that required a participant to be equally involved as both a donor and a receiver. These social networks are domestic or kin networks, 'kin-structured local networks of cooperating kinsmen' (Stack, 1974:92). Both involve people who are sometimes not related to each other. The difference between these two networks is that kin networks are coalitions of various domestic networks linked to accurate or accepted links. However, I have shown how these networks functionally overlap.

That relationships in the context of water as gender-biased was also significant. Since it is primarily women who bear the responsibility of using and managing water in their homes, collection is also a women's activity.

It seems safe to say that women's social relationships in the context of water differ fundamentally from those of men, who seemed to be more involved in providing physical access to water in one way or another.

This study is motivated by a suspicion over contemporary debates that nullified legitimate class to address the adequate access to water in South Africa. The debates raised a question about water's role in a democratic South Africa. Such a question cannot be separated from broader debates about incompleteness and conviviality, which is a framework I used to understand water through mobility in Khayelitsha. The entanglements of settlements created challenges in providing a comprehensive analysis of the social formation in informal settlements. As the study unfolded, it became clear that the residents constantly reach out to assist one another depending on their area; this is how they continue to invest in maintaining themselves.

Evidence has shown that, in Khayelitsha, water access facilitated the emergence of social relationships amongst residents. The evidence also shows that Covid-19 has transformed people's position from rent payer to shack owners of these newly occupied settlements. Nonetheless, all the above elements contributed to forming residents' social relationships within the occupied area in Khayelitsha. The chapter has also illustrated that lack of water caused irreversible changes in the formation of the residents' social relations in Khayelitsha.

CHAPTER 5
INCOMPLETENESS AND THE QUEST FOR WATER
THROUGH PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL MOBILITY IN KHAYELITSHA

Introduction

This chapter maps the key contours of the power and the powerless in relation to water access. It unpacks the different forms of inequalities, attitudes, behaviours, and aspirations. Some of these precedents interrelate and translate into discrimination and prejudice, a social construction that some residents of the formal houses practise vis-à-vis their fellow residents from informal dwellings. The powerless in this chapter refers to *amaQaba*, *amaTyotyombe*, and *amaBhacu*, and power refers to those who received municipal services. These terms reflect degrees of incompleteness based on othering in relation to the origins of people, the types of dwellings inhabited by them, and the degree of scarcity of water access they experience. It also describes how they negotiate their incompleteness through mobility and conviviality. In terms of mobility, this chapter speaks to two forms of mobility, both physical and social. It explores the implications of incompleteness and conviviality concerning physical and social mobility – more specifically, for forming multiple in contrast to singular identities because of municipal water access. By mapping the key contours of the empowered and the powerless, this chapter demonstrates the economic power social relations and mobility are affected by the access to water in Khayelitsha.

The chapter describes these key contours as an integral part in a more profound sense in that, historically speaking, they have been formative of mobility and the construction of social hierarchy, inequality, incompleteness, conviviality, and space, which the participant describes within the context of municipal water. The framework of incompleteness and conviviality is used to understand and explain the lived experiences of participants. The chapter also unveils how, besides the challenges and opportunities that incompleteness provided, the powerless encounter through mobility, residents in both formal and informal settings imagined and reimagined themselves as citizens with rights within the broader context of resource access like water. Although physical and social mobility are contestable, incompleteness and conviviality does not necessarily determine the activities of individuals. One's behaviour is often a function of their immediate environment.

Given the above problematics and description of incompleteness and conviviality, I argue that in the quest to access water through physical and social mobility, municipal water access through communal stand points creates different forms of social relationships in a sense that those who are perceived as powerless residents gnawing on the periphery of the powerful, have to constantly navigate their environmental challenges to access water for their livelihood. These challenges that comprise marginalisation, experimentation, improvisation, and creativity linked to incompleteness and conviviality during the time of water uncertainty, which subject them to social construction, prejudice, and discriminatory practices. They aspire to be mobile from one area to the other for alternative expectations connected to the basic human needs like water, sanitation, and housing, to name a few. Unfortunately, many of them find themselves in situations which make it difficult to attain some of these expectations. However, through the physical and social mobility, established or not, many of these aspirants live in volatile and precarious circumstances that enable them to form relationships. Furthermore, social relations are formed despite being trapped in positions of inadequate life chances, uncertainty, harassment by law enforcement, displacement by fire, wind, floods or what some refer to as ‘liquid shit’ (sewerage water) and depressing prospects arising from inadequate water and sanitation.

Amaqaba

On a sunny day, 18 October 2020, Ndoyisile and his brother, who are residents of Makhaza, were busy cleaning their yard, taking the rubbish away, and throwing it at a corner next to their neighbours’ yard. The two neighbours protested this action: ‘You know you should not throw all this rubbish here.’ Their approach made Ndoyisile violent, and he said to me:

Yazi mntakabawo la maQaba asuka Empholweni asuka eMpuma Koloni asixelela ukuba masenze ntoni kwaye masingayenzi. Into esiyenzayo kukunika abantu umsebenzi kuba xa kungekho mntu ulahla isiza akukho mntu uyakusicoca kodwa ukuba kukho indawo yokulahla inkunkuma ngumsebenzi.

[You know my brother, these pagans from Empholweni come from the Eastern Cape; they tell us what we should do and what we should not do. We give people a job because when there is no dumping site, no one will clean up, but if there is a dumping site, it is the people’s job to clean up].

There is a hint of resentment in Ndoyisile's tirade. While he presents his views with no alternative to his *AmaXhosa* neighbours in the Western Cape, his understandings of *amaQaba*, are a reaction to his neighbour. His tirade presents the essence of human existence. In Nyamnjoh's (2015) critique of those perceived as civilised, he argues that people's potentials are related to life experiences mediated by their different modes of existence and conviviality. These potentials are central to *amaQaba*, but also related to the complementary and alternative ways of coercive violence and control.

In trying to understand Ndoyisile's action, Ta Zuks says to me:

Each society constructs its outsider and insider inside, even in a small society. Individuals are creating the 'other' to create one's own identity. It seems simple, but [...] space determines everything once you secure it (Ta Zuks. Informal conversation in Makhaza, 09 June 2020).

Of importance in this study is the incompleteness of human existence. Nyamnjoh (2015) argues that while people are engaged in a constant struggle to overcome life's challenges amidst scarcity, they constantly compare their experiences with those that have abundance.

Through incompleteness *Amaqaba* is able to identify their inadequacies especially in relation to the difficulties related to limited water access in their environment. They therefore search for ways of filling their inadequacies through the incompleteness of their social relations. This requires a sense of open mindedness in attempts to claim our being and belonging (Nyamnjoh 2015). In the next section, I explore the relations between the powerless and the empowered by examining theoretical notions of labels, attitudes, stereotypes, prejudice, social construction and identity formation in mind.

Labels, attitudes, stereotypes, and prejudice because of water

Kay (2006:72) defines stereotyping as "what a system believes about someone and how this system determines these beliefs..., while prejudice is the irrational hatred or suspicion of a particular group, race, religion, or sex."

During my fieldwork, the patterns of prejudice and stereotypes in the social status between those in formal houses and the shack dwellers were observable. For instance, it is common in Khayelitsha to think that the more one has water, toilet, and electricity and lives in a formal house, one is a higher moral standing and hence more civilised. It is also commonly believed that someone from the Eastern Cape is *iMbacu*, (one who has a shelter but who occupies space illegally and does not have water and sanitation), is manner due to their living conditions and unpopular mannerisms with *AmaXhosa* people from the Western Cape, the poor, ‘uncivilised’, and therefore, of lower moral standing. Besides being labelled in such a ghastly term and manner they are the only *AmaXhosa* people called *amaQaba* because they come from the Eastern Cape. These are some of the common stereotypes identified from people’s narratives. These stereotypes shape how people in these different settings look at the world and individuals. The data show that stereotypes could be positive or negative. This resonates with Kay (2006:72)’s conceptualization of stereotypes as “negative or positive judgement[s] based on any observable or believed group membership.” The negative stereotypes could destructively lead to rivalry and unfair treatment of people.

People are thus negatively viewed as the outsider due to lack of access to basic amenities like water, electricity, or even proper housing. The insiders in this study are considered to be those recognised by the Municipality and provided housing through the RDP housing program or living in self-made houses or housing schemes. An outsider in this study is considered *iMbacu*. Thus, those residents without adequate access to water are ostracised and also begin to see themselves as outsiders. (See Radebe, Mfundisi and a few more). An outsider status is normally given to non-citizens, or strangers in host communities. What complicates the affair is that, in this case, outsiders are also citizens. Mfundisi, Radebe and many more participants illustrated that some of the challenges that many residents, particularly those in shacks, face are the refusal to provide them with basic services, prohibitions on settling on unauthorised space, discriminatory water distribution practices, the inability to access water and toilets (See their narratives below). This paints a complex picture of the fight over resources. According to Nyamnjoh (2014) cultural and linguistic boundaries are socially constructed. The lack of proper house, water and sanitation, electricity, by shack dwellers results in their negative stereotyping as the outsider. This logic, however, is not exclusive to Khayelitsha.

An important note for this study is that distinguishing between local, and non-local is a complicated notion, as determining who is 'local' to space depends on time, identity, and how people construct a sense of belonging to a space. I refer to 'locals' as current or former residents who retain specific historical or cultural relationships to the neighbourhood. I am particularly interested in the groups whose unique historical and cultural identities are attached to the 'significance' of the neighbourhood with formal houses or shacks to live in and how these populations are impacted by the changes that water and Covid-19 bring. For example, in Khayelitsha, some of the first immigrants were people from the Eastern Cape, which contrasts with the current wave of the migrant population. Many residents are rural-urban migrants, so their connection to the place may be just a generation. Thus, it is important not to reify neighbourhoods as having static, unchanging populations and identities until water and Covid-19 influence people's movement while also recognising the existence of these spaces as 'home' to specific groups. Narratives are constructed about cities all the time by the different parties who inhabit, visit, and imagine them (Low, 1996:387). Narratives that repackage spaces as eligible for some residents' privilege particular histories and spaces as significant. Khayelitsha is an example of high levels of settlement, a process of alteration of the neighbourhood in which the narrative of that space and its service is completely reconstructed to the point that the space exists almost exclusively for residents' consumption. The government and citizens' proactivity in preserving local voice and presence has mediated this process in Khayelitsha. The way the narratives are constructed translates to how they are perceived through historical, cultural, and development of settlements representation of these narratives via goods and experiences.



Figure 19: The rubbish that was dumped by Ndoyisile and his brother which created tension that ended with him calling his neighbours ‘amaQaba’ (Photo by Minga, 23 September 2020).

A complexity of names

The terms used in name-calling in Khayelitsha are sometimes difficult to disentangle. This is largely because the meanings can be fluid depending on the context in which they are used. In the Western Cape, *amaQaba* (as used by Ndoyisile, above) is a derogatory term which is loosely translated as ‘pagan’, ‘primitive’, ‘backwards’. It is often used to describe or identify uneducated *AmaXhosa* from the Eastern Cape, demonstrating that they are seen as foreigners of the lower class in their own country. The person may be educated, but, in Khayelitsha, it is used to describe *any* person from the Eastern Cape. The word, *amaQaba*, originated in, and is based on, a tension arising from a mode of life that does not match that of people from the Western Cape. It reminds us of what Nyamnjoh termed, ‘bush fallers’.

AmaXhosa from the Eastern Cape call those in the Western Cape *amaQoboca*, which means churchgoers. There are also churchgoers in the Eastern Cape; in this context, the word means the ‘more educated’, and some would say ‘sophisticated people’ who have adopted a more western lifestyle than the African rural life. Both *amaQaba* and *amaQoboca* are, therefore, socially constructed words.

There is an assumption of ‘cultural ignorance’ – having little knowledge or understanding of IsiXhosa cultural norms – those individuals from the Eastern Cape project onto those who live in the city. This is challenging because people from the Eastern Cape come and work in the Western Cape; what about people who have lived in the Western Cape for generations and those born in Western Cape? It does not change any of their beliefs because they work here; neither does it change who they are. After all, at the end of the year, when they return to the Eastern Cape, they become *amaQoboca*. The social construction is considered a double-edged sword because when someone from the Eastern Cape finds himself or herself in the Western Cape, he is called *iQoboca* by the people back home. However, the description needs to be more carefully interpreted. The social construction of the fascination Khayelitsha life holds for both groups, the powerless and those with power, is indicated by the reference to their flexible identities as *amaQaba* and *amaQoboca*, respectively. The powerless have a degree of awareness, so that, despite being disadvantaged, nothing stops them from finding mutual recognition, forming relationships, and finding a solution to an alternative to the status quo in Khayelitsha.

Iimbacu, Amatyotyombe

In some cases, people are known by the kind of area or dwelling they inhabit, and sometimes not, as in *eMatyotyombeni*, *amaTyotyombe*, which are generic terms. *Ityotyombe* is a single shack. *Amatyotyombe* is the plural of *ityotyombe* which means that area has two or more shacks; *eMatyotyombeni* is the entire area of shacks that have become a community. People here have specific addresses and have named certain pathways to receive mail from the post office. *Amatyotyombe* are distinct areas, like those inside Gugulethu, called Barcelona, Europe, and Canaan, for example.

They have a communal garbage disposal unit; some have a communal tap at different corner, which is more convenient and sanitary. Yet there are exceptions (see the following section). Most of the shacks in these newly occupied areas comprise one room, with only a few having two to three rooms; usually with extended family consisting of about 4 to 9 people, primarily adults, sharing one shack. They are primarily unemployed and left their families in rural areas searching for work, including some immigrants from African countries.

Iimbacu/eziMbacwini

Iimbacu is initially a shack built on unauthorised land, which has evolved over time. *Iimbacu* can describe the shack itself and the person living in it. People are called *iMbacu* because they indeed look like the shack itself: unsanitary and not house worthy. There is no specific address for *eziMbacwini*, but instead, *eziMbacwini* is a given name that will quickly stick to the tongue and mind because of their sometimes deep or uncanny and weird meanings. *Iimbacwa* is another alternative for calling the person who lives in such an area to broaden the meaning and to avoid confusion among some people. *Iimbacu* is the area itself that has two or more shacks on an unauthorised piece of land, and then *eziMbacwini* is the area as a collective of shacks that already has a name and people living in there but without the basic needs of clean water and sanitation.

Regardless of the difference between, and the social structure in, the two areas (*Amatyotyombe* and *eziMbacwini*), there is some commonality. While both *iTyotyombe* and *iMbacu* are shacks, most *amaTyotyombe* have water access through communal taps, and legitimate electric meter boxes; *iMbacu* does not. All *eziMbacwini* use illegal means to obtain water and electric power as do those *amaTyotyombeni*, who do not have these services; both must store water in buckets and cylindrical chambers for convenience and sanitarianess instead of struggling.

In terms of emergency protocol, social services like the South African Police Service and the Fire Brigade or the Ambulance would find it hard to locate or pinpoint the location they are required to reach because neither *amaTyotyombe* and *IiMbacu* have zoned or legitimate roads that are marked on maps or even ones that are worthy of the name. Residents use pathways to connect to one another.

In the past, it was impossible to see *iMbacu* and a formal settlement in the same area, or even see *IiMbacu* and *amaTyotyombe* within close range. *eziMbacwini* have mushroomed because of socio-economic deterioration resulting from unemployment, Covid-19 and the prolonged lockdown. The structure of both dwellings – *amaTyotyombe* and *IiMbacu* – are the same because they use similar building materials for their shelters.

Another distinction is the shack inside the yard behind a formal house. The occupant/s is/are either renting or family of the owner. This kind of shack is called *ihoki* because the land does not belong to the shack dweller/s. (The term derives from the Afrikaans term, *hok*, which denotes something like a pigsty or a dog kennel (a place that houses animals). However, their access to water from the taps on the properties is secure.

The discrimination that people in *eziMbacwini* face from both the formal settlements and people from *eMatyotyombeni* is also felt by the same discriminators from *eMatyotyombeni* because of where they live (shacks), but essentially, they are the same. However, it is just that *amaTyotyombe* are more stable and resourceful than *IiMbacu*.



Figure 20: How informal settlements are born with or without water infrastructure (Picture by Minga 17 August 2020).

When this binary way of thinking is replaced by a more nuanced thought, it is then easy to see how power dynamic play out. What obtains is that "*iMbacu, people who live eziMbacwini, and aMatyotyombe* (ones who live in an informal area without water) emerge as components part of those who live in RDP houses or called Ekasi with water access, similarly to those who live in RDP houses or called 'Ekasi' (with water access) as components part of *iMbacu, eziMbacwini, eMatyotyombeni*: those who live in an informal area without water. Similarly, Nyamnjoh (2015) suggests that elimination of binaries is necessary to understand incompleteness.

Social construction: Lack of water shapes discourses about others

The social relations of residents living in Khayelitsha cannot be analysed without considering the routes by which this reality has been formed.

This element has had a profound effect on the social relations of reality for these residents: the legacy of apartheid, the lack of service delivery and population growth as already discussed. By applying discourse analysis to data collected through interviews, the study analyses the different ways in which each of these groupings (formal house and informal house) constructed ‘the other’ socially. This is reflected in the descriptive narrations of loaded terms (such as in Ndoiyisile’s account), which could be either strongly negative or positive and the challenges that respondent’s foreground – different issues like water and sanitation, electricity, employment, and housing. With water being part of the context, every word or attribution develops out of interaction between time and space. As stated in Chapter 1, context is essential to people’s construction of their meaning and relationship with water and this in turn affects their interactions and construction of identity. It emphasises that other stumbling blocks lead to misinterpretation and misunderstanding between people settling in different areas and contends that the nature of water access compounded the residents’ frustration irrespective of their area.

Lynn and Lea (2003:17), in their article on the social construction of ‘aliens’ by the UK government, discuss how the need to protect the “English way of life” was central to the argument to restrict migration into the UK. The social construction of shack dwellers by those in the formal houses is prominent in Khayelitsha. Similarly, to Lynn and Lea’s (2003) line of thought, the study argues that protecting the formal housing way of life is prevalent among many respondents residing in formal houses. Those that threaten the usual way of life are construed as the ‘other’, while bent on maintaining the status quo as ‘self’. The narratives from different respondents also proved that there is always name-calling between these groups. There are also accusations and counter accusations, leading to certain stereotypes about the other. Lack of basic services like water creates the emergence of characteristic socio-economic asymmetries. These asymmetries have created an urban morphology that saw those called *iMbacu* (in occupied areas) and those who live in *eMatyotyombeni* often both at great distances from water. The increasing difficulty of accessing water has exacerbated living conditions in many newly occupied areas. Khayelitsha’s population is becoming increasingly dense and dynamic with informal settings (people from *eMatyotyombeni* and *eziMbacwini*) primarily living in shacks. The latter do not access water from communal taps or tanks, unlike in some areas, where a more significant percentage of various communities from *amaTyotyombe* do. While the general pattern of shacks is similar, *iMbacu* poses its challenges.

What causes the discriminatory practices between the formal setting, referred to as ‘township citizens’, and people who reside in the informal setting, referred to as *eMatyotyombeni* and *eziMbacwini* are two factors: the indisputable fact of living conditions, and access to municipal services. Those who live in an area referred to as *eMatyotyombeni* claim basic service and housing conditions and the same service or treatment and respect as those in formal settlements. Whereas formal setting residents feel conflicted since, according to them, a resident from *eMatyotyombeni* does not pay for water. Residents from formal settings argued that ‘some do not even pay for electricity but still demand the same privilege and service’. This conflict and misunderstanding results from abuse of privilege. Those in formal houses do not want to be equated with those in informal settings because they consider themselves of a higher class and privilege than the latter (*abantu abahlala eMatyotyombeni*, meaning those who sleep/dwell in shacks). Simphiwe further echoed formal residents’ argument and reiterated their position: “Those who live *eMatyotyombeni* are seen as a danger to living standards, lifestyles, and social cohesion.”

Imbacu, according to narratives, is ‘the lowest tile that forms the pyramid’; metaphorically a foundation of some sort because, for a pyramid to take shape, it must have a base. The base in this context is *iMbacu*. Many residents in informal settlements started as an *iMbacu*, a person who built a shack on unauthorised space and claimed the land as a place to stay. Today some individuals or townships that are prospering and getting basic human needs, including sanitation, were once *iMbacu*.

Formal houses, sometimes referred to as township settlements or *eKasi*, are recognised by the Municipality; access to water might be within a reasonable distance, either inside the house or within the yard. Some *amaTyotyombe* are built on a rezoned area, and they are also recognised by the Municipality and the latter access water from communal taps. However, *eziMbacwini* is a derogatory term that has been used by people, more particularly to define shack dwellers who have no water and toilets to defecate; those who settled in the unauthorised area and are unemployed, economically poor, are not entitled to basic services and ‘inferior’ to residents who access to water; and residents who are believed to be incomplete in the mode of accessing basic services.

It is quite ironic that many of those in the informal settlement are citizens; however, they are derogatively treated by their oppressors, also residents in the same area.³² Boundaries do not only physically divide groups of people and individuals but also create distance between groups that share a common belief system. But identities are central to human existence although they tend to conflict during interactions nevertheless emphasising uniqueness of individuals.

Furthermore, authorities do not recognise *IiMbacu* since they reside on unauthorised land. Because of the disparities and the privileges amongst these three groups, social hierarchies are formed where prejudice and discriminatory practices emerge. Due to the entanglement of these settings, it becomes challenging to separate and differentiate between these shack dwellers (a person who resides *eMatyotyombeni* and a person who lives in *eziMbacwini*).

In terms of living conditions, people who live *eMatyotyombeni* do better than *eziMbacwini*. They do not have to reshuffle or re-use water as they have the privilege of basic sanitation and can claim service from the Municipality, whereas people who are referred to as *IiMbacwa* cannot claim such service. They must find a strategy and adapt to the environment with no clean water, no access to municipal services or assistance and harsh living conditions such as defecating in the same water they washed clothes and bodies. Discrimination and prejudice come from a created social hierarchy. After all, nobody chooses or wants to live in *eziMbacwini*, and nobody chooses to be *iMbacu*; however, these terms are socially constructed and normalised. Discriminatory practices, prejudice, stereotypes are normalised with time. These names were given and used until they became the norm because they felt or sounded normal.

With Covid-19 coupled with extensive lockdown, residents' predicaments are taking another flight; the living conditions are deteriorating and the high unemployment rate with residents sinking to new lows. Covid-19 impacted all – formal and informal; even residents in formal settings struggle to cope with unemployment and cannot pay bills, and, as a result, water gets disconnected until the payment is settled.

³² I do not suggest that there are no immigrants from other African countries. In newly occupied areas, I did not come across other immigrants from other states.

The findings show that in informal settlements *eMatyotyombeni*, there has been so much distress that some shack-dwellers cannot bear the burden without water and electricity for too long and they eventually abandon them. Besides, people move and build new shacks and homes, formal or informal, on new land that has not been approved, thus becoming people who live *eziMbacwini* with themselves now becoming *iMbacu*. This process keeps sprawling and recurring during this Covid-19; it has been rather commonplace to find people or even one person isolated on a piece of land (*eMbacwini/eziMbacwini*).

Infrastructure and basic service do not determine incompleteness but differentiate the informal and formal settlements. The difference and way of living between a formal settlement and living *eziMbacwini* is extremely vast to a point where it would be hard to comprehend or accept each other's way of living. There are some rare areas, though, where one would find formal houses, and next to them, shacks (*ityotyombe*). Such areas are neither informal nor formal settlements, but something in-between. In those areas where one would find both formal and informal houses, social relations become challenging. *Amabhacu* and *amaTyotyombe* are not established because the community accepted them into the occupied space, but rather, they forced themselves into a place that offers space and room to build a home; however, the treatment is still the same; they are still treated as outcasts even though their shacks are built in the neighbourhood, and are blamed for making the area unsanitary and dirty, unappealing and devaluing the property value of the houses around the neighbourhood or the neighbourhood itself, with high crime rates and littering behaviour blamed only on the ones living in shacks (*etyotyombeni*) and not the community as a whole. The issue here is not about where one lives or stays but how society perceives one or what conditions one is subjected to.



Figure 21 Residents collect water from municipal water pipes (Picture by Minga 08 May 2020).



Figure 22: Noluntu, one of the respondents, collects municipal pipe water for her household (Picture by Minga 08 May 2020)

'Singabantu Nathi – We are also human beings'

The quotation from Radebe (32) in the heading enables me to explore the contours of belonging to multiple places in contrast to one place searching for water access. Nyamnjoh's concepts of incompleteness and conviviality present an alternative thinking of belonging. However, restriction of one's belonging to a particular place limits social cohesion. The role of imagination, as a strategy for the powerless "concerning Clingman's concept of a grammar of identity", the search for what is expected, and the effect of historical memory are already discussed. Enrichment of multiple identities is achieved by the inclusion of individual identities to form a whole.

Radebe poignantly expressed how he sees himself:

Whenever I need water or go to the toilet, I am aware people will not allow me to use their toilet or water; I must walk a distance to the bush to defecate and walk a long distance to access water from a broken pipe. This experience always creates an empty hole in my heart, and it is like we are not human. Sometimes I do not mind asking for water from the neighbours in the formal houses, but it feels awkward, uncomfortable, and annoying with eyes gazing on you, knowing that they consider you as *iMbacu*. That feeling makes me feel inhuman. It hurt so much that I managed to numb my pain and smile and walk, and say, *andizophuma apha* [I am not moving] [...] I know I live in a shack, this entire area is new, and it is called Covid-19, and it has no water or toilet, but people are still moving in. I do not wash every day, but I am hygienically clean. I dress appropriately, but people can only see these shacks that give us a different identity. I was employed before as a general worker and got retrenched when Covid-19 came. I have a brother in Site C, and my wife is in the Eastern Cape with my son, who is three years old. Ever since I moved to this area, I have minded my own business. I do not take what does not belong to me. I am cognizant of why people avoid us or even be close to us. (Interview in Covid-19 on 09 September 2020).

The message expressed by Radebe is without doubt hinged on incompleteness, belonging and his dignity and the challenge to water access and the strategies he uses, which appeared collective and challenging during the pandemic. Nyamnjoh (2021) argues that incompleteness is the essence of the human condition.

While conviviality represents residences adaptation in their relationships and ability to access water. This presents the alternative dynamics of social relationships in relation to water access in different areas.

Besides the lack of proper shelter, water security is the main factor that significantly increased Radebe's mobility. Although Khayelitsha society presents the façade of different people occupying different spaces, Nomfundiso and Radebe's sentiments may prove that Khayelitsha has a challenge with social hierarchy and belonging:

“I realised, and we spoke about it with my friend, who said people in formal houses are afraid of us. My friend is right; people in formal houses cannot extend their hand to help with either water or toilet unless you are one of the relatives.” (Radebe. Interview. 09 September 2020).

“I am confronted with the issue of black self-hatred in our community, more particularly in this space, but in some cases, I pretend as if it does not exist.” (Mfundisi. Informal conversation in Empholweni, 01 October 2020).

Radebe's and Mfundisi's expressions of grief reflect the question of belonging and on what the great French West Indian psychiatrist, Frantz Fanon, wrote about the issues of self-hatred. According to Fanon (1970), since the black person was not viewed as a human being by the other, the black person internalised this view of himself consequently affecting his consciousness. For instance, the use of the N-word by the white towards black elicited fear of the black person. Nevertheless, people in Khayelitsha perceive *iMbacu* as people of the lower class.

“I am from the Eastern Cape [...] sometimes I feel a sense of rejection by our authority. There is nothing special about being called *iMbacu*; it is a life of misery and shame because I found myself displaced seven times before I built this house and thought about water. You can see I have a new-born baby, and we are going through this problem with my wife.” (Mfundisi. Informal conversation, 01 October 2020).

Mfundisi's thoughts relate to what Modisane (1963) said during the apartheid period:

I found myself a displaced person, caught between and rejected by the two worlds with which I presumed a mental level; it was perhaps this single factor which has contributed to the intense feeling of rejection, which is apparent in my reactions, but more constructively it forced upon me the realisation and

acceptance of my condition; I became cynical about my colour and reaction to it (1963:88).

Modisane (1963) provides insight into the lived reality of many black South Africans coping with such mass pain under apartheid (Nyamnjoh, 2016:83). For Mfundisi and Radebe the pain induced by apartheid are “monuments of centuries of torture” as described by Maxwele (see Chapter 1) and Radebe and Mfundisi speak who are disillusioned by the abolition of apartheid, for hope and aspirations of a better life heightened instead. The dream for a better life therefore never stops. In Nyamnjoh’s (2016) words, “to feel pain is to have hope and to believe that human agency can result in creative innovations. Furthermore, to endure pain is to be able to look beyond your reality and to be willing to seek out a better version of the present.” Indeed, some *eziMbacwini* with relatives have the means to get assistance and are fortunate to upgrade to *iTyotyombe* then to a formal house.

The disdain towards *iMbacu* and those living in *iTyotyombe* is depicted from a formal housing point of view. The narratives presented in this work describe the negative attitude and, in some cases, hatred towards fellow neighbours who settle in an unauthorised area. However, many residents from formal houses I spoke to do not acknowledge their feelings of disgust towards *amaTyotyombe* and, particularly, *IiMbacu*. It is considered emasculating to admit the existence of such judgements. The study contends that disdain manifests from one’s external environmental conditions. It is born out of the hopelessness and the unhappiness I saw within many young residents. There is also negativity and criminal suspicion associated with being an *iMbacu* or resident of *emaTyotyombeni*. Despite being on the margin, most residents I have spoken to said they do not have criminal records, and they certainly do not associate with criminals.

Mfundisi asked:

“Honestly, who would want to be *iMbacu*? Who would want people to be terrified in such a way that some people do not want to assist with water, and you take a long walk to a communal tap, truck, or access water illegally through municipal infrastructure? Who would want to wake up in the morning being despised by the society he or she wants to integrate into?” (Mfundisi. Informal conversation, 01 October 2020).

As Radebe continued:

“Some people in formal houses told us directly that they do not like us here, the other one hit me with a fist from the back one day, and I fell on the ground, some told me that the value of their houses was being degraded. I do not want to have all the negative feelings, to have these dark thoughts of being called *iMbacu*. However, I cannot deny this feeling... I did not choose to be an *iMbacu*, but I want to be treated as an individual and not based on the content of my house type.” (Interview in Covid-19 on 09 September 2020).

Though I could not answer the above questions asked by Mfundisi, I contend that, in many cases, *eziMbacwini* feel like their status of not having a toilet and water become part of their identity. Defecation is part of being human, even when one is uncertain of not having a toilet; it is a practice that no one has any control over (Schutte, 2015). The above stories described the predicaments and indications of inequality and discrimination within Khayelitsha. Radebe’s sentiment echoes that of Mfundisi. Some people might disagree with the argument that human beings are a species that is unique and complex.

Nonetheless, the reasoning or cognitive process might differ from one person to another. Human beings have developed into beings with an almost endless array of abilities. As proven in the history of humanity, the efforts as individuals and as groups have been concentrating on the ‘improvement’ of the human condition. Although people are aware of their need to acknowledge and communicate to others, the aspiration for such acknowledgement should be advantageous for all concerned to encourage people to act humanely while communicating. Often people choose to treat others inhumanely; the study contends that many people had experienced inhumane treatment when they first came to be known as *iMbacu*. Uncertainty of being new in an environment without permission increased. Possibly the most significant influence was the treatment many received in reaction to being on the receiving side (*iMbacu*). Those treatments or actions are, in their view, the catalysts for the quest to forge relationships. Shack dwellers' relationships with those in formal houses show quite a painful paradox.

In some instances, residents in formal houses have become exceptionally caring by allowing shack dwellers to connect water and electricity illegally from their houses, but others seem unwilling to care, even incapable of caring, for shack dwellers. As Nyamnjoh (2017, 2021) put it, people can achieve mutually interdependent, harmonious advantageous, and highly

harmonious cohabitation. However, as a society, many have also proven that they can be abusive and violent in their intentions and interactions by forcing others into social isolation, or degrading and refusing to acknowledge their presence and abilities.

***Siyazama* – We are trying**

In the morning residents went through the same ordeal of preparing themselves for work and children for school. While the weekdays were very structured the weekends were more relaxed except the laundry chores. But for those who were self-employed everyday was a workday and were constantly on the search for extra income activity. Even those who worked within Khayelitsha were quite mobile, either visiting friends out the settlement or shopping at department stores outside the township. Despite the fact the public transport to the township is time consuming, residents still lived exuberant lives.

Like many fast-growing South African townships, Khayelitsha is seen as a place of new opportunities although a stressful environment for the powerless. The everyday expression, *Siyazama*, indicates a collective way to interpret daily challenges of survival situations in a heterogeneous society, and aptly describes the condition of people in their incompleteness: their constant striving to enhance themselves through mobility and conviviality. It is also a sign of collective strategies to negotiate through the social landscape to access water. By describing the daily life challenges of *amaQaba*, *eziMbacwini*, and *amaTyotyombe*, this chapter contributes to analysing the mobility required to forge relationships, access water, and enhance their situations within the incompleteness of a contradictory urban milieu such as Khayelitsha. The commonality among these groups is how they are forced to negotiate their access into a different area and be visible in a social space. Access to these spaces requires these residents to acquire new knowledge through relationships or kinship, as Radebe, Sipati, and others did.

The three states, *amaQaba*, *eziMbacwini*, and *amaTyotyombe*, speak to the quest of residents to enhance their positions and themselves, through the never-ending process that is incompleteness.

The powerless thus find it challenging to reorient themselves according to the new knowledges and environmental context. The narratives presented in this study focus on the resident's lived experiences and the how they negotiate their predicament.

Amabhacu like others finds it hard to access the communal water source due to his new status in the township. The high line of uncertainty also affects their livelihoods. In a related context, in newly occupied spaces, *iMbacu* have been compelled to invent alternatives: dig toilets (like Bongani I mentioned in Chapter 1) or defecate in the nearest open space to address their lack of, and need for, toilet facilities. The feelings of worthlessness and being non-existent stemming from such disparities continue to harm these shack dwellers, even as they fight back by reasserting their right to relieve themselves of their waste. Their agency lies in their refusal to be considered non-citizens, which, arguably, is the material condition that denies them water and toilets. Of course, that refusal is continuously tested as defecation in open spaces or dug toilets from other places become the norm. For *iMbacu* who live in wretched conditions without water and sanitation, the meaning of home continues to be elusive.

The fast growth of the areas is attributed to constant influx mainly from the residents from the different areas characterised by overcrowding, resulting in very little open space and overused space. Shacks reflect inequality, poverty, and global market forces, which create ambivalence. The study presents the predicament of marginalised people in townships as those living in 'illegal' spaces which connote lack of access to urban amenities. This essentially means that shack dwellers are not recognised by the government in their places of habitat, are granted no property rights, hence as a push back, they reconstruct their reality in the informal and unregulated environment. It is partly because of this uncertainty that shack dwellers move from one place to another, but their movement is oppressed, unlike those in formal and recognised areas. In Ethembeni, like many other newly occupied areas, the shack dwellers move up and down searching for water and access it through municipal water pipes and water-hydrants; their movement is hampered by poor infrastructure. Khayelitsha is one of Africa's largest informal settlements that lacks sanitation, clean drinking water, and space.

According to the finding, some of the most significant challenges facing Khayelitsha are urbanisation and poverty due to unemployment. The living conditions of shack dwellers in Khayelitsha vary from area to area, case to case, but it is generally agreed that all shack areas are poverty products. Khayelitsha shacks are characterised by a lack of access to essential services, and the trend is bound to continue unless serious action is taken. In the challenge to address housing and water issues, President Ramaphosa reshuffled his Cabinet and, in an address on lockdown adjustment, warned that without severe and decisive leadership from municipal authorities, state and civil society; the lack of housing and water is likely to increase in South Africa.

As stated in Chapter 4, Covid-19 marked the beginning of a new era characterised by more intense intra-mobility, within Khayelitsha and the erection of new settlements. Intra-mobility, internal migration from and within Khayelitsha, and its expansion have reshaped societies and water accessibility. These settlements have dramatically altered the inner neighbourhood in Khayelitsha, with shacks filling the open spaces that have not been rezoned. These shacks vary in size and designs; as stated in Chapter 4, most of them are built from a combination of various second-hand materials, like pieces of timber and corrugated iron (popularly known as *amazinki*, from ‘zinc’). Most residents call these dwelling units *amaTyotyombe* and not houses. *Ityotyombe* (the singular of *amatyotyombe*) means something unstable, that can easily be dismantled or broken; others call such a structure *ihoki*. These terms are descriptive of the living conditions of squatters and the embodiment that portrays the socio-economic predicament in the settlements. Some residents have tried to improve their homes by painting them with bright colours, in this way resisting their incompleteness.

Drawing on incompleteness, Nyamnjoh (2017) also demonstrates the principles of being human. The assumption that human beings should be collected and discernible, is strengthened by the fact that no one person can possess all the material wants or be present simultaneously – the omnipresent. Here I am referring to the access to resources. However, there are occasions where incompleteness becomes an issue of temporary permanence.

Nyamnjoh (2017) states that incompleteness touches on all facets of human existence (Fine, 1993; Allen, 1997; Tschemplik, 2008; Howatson & Sheffield, 2008) at individual and collective levels and applies to humans and their relationships with non-humans. Its dimensions include relationships, openness, improvement, humility, and engagement.

Baby nappies: Socio-psychological factors and anxiety over lack of water

While the consequences of the social hierarchy are evident in the spatial inequalities between formal and informal houses, equally important, while not as immediately noticeable, are the psychological effects on the individual and the community. Being compelled to live in an environment lacking water and sanitation and often situated some distance from areas of scenic beauty has negatively affected the environmental perceptions and attitudes of many shack dwellers. As Ma Mkhulu (26) put it:

You can see we do not have water or toilets; I have a baby. I walk to get water from the truck. Besides water, our rubbish is piling up, but we put them along the road and the Municipality will not bother to collect them. Then when my baby makes poo, where would I throw the waste? So, we develop a mechanism. You see this fence along with this company [...] what we do is we collect our rubbish and dump it on that fence opposite the road. When management sees that, they will call a waste removal company to clean it. *Kaloku* [obviously] we are not visible *nyhani* [really/honestly] (Ma Mkhulu. Conversation in Empholweni, 01 October 2020).

Ma Mkhulu, Mfundisi's wife, has drawn attention to the neglect and littering of public open space and has pointed to the feelings of being invisible; displacement and a lack of belonging contributing to the lack of environmental concern. The prevailing perception of the townships as Group Areas dumping grounds has also contributed to widespread feelings of antagonism to the township environment. Much frustration and resentment are also felt at the extent of the unequal distribution of water and the sharp contrasts in the quality of life between formal and informal houses. Cognisance must be taken of these feelings since the reality of the situation is that, even in a post-apartheid society, many poor black communities remain trapped within apartheid-created circumstances with little hope of breaking free.

Since this inevitably means that existing townships will have to be upgraded for the residents living there, future upgrading or structured urbanisation programmes will have to be particularly sensitive to these solid residual feelings.

Many residents I interviewed, particularly shack dwellers, seemed anxious and uncertain about their future, a manifestation of their incompleteness. They argued that uncertainty increased when all water connected illegally was shut off and when residents, the city authorities and anti-land invasion units continuously confronted each other, and authorities confiscated their belongings. Some were anxious, knowing that they were residing on unauthorised land. Barna (1994) stated that due to anxiety, people were unable to anticipate their future needs and hence focused more on their feelings rather than the reality. The inability to comprehend one's reality was however fuelled by uncertainty (Gudykunst & Hammer, 1988). Anxiety makes it possible for people to easily make mistakes, since it reduces one's confidence in self. Thus, living in unauthorised areas created a lot of anxiety and uncertainty among the residents.

Covid-19, economic simmering, chronic unemployment, and water access

Due to the Covid-19 lockdown, profits for manufacturing companies, business owners, and commercial farmers plummeted, workers were retrenched from 2019 onwards. Some of these retrenched workers moved to Khayelitsha, causing land occupation (see Radebe's narrative above). The acute land occupation that became visible in Khayelitsha in 2020 was a manifestation of the movement of people mainly from within Khayelitsha, but also the Western Cape areas. The movement was due to many reasons; mainly triggered by the global pandemic. Similar processes also unfolded in formal houses from the same period. The influx of people into Khayelitsha also occurred because people chose to leave other areas hoping for a better shelter in Khayelitsha. Some residents were responding to prospects of the ownership of a permanent dwelling in Khayelitsha than in any other area. This was, therefore, one of the pull factors for the movement of people to Khayelitsha during 2019-2021. As individuals moved into the already overcrowded section, water access became a challenge and affected the formal houses and the children of the 'bona fides'. The escalation in land occupation increased resentment and frustration among the residents due to limited water access.

This gave rise to protests against the water scarcity and increased tensions among residents, triggering social divisions.

Unemployment had reached chronic levels due to Covid-19, a current economic crisis, retrenchments, natural population growth and the land occupation of the open space. Some retrenched workers could not be returned to their province of origin, the Eastern Cape, but were stranded in the areas. The effect of unemployment is that the residents of quit-rental agreements could not afford rent.

The Covid-19 period was generally associated with the economic challenges and water distribution in informal settlements. Residents have even hinted at the limitation or, in some cases, the disappearance of water distribution in some areas of the settlement. During this period, a few residents who moved to the areas accessed water within the neighbourhood while others walked to their kin's areas to collect water. Since the lockdown, the importance of water and economic deterioration became evident in South Africa, particularly in Khayelitsha, with conditions that compelled the authorities to respond swiftly. Part of the reason that informal settlements were provided with water for their basic needs, was to minimise the spread of Covid-19, not to address the escalation of land occupation in the different areas. Population growth and the waves of movements of people into the area contributed to the water challenges.

Then, there are the concepts of 'community' and 'community participation'. Both are political. What constitutes a community, and who in that 'community' carries the heavy work and finance either to maintain a family or support 'upgrading' projects. We need to realise that the concept of community is a problematic one, and, thus, open to manipulation. As Thornton and Ramphela (1989) have demonstrated, the idea of community participation is now popular in 'development' projects. It can mask the power relationships and exploitation involved. They (1989:35) argued that women are usually disadvantaged in the distribution of community projects and yet are expected to contribute to their success by giving their already constrained time.

Together but apart

The ‘together but apart’ metaphor takes us back to Zuki’s and Mpho’s images illustrated in Chapter 3. Despite living in different settlements, they had a connectedness through water which bound them. They engaged in their everyday tasks, together in their predicaments but apart, divided in lived experience and by the history of inequality, in how water is accessible within the settlements. This section unpacks the causes of frequent and incessant water conflicts amongst residents from diverse geographical perspectives. Ethembeni, Empholweni, Island, Emsindweni, Site-B and many other areas covet those basic resources, like water access and sanitation, igniting conflicts. It further speaks about the nature and scale of the conflicts in different settlements, their effects, and the appropriate strategies to end the conflict other than the call to expel those who occupy land, which has been ineffective over the years.

These conflicts are water, electricity, environmental security, and political and ecological issues. Conflict over water poses a significant threat to livelihood; the people need it to survive. Ta Zuks’s approach to explaining conflicts holds that frequent conflicts result from increasing water scarcity caused by population pressure, land occupation, and overcrowding. His view has been affirmed by Mfundisi; that there is a causal link between resource scarcity and violent conflicts. Many residents who explained water conflict argued that, in Island and many other areas, there are equally conflicts between residents from formal houses and those in the newly occupied area called eMatyotyombe despite the relative closeness to communal taps. In effect, communal taps degradation and marginalisation of those in the newly occupied area through deficient service delivery and practices are central to themes in conflict.

Nyamnjoh (2015) uses incompleteness from a decolonial perspective to encompass all individuals who need not only to be equally treated by embracing alternative forms of knowing and expressing their being with the new knowledge paradigms. This notion is relevant to the South Africa transition period as embedded in the concept of ubuntu. Nyamnjoh (2015) describes an attitude that presupposes a thorough understanding of identity – multiple identities.

As the study examines the relationships that water creates, several factors make this a helpful exercise, including the richness and complexity of the narrative record, the extreme nature of the forms of relationships forged in this part of Khayelitsha, and how access to water and its usage and imaginaries of deep time have served as a space of contestation for several social forces and relations. In short, they are all the overdetermined, culturally interesting practices and ideas that emerge when residents from a formal and informal settlement, of both sexes and all ages, set out to provide their experience with water during a turbulent period. At various periods in its development, residents in Khayelitsha have provided a point of conciliation, as I discovered while researching both informal and formal houses. They understand the predicaments of being vulnerable by continuously negotiating their legitimacy as the responses have been a critical source of commentary on notions of service delivery.

More recently, Khayelitsha has been a site of contestation in the working out of post-apartheid mushrooming of settlement imaginaries and the legacies of exclusion in the city of Cape Town. One part of the argument is that the narratives provide a rich set of data for thinking through the various relations and ideas around water. Another part of the argument is that Khayelitsha provides an excellent location to think through people's relationship with water through physical and social mobility. The theme here, a familiar one in discussions of water and relationships, is the theme of contestation, negotiation and intensification of conviviality. I describe Khayelitsha concerning water as a space with 'an element of social hierarchy'.

To have a diverse view of the causes of conflicts, apart from government failure to distribute water equally, that is, the study has identified many structural factors responsible for the increasing clashes between residents within Khayelitsha; include institutional failure to resolve conflicts, historical and political context, and lack of upgraded water infrastructure. The study contends that the overall outcome of conflicts is the multiplier effect on water, environment and human wellbeing. Conflicts impact the quality of life and human dignity and, ultimately, cause loss of lives. These conflicts socially breed or create an ambience of suspicion and tension, which threatens peaceful social cohesion, co-existence, and security. These conflicts do not only have a significant and direct brunt on the lives and livelihood of those involved, but also disrupt and threaten water infrastructure and maintenance.

These occasional, but violent, conflicts are not confined to Khayelitsha, and are evident in other informal settlements. The intensity and frequency of residents' conflicts vary in different areas. The study contends that there was an upsurge of conflicts in these respects across Khayelitsha during my fieldwork. Mfundisi reported that in 2020, he suffered significant losses due to conflict between Empholweni and Ethembeni, Island and Emsindweni. He further stated that during that period, two people were kidnapped, one, a driver from a contracted company that was assigned to deliver water, and the other, a driver contracted by a sanitation service. Both services were assigned to the residents of Island and Emsindweni, a settlement adjacent to Ethembeni and Empholweni, while the latter two settlements were without water and sanitation. In 2020, I witnessed widespread conflicts, primarily characterised by a blocked major road. Many confrontations were recorded between these different groups. Water-related issues is one manifestation of the deep-rooted problem of service delivery articulated by housing type and political motivations. These water-related clashes, mainly between formal and informal houses, are dire.

Studying people's relationship with water in Khayelitsha is complex, but it is also paradigmatic of a broader set of relations involving social hierarchy, science, society, knowledge, power, and the government. One part of the appeal of the narratives for this kind of study is the appeal of image and language itself. There is a richness and density of metaphor and imagery associated with the doings of this research, using photographs as one of the methods to inquire water and the formation of social relationships: the layering of sequential time in fieldwork, the revelation of the hidden information. Freud famously used anthropology as a metaphor to describe the workings of the unconscious mind and the actions of psychoanalysis. If we recall, Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu used a metaphor to describe the task of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission at its opening session. Standing in front of the sixteen truth commissioners on the stage of the East London City Hall, he said: "We are charged to unearth the truth about our dark past; to lay to rest the ghosts of that past so that it may not return to haunt us" (Shepherd, 2019:20).

Mfundisi said that various efforts to address some of these conflicts in different parts of Khayelitsha had not yielded the desired results. In recognition of the menace of the conflict, the Municipality stated that it makes strenuous efforts at addressing the issue of water.

The acts as a resolution of the problem have only relocated these conflicts from one geographical area to another. In 2021, there was a confrontation between residents from formal houses and shack dwellers. These conflicts have escalated and become more economically and socially unbearable, more succinct. In everyday life in Khayelitsha, there seems to be a heavy law enforcement presence. The residents' views and the government's position on these conflicts will better inform stakeholders of the fundamental issues regarding the nuances around the contests and conflicts and address the challenge holistically.

People's subjective experience usually changes with time. Hence, they are defined both in terms of their relationship with others and their uniqueness. These aspects reinforce the convivial catalyst of the individual's incompleteness in Khayelitsha. Nevertheless, the historical context of relationship formation and social construction need to be recognised but also transcended as Nyamnjoh (2015: 7) convincingly illustrated. Besides, belonging is important in individual development. The narratives present a unique development characterised by crises and how individuals react to their specific challenges. For *iMbacu*, the crisis is figuring out the kind of space they want to occupy amidst conflicting roles. If they fail in this space to access water, they develop a different mechanism.

In engaging with their incompleteness, the residents explore various possibilities and make choices about land occupation, and water access. In the process, he or she can explore what Macia (1966) calls identity diffusion (a state of uncertainty about current and future decisions); identity foreclosure (making an uncertain choice); and identity achievement (confidence in identity choice). Another way of looking at the process is through rites of passage. It is worth repeating Van Gennep's (1960) three different segments of rites of passage expressed in terms of liminality: rites of separation referred to as preliminal rites, rites of transition as liminal rites, and rites of reincorporation referred to as postliminal rites.

Hockey's (2002 cited in Blows et al., 2012: 2156) description is also illuminating: "A rite of passage starts by 'breaking relationship' with a previous social position or status, followed by a phase of ambiguity or uncertainty where persons caught themselves 'in-between' social positions, and ends with "re-entry" or "rebirth" into a new social position."

In contrast to the conflict, which gave rise to negative relationships, there seemed to be reinforced cooperation between people in some formal and informal areas reflected in adopting illegal connections, dispute resolution mechanisms, and good management of water resources. There were also different dimensions of convivial relationships between formal and informal settings where neighbours shared and accessed water to wash and, sometimes, for household usage, collecting it in either a five-litre container or more if provisions allowed, and later returning the same amount of water borrowed. Resident's relations, in this case, involve reciprocal water sharing. The long-term relationship built over the years with the neighbours in the formal houses made it possible for them to engage in negotiations and conflict resolution mechanisms to avoid confrontations. The scenario elucidated above provided an avenue for reconciliation and maintenance even if a dispute arose among the two groups. However, these relationships that existed previously have broken down across Khayelitsha precisely during the intense land occupation period. In the same vein, Nomfundiso, as a resident of the informal setting, provided a contradictory view demonstrating how those in informal houses used water at the expense of those in formal areas. This practice is found in many parts of Khayelitsha when water is syphoned from some formal houses. Those in formal houses contend that large-scale illegal connections place formal houses under severe pressure, therefore often pitching them against one another.

The uniqueness of water as a valuable immovable resource-limited supply makes it an essential factor of production that quickly breeds conflict among individuals or groups. The issue of water access in Khayelitsha is interwoven with complexities; formality, informality, legal and illegal, and service delivery, transcending the material (physical) realm and the settlement's geographic position. Formality and rezoning explain people's peculiar political and economic circumstances regarding water access, use, and development. These issues serve as a catalyst to spark conflicts between residents over the cruciality of water for both groups.

Conflict connotes a struggle between differing needs, ideas, beliefs, and values. It is also viewed as a situation where the parties' aspirations cannot be achieved simultaneously. Sanson and Bretherton (2001:2) posit that conflict is 'value neutral' as it could have negative and positive consequences. They alluded that the negative consequences of conflict will result in suspicion and distrust, the damaged relationships leading to violent conflict, whereas, positively, conflict facilitates in problem identification and solving.

The survival desire of the two different groups places them at opposite poles, often resulting in disagreement and, eventually, violent conflicts. The nature of conflicts among residents manifests itself in diverse forms; sometimes through non-violent ways such as verbal exchanges and ridicule, and a violent and destructive form, including riots, assaults, reprisal attacks, and the throwing of stones.

In August 2020, a delegation from formal housing met with a delegation from informal houses to discuss the possibility of formalising a relationship between the two settlements. For Simphiwe, this was a new and controversial development. He stated that shack dwellers have a history of malpractice, specifically to access to basic services such as water and electricity; however, more recently, those in formal houses have stated, and in some cases demonstrated, its commitment to addressing these issues and to developing forms of responsible practice. He further states: ‘Those of us who took part in these discussions did so based on this stated commitment, with open minds, and the understanding that no one should illegally connect water or electricity. No binding decisions would be taken without a discussion within.’

In addition, there is a thread of argument which grants a certain logic to these actions. A resident of formal houses, Simphiwe lives in an RDP house near water (not all RDP houses have indoor water, but some can access water within the yard). The meeting pressured the Municipality to remove the shack dwellers while acknowledging that one of the effects of illegal connection over the last decades had been the declining influence of nationals. The household group’s idea was that residents need to develop effective mechanisms for engaging with shack dwellers. Since then, there has been a debate and divisive series of discussions within the formal house’s Committee and amongst the broader group of informal settlements who participated in the meeting, which has seemed to exceed the agreed-upon mandate. At the time, those in formal houses discussed whether to remove them. More fundamentally, it has been difficult due to political and strategic differences among the members of the shack-dwellers group, based on different understandings of being unemployed.

Indeed, social structures are simply the textured orderings of social structure. They are the embodiments – the metaphysical constructs – of a society’s physical constitution of itself.

The intra- and inter-mobility and urban organisation of Khayelitsha may thus be read to reveal the invisible forces of production, modes of organisation, and contours of political-ideological will. Spatially then, it is a thumbprint of its community living in the area in its most total sense. It is a product of, and a moment in, the evolution of Khayelitsha. It is this evolutionary process that space fixes. The gradual, incremental development of the current development of Khayelitsha is continually being translated into a different landscape. While freezing society's past failures and triumphs, its consistencies, and contradictions, it is this landscape of mortar that, at the same time, is being continually transformed by current societal processes and transformations. It is a process of stone, a geographic inscription of history, and thus a spatially transformed means of interrogating past and future fluxes. Just as space is the outcome of social relations, these relations are, in turn, contingent upon the space in which they are embedded. The flow of the social milieu, the daily practices of people's lives and longer historical processes are all enmeshed in a grid of space. While geographic struggles are rooted in time, the struggle of history is rooted in space.

Residents of Khayelitsha are trapped in an unstructured defined residential neighbourhood; entire unequal demographics have inherited spatially defined access to water, health, welfare, income, and occupation. Such differentially limited access to resources has intensely sparked the mobility of those living in informal settlements. In Khayelitsha, this physical and social mobility is also a by-product of lockdown and has created social distinctions, a relatively fixed feature in the social environment. To this extent, the government controls of the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic have created spatially induced inflexibility in the social formation that has crystallised into a geographical fabric of water injustice. This fabric will continue to exert its influence after these government controls have been removed. As with any development, the struggle of these residents has been, and will continue to be, rooted in space.

Only an understanding and the change of the spatial and societal coordinates will free these residents from the inertia of geographic and water injustice. Physical and social mobility is yet another tool generated to attempt to disrupt the critical conditions for its survival, the opportunity for accessing water. Concomitant with this contemporary survival process have been significant due to the ongoing characteristics developments of the area. These include settling on unauthorised space and an accelerated erection of shacks. This process significantly affects the urban future of Khayelitsha and will perhaps burden the socio-spatial deadlock.

The settlement of more people from outside areas negatively impacted the attitudes of those in formal houses towards those building shacks close to them. The experience of Zoleka's (54) family illustrates the point:

“When our family arrived in this area, it was not easy to see people occupying it. Local people had an attitude to build a shack in designated areas. When my mother-in-law got this in 1988, there was no protest from the local people, but things are out of control now. People build wherever and whenever they want. By late 2018 land occupation had become almost prominent. Slackness in the response of the government to respond aggravated the situation. For example, a land occupation that occurred got the Municipality to mount intensive eviction in 2020 during Covid-19, a gap of about a few months between the occupation and the removal action.” (Zoleka. Interview, 27 October 2020).

The debate and the confrontation at the Cape Town Mayoral office in 2020 revealed the seriousness of the situation in Khayelitsha. In the debate, Mfundisi reported that besides financial struggle due to unemployment forced by the lockdown, many residents were facing difficult situations due to lack of water. Similarly, there is evidence of differentiation among settlements. Differentiation is the difference among settlements regarding access to water. In this study it also refers to inequalities in Khayelitsha worsened by the inadequate communal taps with grave implications for vulnerable groups such as women. Access to municipal water is an ongoing challenge in Khayelitsha. On the night of 18 May 2022, Protesters from Zamimpilo (a newly occupied area) went on a rampage barricaded Baden Powell Drive, demanding that the City of Cape Town allow them to extend their shacks.

Three structures used by security hired by the Cape Town City to monitor resident mobility and prevent a further erection or mushrooming of shacks were turned into ashes. Residents provided a similar argument as that of Lindela from Ethembeni and stated that their attempts to engage the city on the challenges have been unsuccessful. Protesters did not want to be violent with the security guards because some live in the surrounding neighbourhood but warned them to leave the area. Nombulelo Damba-Hendrik, reporting for Ground Up, says that the team arrived on the scene by 7 pm and found the security guards were present but anxiously standing between the shacks, visibly afraid for their lives. However, security guards who lived in the same settlement escaped. Zamimpilo is one of the occupied spaces formed in 2020 during the lockdown near Monwabisi Beach.

According to the reporter, most of the residents of Zamimpilo are backyarders in Kuyasa and Harare who, according to the reporter, unemployment was the reason to occupy land due to inability to afford rent. Their story is similar to many newly occupied areas I have encountered—no water supply and toilets to defecate. Zamimpilo residents use one standpipe installed by themselves. Like many other areas I researched, Zamimpilo residents rely on illegal electricity connections. The City official provided the same argument that the land was occupied unlawfully and rezoned for development; therefore, they were subjected to the City’s Anti-Land-Invasion Unit that destroyed shacks in the so-called 'invaded areas'. According to the report, residents of Zamimpilo expressed their grievance about the living condition, arguing that their shacks were small, and some had leaks, but they were asking for the extension of the shacks they already had. Mayco Member for Human Settlements, Malusi Booi, reiterated his argument and said the land was illegally occupied despite the City’s efforts to prevent it. He further reiterated that based on his experience, the illegal occupation is a real threat, and that prevention is necessary, (Damba-Hendrik, 2022).

However, this requires the willingness to move, which he sees as the hallmark of ‘*iMbacu*’ who contest to be taken for granted and often bound by ideas and practices of being, belonging, places and spaces. This suggests a nimble-footed approach to social action in which interrelationships, interconnections, interdependence, negotiations, and compassion are at the core (Nyamnjoh, 2015:8).

Conclusion

Using the concept of incompleteness, this chapter has unpacked the impact of people’s physical and social mobility, their relationships with the residents and families they found in this newly occupied space, and how they are classified and known by their neighbouring community. The chapter considered the problematic and social relationships built on everyday experience and examined why water access is distributed differently and affects this segment of the Khayelitsha population under study.

Lastly, the study contends that those in formal and informal houses are both citizens, though the latter is perceived as undesirable, treated differently by their neighbours; however, suggests that the ethical and moral relationship with the language of citizenship emanates from the fact that citizenship is considered an attribute exclusively for human beings. Shack dwellers are human beings. The chapter provided insight and answers to these questions relating to social hierarchy inequality.

It describes water politics as existing in a continuum of expected behaviour and conventional behaviour expressed in norms and practices permissible under a particular culture, evidently excluding what is not considered as part of the norm. The narratives reflect on the paradoxical openness of the post-apartheid township: on the one hand, the existence of profoundly new opportunities; on the other hand, the perpetuation of past discourses and entrenched inequalities. The chapter showed that the residents, from formal and informal settings who form part of this study, are living in a moment of profound changes socially and politically in Khayelitsha in ways that are fundamentally challenging, along with the years following the shifted understanding of Covid-19 lockdown, yet little attention has been paid to changes and how these changes have affected their lives. There is a deep need to examine and centre the diverse socio-environmental settings and the historical context in which social construction and identity operate and emerge with residents. The focus must spread to the social hierarchy that is often neglected in scholarship.

The transition or mobility from an informal area *iMbacu* to a formal area is not merely a matter of replacing an innocent consciousness with a critical one. The idea is that an ‘unhealthy’ variation can also become a ‘healthy’ scepticism. After losing their first naiveté, this occurs when one cannot develop a ‘second naiveté’. But if one develops a second naiveté, this creates fear in future relationships, given that scares of past hurt tend to be often ingrained in an individual's memory.

Amaqaba in the Western Cape and *amaQoboca* in the Eastern Cape are only a few examples of seemingly unbridgeable divides. By frameworks, I refer to how identity is conceptualised and whether this conceptualisation provides for pluriformity in the first place. Restrictive frameworks and strategies are characterised by contraction, demarcation, entrenchment, defence, and isolation. In contrast, multiple identities presuppose a framework of openness and

limitlessness, along with strategies for building relational bridges, reaching out, moving from one area to the other, and expanding one's identity.

This chapter moved away from 'over-privileging' formal house residents that assume positions of power and considered and explored the experiences of shack dwellers in studying identity formation in positions of inferiority and as citizens capable of fashioning their own space and identities. One of the difficulties the government is facing is how to provide basic services such as water infrastructure in newly unauthorised occupied areas. The study contends that whatever policies the government adopts and implements, intra-mobility, internal migration, and the mushrooming of the informal settlements have led to the upheavals and tension among local populations in Khayelitsha.

This chapter showed the differences between the participants' perceptions of the area when they migrated to new areas and the reality of their lives in the new areas. Once again, the municipal action to remove them and limited water access are recurring obstacles, but they settle regardless of these challenges. The chapter reveals the difficulty of maintaining dignity and identity by marginalised individuals. Therefore, social practices and power are a function of one's socio-economic and political environment as expressed in residents' relationship with water access in Khayelitsha.

CHAPTER 6
OPPORTUNITIES AND OPPORTUNISM: WE ARE PEOPLE THROUGH OTHER
PEOPLE

Introduction

The ‘factual’ and the ‘ideal’ determinants of social relationships

This chapter builds on the previous chapter; it examines how, through mobility, residents in Khayelitsha take advantage of *ubuntu* to exploit and explore social relationships to access water. *Ubuntu* epitomises a network of social relations – kinship, clanship, neighbours, landlord/tenant, etc. Conviviality and interconnectedness are the very essence of *Ubuntu* and essential in navigating incompleteness. It also encompasses both opportunities and opportunism (Nyamnjoh, 2016). The chapter extends and infers the nature of incompleteness that requires conviviality and interconnectedness (Nyamnjoh, 2017, 2021) (i.e., inclusivity). It also mines the attitude of (illusory) completeness, of residents in formal areas in relation to water access through their masks of autonomy and dominance, although some residents of informal areas also display this attitude. I also highlight the opportunism evident in both groups of people. As a framework, incompleteness not only provides for mobility as a universal, but it also argues for humility and conviviality. These groups of residents include those occupying the space both legally and illegally. Many of them, especially the ones in illegal spaces, aspire to be mobile from one area to the other; to leave behind execrable living conditions and settle in areas that have better to offer, especially relating to accessing water and sanitation. I further demonstrate how incompleteness plays out in how residents negotiate their relationships to access water.

In unpacking some of the preconceived ideas, I maintain that marginalised individuals cannot be taught how to survive, because they understand *ubuntu* and use the ideology in their daily access to water in Khayelitsha. Some of these expectations are realistic, others may be unrealistic.

During their mobility process, these expectations ought to be appreciated and, where possible, managed. To manage normally involves elements of planning, controlling, directing, coordination and, sometimes, evaluation. As the data in the previous chapters have shown, some residents move voluntarily; others are forced to move by conflicts, natural disasters, and personal adventures. Therefore, planning, controlling, directing, and coordination become a challenging affair. Like everybody else in different settlements, many residents hold views about where they are moving to in comparison to where they are coming from. Preconceived ideas and expectations including desires, feelings, wishes which one wants to fulfil or maintain. Considering the above factors, I contend that expectations are sometimes influenced or determined by one, or combinations, of the range from manipulation and exploitation to personal interactions and relationships one has, the activities one will have to take part in, and the joys and sorrows; what Nyamnjoh (2017) refers to as the opportunities and opportunism within *ubuntu*. Nomzamo, Dabawo, Bongu, Bhutana, Nomfundo, Asakhe and Ta Zuks bear witness.

Although these households are nearly the same as far as their composition is concerned, a significant number of people are not born in the Western Cape, with the majority in the age category over 20 looking for work and living with their girlfriends/boyfriends or spouses. I assert that social relationships in urban areas are often more crucial for survival than in rural areas (Epstein, 1981; Lomnitz, 1977, 1981; Oke, 1986; and many others). Social relationships are merely employed differently by people in urban areas to deal with urbanism challenges. Thus, I contend that people from different social backgrounds and social status discern social formation differently. I hold that social formations or relationship groups should not be equated with residential groups. While there is evidence for co-residential groups to approximate nuclear or conjugal family patterns, social relationships do not diminish. To demonstrate how these relationships are exploited differently, I presented two types of housing: formal and informal houses. These households are different in terms of their location, background and how water is accessed (see Chapter 4).

Water is central to the formation of social relationships between different groups. In Khayelitsha, and South Africa at large, most people are experiencing political disillusionment and a severe economic recession with resultant physical and social mobility, water insecurity, and pessimism. In addition, residents indicated that the government is contributing little, if anything, to social welfare in terms of economic support for the majority of the people who are incidentally black. What is sustaining these residents given that they have little or, in most cases, no economic backing? It is imperative for this study to have unpacked people's social resources; that is, who does what for whom? What kinds of support do relatives, neighbours, and landlords provide for each other? What is the nature of mutual support, assistance, or interaction? Between whom is the support given? Is there not an obligation a receiver has to a giver? Are there no differences in kinship perception between the very poor and the well-off (cf. Finch, 1989:13-34)? These questions are addressed in this dissertation. They are deployed here to understand conviviality through social formation which promotes reciprocal relationships (for a detailed analysis of social relations, see Nyamnjoh, 2018). The nature of such social networks will be determined and shaped by a broader context of incompleteness. The South African context might not be the same as elsewhere because of South African society's particular nature (see below). The study maintains that relationships play a vital role in these social formations. As Nyamnjoh (2015, 2017, 2020) puts it, relationships and social formations provide individuals with resources, economic and otherwise, and enable individuals to adjust to precarious conditions.

Lack of water development, particularly stemming from apartheid in the settlement context, has contributed to the revitalisation and redesign of the formation of relationship networks as a coping strategy when confronted with impersonal and alienating experiences. Formation of relationships in Khayelitsha has resurfaced as a vital adjusting mechanism to access water. However, it is unfortunate that this study is limited to South Africa. One would have expected, provided the nature of the country's prevailing conditions, that there would be a large body of literature dealing with mobility, showing how people manipulate the phenomenon for economic and security motives.

The selected areas are not homogeneous in terms of status. I intentionally avoid using the concept of 'class' in labelling residents of Khayelitsha because there is no remarkable difference between their social backgrounds.

I chose people of different statuses to observe whether there is a variation in their appraisal of social networks and whether the study can safely generalise their use of social relationships in Khayelitsha. Besides, I unpack how people occupying both formal and informal housing perceive the formation of social relationships, ties, and obligations, given the fact that they might not necessarily settle amongst their kin because of their ‘improved’ economic status.

The marking and claiming of space

We come, we mark each person’s space, and we build our shacks with our money [...] you can also come and choose your spot and build. I don’t know the head of the committee, but the house number was given to me by the committee, (Lungisani. Interview, 21 September 2020).



Figure 23: Researcher observing how residents claim space and how a new settlement is erected by marking it with waste plastic pieces (Photo taken by research assistant, 18 July 2020).

The opening quote came from a conversation I had with Lungisani (43), a resident from Jerusalema. It explicitly shows the technique of claiming of space that speaks to what Nyamnjoh (2017) calls ‘opportunism’.

I observed how through physical and social mobility residents firstly marked the area with waste plastic pieces. Secondly, residents removed the plastic, and gradually started moving building material onto the marked territory, except for municipal demarcated areas (although, in some areas the municipal demarcated areas fall under residents’ control), and erected shacks. Once the residents assumed control, with or without a water access point, they carved the area into several shacks, with narrow passages of less than one metre between them. An empty and invisible space becomes a visible social space saturated by shacks. The move is done with family members each carrying building materials.

Some residents considered the newly occupied area a space of hope and belonging in terms of housing and better living conditions than where they lived before. Others considered the area a space where they could have better daily living for future RDP houses because they had lived in the area for a long time. Most residents see Khayelitsha as more desirable because the population is relatively blacker and predominantly isiXhosa-speaking compared to other settlements in Johannesburg or Durban, where there is Sesotho or isiZulu. These characteristics give them the advantage to forge social relationships. Many residents who moved into the area before Covid-19 argue that their reason for moving was based on its proximity to Cape Town, where one could access basic services, and employment, according to Mfundisi. Many believed that there would be opportunities for improving their lives. Thirty-six of the forty-five participants came to Cape Town and moved to Khayelitsha because they heard that the Western Cape provincial government assisted residents to acquire RDP houses. All of the interviewees left their homes or places of birth due to unemployment, in search of better education facilities but landed in an environment with higher level of water challenges.

Completeness is a tool of dominance. It is a power game one aspires to by claiming superiority over others or the environment. For instance, defining the Western Cape as better, the dominant province over the Eastern Cape, where all modern people should aspire to move into, is a power playing up. Whenever one talks about power, one begins to see different degrees of claims of completeness of society and social processes to see what game is being played.

The city claims that it is a better place that works for its citizens. The debates often tell those in the Western Cape that the city creates jobs, provides water and housing, and brings empowerment. By exploring the accuracy of these claims in the township, the city claims it is bringing attention to the township's predicament by planning – something of an act. In terms of individual relationships that produce them, one sees that the city cannot operate within the power games that suggest that some deserve more while others deserve less.

Through physical and social mobility, the notion of water, social relationships and space in Khayelitsha is central to the event of residents. This study identifies environmental and cultural elements that impact the socio-economic integration of the residents, particularly those who do not consider Khayelitsha their birthplace. In a society stricken by poverty, unemployment, water plays a vital role in many residents' lives and provides a source of good health and dignity and relationships. As empirically shown, we need to consider the improvisation part of incompleteness and conviviality, which are what residents require to achieve mutually supportive living conditions.

In examining mobility and the distinct role of space in relation to water and the narratives of many residents, I draw from the anthropological readings of spatiality by Ramphela (1993), Vigouroux (2005), Blommaert (2006), Ross (2010) and Nyamnjoh (2016). Nyamnjoh (2016) asserts that space is continuously constructed by people's activities (also see Vigouroux, 2005; Smit, 2000). Vigouroux (2005:241) on the other hand concludes, that through physical mobility space is an uncertainty; one always must mark it, designate it; no one ever owns it; it is never given to someone; it must always be conquered. Space is both social and physical and expressed in a political economic sense, ideologically and intellectually, psycho-socially, and physically (Ramphela, 1993).

Ramphela's classification of space in addition to Appadurai (1990) categorisation of space as ethnoscapas (flow of people), ideoscapas (ideas) and financescapas (money) are applied to Khayelitsha. Using Appadurai's (1990) ideas, the study considers the different groupings moving through Khayelitsha (for example, those from the Eastern Cape, the Western Cape, and residents from within Khayelitsha) or established residents from the various section for whom Khayelitsha has become their home and those who move from one settlement to the other. As alluded in the previous chapters, I contend that, in such an environment, access and

relationships though water can become problematic, and can be easily manipulated. (This contention is discussed in Chapter 5).

Considering the above it is critical to understand the perceptions of those who occupied the new area in relation to water. I also suggest that their mobilities and the formation of social relationships are problematic, as the impact of the political-economic system limits their access to water. In the context of physical and social mobility in accessing water, I posit that spaces have very different meanings, including ‘a place of belonging’. Many residents view the new space as essential for physical survival.

Ithetha ukuba Siyazalana sonke – We are all related

It is helpful at this point to clarify social relationships referred to in this study. In the different chapters I describe the nature of people’s social relation interaction in a different area. In Chapter 2, I showed the complexity in conceptualising social relationships and how through incompleteness and conviviality the formation of social relationships is constantly built over time. It should be considered that Khayelitsha is an environment of multi-clan interactions born through social and physical mobility. People in these different settlements recognised the importance of clanship, neighbours, and siblings in moulding the formation of social relationships. What also should be considered is that most respondents in Khayelitsha are born outside Cape Town and move there, not as families, but as individuals for work reasons. It means that some do not have immediate families or biologically determined families in the city.

For most people in Khayelitsha, the most crucial ingredient for a relationship is, as they often said, ‘*Igazi liyajiya kunamanzi*’ (Blood is binding, unifying, or thicker than water), that he or she must be of the same clan. However, this does not end here; clans can also be related to one another. Therefore, a relationship in this context means sharing the same clan’s name and the relationship between clans through marriage. It can best be illustrated by this case study, which is indicative of the general pattern of relationships interaction in Khayelitsha. However, through physical and social mobility, the formation of social relationships or relationships also go beyond recognising shared clan names. Though there is a concentration of related individuals, many residents are not related in a biological sense as they claimed to be. Some of their social relationships are established using clan criteria or their mode of water access.

The other social relationships that people form is composed of ‘cousins’, ‘distant cousins’, or other classificatory terminologies used in contemporary anthropological literature.

The study points out that lumping together these people as ‘cousins’ or any other terminology is ethnocentric and simplistic. Many residents perceive that a family member or any individual with whom they interacted or exchanged resources like water are their ‘true’ brothers, sisters, fathers. What is relevant and essential to them is not tracking an individual relative and seeing where they fit in a family tree. The empirical data show that the formation of social relationships in this study are formed in the different contexts named above. Relationships meant more than just being related to the people in the samples because no clan could be related to more than one clan sister, brother, and neighbour. The above relationships are also applicable to many residents I spoke to. It also demonstrates that incompleteness emanating from physical and social mobility is prominent. However, the formation of social relationships, interaction, and networks are complex phenomena that need to be studied and analysed with extreme caution. Besides, many respondents in Khayelitsha addressed each other in terminology, such as *bhuti* or *mzalwane* (brother) and *sisi* or *dade* (sister), which has religious connotations, but these ‘brothers’ and ‘sisters’ perform the same function as people related through a common lineage-clan. It does not mean that Khayelitsha people are wholly alienated from their kin or neighbours who might not share the same religion. It is beyond the scope of the study to analyse the significance of all these interactions.

Reassurance of belonging

The shared experiences of suffering in an informal settlement give groups of resident young men and women living in shacks a sense of solidarity and *ubuntu*. Although they come from different areas out of or in Khayelitsha, they have to jointly fight for water, sanitation, and housing. Following the main argument that water enables the formation of relationships, the study suggests that family and neighbourhood relationships are the most highly invested form of social organisation. They evoke support, filiation, belongingness, affection, faithfulness, cohesion, and common defences against outside forces. Through exclusion, water access becomes more acute, but through belonging a means of survival for many residents. Improvement of livelihoods depends on access to social capital and relations with others for the communal use of toilets and access to water.

While in the field, Nomzamo (54), who is Ta Zuks' relative, introduced me to two community leaders, Bongani (54), the chairman, and Bhutana (59), the community organiser – one example of snowball sampling used; Dabawo's introductions were another. Bongani is about the late forties, rather bald, a relaxed man, with a somewhat quizzical expression and Bhutana, late fifties, slow speaking, like a man used to long silences or solitude. Steady, brown eyes. They took me around the area; introduced me to a group of women working at the public toilet and a few people at different communal taps. Dabawo (52), one of my informants, an older woman, was working with her son selling meat in the street. We were hungry, at lunchtime, we bought meat and *umbona owojiweyo* – roasted maize – from her stall.

I spent a few days at Dabawo's stall. Behind and opposite her stall were communal water taps. The communal tap behind her was mostly used by men for their car wash because it was near the taxi rank. Dabawo was my connection to other research participants. The question of how people moved, connected, and accessed water always has an essential aspect to residents in the community. During my first days at one of the communal water taps, many residents were curious about me and asked about my relationship with Dabawo.

The importance of people's relations and belonging is further demonstrated during introductions, whereby residents always reference their identity with others by including clan, or family connections, or where they originated. For instance, Bongani's wife introduced herself to me by saying, "I am Nomfundo, Bongani's wife", while her daughter said to me, "My name is Asakhe (19), Nomzamo's daughter." Social relations reinforced the sense of belonging in Khayelitsha. It was expressed by Ta Zuks, who every time while introducing himself to the people, said, "I am TaZuks *wase* [from] *Cofivamba*. [a place in Eastern Cape]"

In Site B, Bongani and Bhutana would introduce me to people as '*Umntu wamanzi*', 'the water person'. On the other hand, Dabawo formally introduced me as '*Ubhuti Minga, umfundi wase-UCT wenza umsebenzi wakhe wesikolo* [brother Minga, a UCT student doing his schoolwork]', and she would further tell residents why I was in the neighbourhood and asked me to elaborate to the residents. With every initial conversation, I introduced myself to the residents to tell them about my interest in the field. Maintaining relationships was of the utmost importance as far as Khayelitsha residents were concerned. As discussed in Chapter 5, their history of water access and shelter is one of hardship and agony.

Being constantly on the move to access water, albeit violently, they needed to maintain and forge relationships with one another to counter problems they faced during their mobilities. These relationships enabled the respondents to have options in choosing a neighbour that could help them with water.

Umntu ngumntu ngabantu – A person is a person through other people

Ronnie Kasrils, the late Minister of DWAF (2004), when assuming his duty in late 1999, viewed a newly built water system in the village of Lutsheko. Kasrils (2000:1) implied that implementers of the state-funded borehole had followed national policy, for taps had been installed within 200 metres of every household; families contributed ‘R10 a month’ towards operations, and the scheme was ‘well run’ by villagers, given that the project met DWAF’s technical, financial, and administrative specifications. Kasrils (2001:1) could have quickly concluded that the government had ‘improved the lives of 3000 people in Lutsheko’.

However, he (2001:51) questioned the state’s success after visiting the new borehole:

I went down to see the borehole, on the banks of a dried-out riverbed. There I found a young woman, with a three-week-old baby on her back, scooping water out of a hole she had dug in the riverbed. When I asked her why she was not using the taps, she told me she could not afford to do so. For those living in deep poverty, a US nickel is just too much to spend on a day's supply of clean water.

The riverbed exchange prompted Kasrils (2001:1) to reflect on the findings of a published survey, which had indicated that many women in poor rural households felt that spending ‘R10 on clean water would... deprive their children of food’. Notably, Kasrils (2001:5, 9-10) did not invoke the right to services in his proposal but premised his ‘sound, social policy approach’ on a concept of ‘interconnectedness’:

In South Africa, we talk of Ubuntu—a concept that says we are only people through other people. We do not help the poor because we are charitable. We help them because they are part of us, and we are nothing without each other. Above all, we aim to create a better life for all our people.

Nyamnjoh (2015) demonstrates how *ubuntu* transpired not only in Africa but also globally. Though the rich experience of human relation in Africa *ubuntu* tends to be both abstract but part of the practises of African life. Nyamnjoh (2015) links the philosophy of *ubuntu* to conviviality to African migration to Europe, the West and other such places, where, ironically Africans are treated as undesirable and disposable, including by nations that formerly exploited them during the slave trade and colonisation. One of the human species' characteristics is its members' inability to survive by themselves (Nyamnjoh, 2018). To be human, one needs to interact (temporarily or permanently) with other human beings, whether as friends, enemies, or kin. The society we currently live in is characterised by individualism but requires people to interact to advance all people in a particular social context.

Applying Nyamnjoh's (2015) account to understand incompleteness is reflected by Kasrils (2000) in the quote above. *Umntu* means 'human' and *ubuntu*, 'humanity' or 'compassion' in Nguni.³³ The ethical concept of *ubuntu* is generally understood as a moral driver for transforming democratic South African society and improving social relationships (Bray et al., 2010; Pera & Van Tonder 2005; RSA, 1997). For example, Williams (2000) states that many state-driven developments promote the broader society (2000:175), though Ubuntu's indigenous concept and practice are encouraged to reflect, detail, and uphold the spirit and tradition of social relationship: selflessness and consideration for others (Nyamnjoh, 2015). Furthermore, for people who find it difficult to adjust to social circumstances they are unfamiliar with or forced to adapt to, a variety of social relationships act as adjusting mechanisms, enabling a person to be aware of his sense of belonging and know that he or she is part of a social structure.

I imply that people form social relationships – a universal phenomenon, although with differences of degree between populations, which are rooted in the context within which a particular kind of connectedness determines the nature of that social network. Khayelitsha is perceived as a place of incompleteness that requires strong relationships for survival (Nyamnjoh & Brudvig, 2014a cited in Nyamnjoh, 2017).

³³ Nguni is a Southern African language group spoken by the Bantu people. Zulu, Xhosa, Swazi and Ndebele are all Nguni Bantu languages.

Writing on relationships to understand incompleteness, Nyamnjoh (2018) says both relationships and incompleteness provide an individual or a group with adaptive strategies, resourcefulness, and resilience under the precarious conditions of perpetual poverty and instability. Although Nyamnjoh's (2018) account is of social relationships in general, this work describes the very poor's survival strategies in the face of poverty. Nyamnjoh (2018) in his work does not adequately address the question of kin relations and networks through ethnographic data. Epstein's (1981) analysis, and most studies of relationships, especially in urban areas, seem crucially about the very poor's plight.

Through observation, one can discover the implicit assumption that relatively well-off cohorts or even the wealthy cohorts need not maintain kinship links or networks. Many anthropologists seem to follow this line (see Epstein (1981), Lomnitz (1977) and Gugler and Flanagan (1979), for example). The main idea underlying this chapter is the importance of understanding municipal water accessed through communal stand points through the framework of incompleteness and conviviality and social relationships. This is done by looking at residents of different households, and economic and social statuses to assert whether they have a different perception or not towards kin relationships. The difference, if any, lies in the relations' interaction. I believe such comparisons might produce some successful theoretical contributions and demonstrate the often-unspoken assumption that kinship is a method employed by only the very poor, or, according to Lomnitz (1977), by 'marginal populations'.

I do not contradict the notion that, because of challenges emanating from people's mobilities, sometimes relationships are exploited using *ubuntu* by those in need as a resource to deal with the demands of the challenging situations they find themselves in; by this, I mean those who find themselves in a position of not having access to water. I only qualify this assertion and add that even those residents who are presumed 'illusionary complete' also employ relationships for their own goals. The term 'complete' people are used here subjectively.

The research is mostly 'emic' because I present residents' narratives as they perceive and understand themselves from their (subjective) perspective. In terms of water access and service delivery, the residents of Khayelitsha formal houses may be regarded as being in a state of completeness in comparison with those living in the newly occupied areas, squatter settlements or informal houses. Therefore, 'incompleteness' here is not necessarily or wholly equated with

material well-being. In this context, neither is ‘completeness’ equated with social and spatial inequality in water access. That is why I avoided using the label of class in distinguishing these residents (see Chapter 5). Therefore, it is essential to see where we can draw the line between the negotiation of relationships by different residents, where the use of conviviality by those who are on the margin overlaps and where they diverge compared to the resident who is ‘relatively complete’. As stated above, the illusion of completeness is a tool of control. Also, by claiming completeness, those in formal houses might have the illusion of being materially complete.

I am thus concerned with the use of *ubuntu* for various strategic reasons, for example, by the squatter settlement residents sharing communal water. The idea of *ubuntu* is also deployed in all the chapters. In contrast, all chapters also raised the idea of incompleteness and integral aspects of this research and explored the importance of incompleteness and conviviality in moulding relationship-based water access. It covers most people’s activities that require and involve mobility and relationships (see narratives in the above chapters). Furthermore, I illustrate how relationship ties are based on inadequacy, using multiple narratives. I detail the conversation between a respondent of an informal settlement and me, for example, on mobility between formal and informal areas, and within informal areas; accommodation; everyday needs (for example, water collection, usage of a toilet for defecation).

The reader is reminded that the manipulation of relationships in this chapter or the ties that are spoken of here are not necessarily based on consanguinity or affinity, but are ties based especially on neighbourliness, family, ex-landlords.

Asiyi ndawo – We are not going to go anywhere

Apart from facing barriers to accessing water and using the toilet, many residents like Noluntu (47) find themselves incapacitated when their belongings are confiscated by law enforcement, and they are displaced or relocated into a new area. Noluntu, like many others have reasons to be mobile: water, search for a suitable home, sanitation, unemployment, and financial reasons. However, their move is confounded by difficulties living conditions in newly occupied areas. For Noluntu, difference in terms of a place of origin becomes a barrier. Her access to water has a slight disadvantage over the long-time residents. These newcomers become alienated due to

their different repertoire as stated in Chapter 5.

Beside harassment from law enforcement, there is also tension between the residents in old settlements and those in the newly established area when water is concerned. Drawing on the narrative from the residents from Empholweni about their mobility, difficulties, and strategies to get water, and the nature of sanitation, they indicated that the municipality ignored them but showed a strong preference for delivering water in other residential areas. The tension subsides when the municipality provides communal taps in the area. There have been consistent protests because of the lack of water provision, mainly by residents who settled before Covid-19, who are accusing those in the newly occupied areas of being beneficiaries of their water provision to the detriment of the residents of the old settlement, and in particular, those shacks in close proximity to the settlement. Besides, they accused them of using the water assigned to them. The lack of accessing resources sometimes results in violent actions. Below, I share the comment by Noluntu, who is one of the evictees from Empholweni.

“I am a mother of five. I was in an abusive marriage; I divorced my husband a year ago. The court granted me the house so that I could live with my children. My abusive husband continued to harass then assault me because he wanted the house; he would send people to threaten me. This is the reason I left the house to come to live here. For the past three months that I have been here, my shack had been destroyed by law enforcement, but now I decided not to give up because I have nowhere to go.” (Interview in Empholweni, 19 September 2020).



Figure 24: Truck loaded with belongings of residents who are moving into Covid-19 (Photo taken by Minga 29 September 2020).



Figure 25: Residents are busy rebuilding their shacks after demolition by the law enforcement (Photo taken by Minga, 29 September 2020).



Figure 26: Residents collect water from a pipe situated along the N2 Highway (Photo by Minga, 29 September 2020).

Some argue that municipalities must be reduced and some integrated if they are to be provided with adequate service. Yet, even if these get reduced and integrated, harsh structural barriers still stand in the way of water provision. Those who live in newly demarcated areas are marginalised citizens with limited access to government service delivery. In this study, integration creates harmony amongst residents in two different settlements (occupied area and the surrounding old settlement) (Cheong et al., 2007). Through social integration people from different backgrounds, with various values and norms depend on each other to sustain the social order (Bosswick et al. 2008; Turner, 1999). However, the process of social integration requires time, patience, and conviviality because it enhances the possibilities of improvisation and enrichment (Nyamnjoh, 2017, 2021).

Statistically those who participated in the study presented profound emotional, political, and sociological consequences, especially those in newly occupied areas. Some of the residents who live in well-serviced areas believe that those who occupy land are escaping dire living conditions in their previous settlements and that they come to a new area to take land for unstructured settlement that impacts on their houses' market value. These individuals, particularly those in formal houses, believe that the new unstructured settlements are a problem to the environment. Contrary to that, however, Bhutana, who resides in a Site B-formal house, explains:

“I think that these residents are occupying land that would otherwise go to the municipality or developers. They occupy it and build little shacks more often with the little money they buy second hand material. Sometimes the material is collected from either scrap yard. The main issues linked to problems with social integration can be traced back to the colonial and apartheid period” (Interview in site-B, 30 September 2019).

Thus, the challenge of social integration is a causal factor of conflict and violence in Khayelitsha. Besides integration, forced evictions become an active tool that many governments use when it suits their interests, which is the case in South Africa's rounding up and eviction of many shack dwellers. The main task of anti-land invasion operations in Khayelitsha is to get rid of *amaTyotyombe*, particularly *I* or *iMbacu*. Neither the government nor the organisation is formed to help provide essential services like shelter, water, and electricity to these *iMbacu* they sought to evict. It is recognised that those on the margin play a vital role in improving their living conditions. These residents, particularly *I*, are very mobile people; they move from one part of Khayelitsha to another, searching for water and sanitation. The authorities believe that the notion of movement has its limits, especially for the shack dwellers and lower class *iMbacu*, demonstrated by removing or demolishing their shacks.

The persistent erection of shacks constituted a challenge to the hosts who never envisaged such monumental water demand within such a short period. Siphokazi affirms that the implication of such a movement because of Covid-19 coupled with unemployment poses an intense challenge for water and shelter.

She added, ‘The presence of these residents in the newly occupied area is a considerable burden that comes with enormous responsibilities,’ (informal interview in Makhaza 09 September 2020).

Despite the attack from the neighbour from the formal house, these shack dwellers remained resolute, knowing that the topography and the nature of the area would pose a challenge to the authorities to evict them. Besides, the nature of the area shielded some occupied areas and hampered the further movement/operation of the land invasion unit working with the municipal troops. The above explains why the authorities cannot move and remove the residents from some areas. It is one of the factors that made the authorities not provide water. The same reason made it difficult for them to move into the area quickly. In other words, this demonstrates the extent to which the area recorded tremendous movements of the residents during the Covid-19.

Given the massive influx of residents from different parts of Khayelitsha, it could be said that the lockdown comes with stress and hardship, which forces many out of work but pushes them to occupy the land. The lockdowns imposed by the government speak volumes of the nightmarish experience residents are going through. More so, unemployment must have also added much pressure on the people who had no option other than to occupy land in various areas. It is also important to assert that the settlement pattern drastically changed following the increase in population, which naturally initiated some of the challenges of water that confronted residents.

Nomfundiso (36), who settled in Ethembeni during the lockdown, asserts that many residents had no relationship with the newly occupied area. In other words, most of the residents came from different areas and were forced to settle into the existing area, but a few, like Sipati, moved out when it was flooded by rain and sewerage. Floods which forced shack dwellers out of the newly occupied areas knitted these residents together. This same flood became the source of social relationships.

In line with the preceding, Sipati asserts the importance of belonging and conviviality thus:

“Luckily for me, my family, then my neighbour gave me a place to stay when my shack was flooded. After partitioning two sizable bedrooms for a family of five, the size of the room was not enough room to accommodate children comfortably.” (Informal conversation in Ethembeni, 28 July 2020).

The significant challenge commonly associated with these residents that cohabited with family members in their households is the loss of privacy. Different families from the Eastern Cape, Khayelitsha and other parts of Cape Town settled together under one roof. With this kind of cohabitation, the residents had to live with a great sense of caution not to offend their fellow family members. Nevertheless, in Sipati’s case, she could depend on her social relationships to help her survive.

As stated in Chapter 4, because of the Covid-19 intra-migration, many residents are exposed to some difficulties, grappling with water. Besides the lack of water and sanitation commonly associated with the lockdown, there are other challenges that confront residents. Some of them were frequently exposed to transmissible infection, floods, strong wind and cold (see Lindela, Sipati, Bongani and Azile’s narratives in Chapter 1). The overcrowding, as one of the challenges of residents, further compounded their problems. One indication of how residents altered the settlement pattern is that it gave rise to the erection of unstructured shacks on the open fields. Since scrap yards are full of second-hand materials for shelter construction, the residents did not find it challenging to collect materials to construct their shelters. Mfundisi said everyone worked to ensure that they had shelter. Moreover, towards late 2021, as the population of Khayelitsha began to grow, pressure started building up, which eventually affected the residents and the host communities. Put differently, the swelling population of Khayelitsha residents constituted one of the significant challenges.

Furthermore, a significant challenge that residents grappled with during the lockdown was frustration, which influenced how they responded to water access and the harassment from the municipal authorities. Moreover, I observed that the residents were practically overwhelmed by the loss of jobs and their properties when migrating to the newly occupied area.

Some indicated that the confiscation of building materials by law enforcement became a source of worry. Because of this, some of them became paranoid. Following their constant depression, it became difficult for some to participate in the research (see Chapter 3). Thus, this sensitive issue became one of the burdens for some of them to cope with.

Indeed, this should be expected and evident in a society that has been stretched in a difficult time, such as the Covid-19 pandemic. Azile, provides further clarification on this matter:

“I cannot say we are having an unpleasant time here due to the treatment we got before we settled [...] because of the misunderstanding that occasionally came up between our fellows from formal houses during the pandemic. ... You see, we had such a misunderstanding primarily because of water, and that is expected, in any case. I also think such misunderstanding became frequent because of frustration from the lockdown and expectation. When the area was flooded, we lost our belongings and had to cope as an iMbacu.” (Informal conversation in Phola Land, 28 July 2020).

Because of the prevailing conditions, their state of disillusionment made some of them abandon their shacks. In other words, the lack of water and extended lockdown coupled with sewage water and unemployment became additional sources of frustration. Azile recounts her experience:

“We missed our homes at that time. I think this very fact led to the emotional challenges of many people, of which some of us are ill due to the dirty environment and cold. All these factors, I believe, affected our health. Generally, people in our area, I mean Jerusalema, are kind, unlike those in formal houses. Some of them took advantage of our condition where they attempted to sell water and electricity to us, and some attempted to rent their toilets for defecation. You see, such an experience could be frustrating because some of us are unemployed.” (Informal conversation in Phola Land, 28 July 2020).

Azile’s narrative highlights what Nyamnjoh (2017) calls opportunism; the attempted exploitation of *ubuntu* of the shack-dwellers by the formal house residents. The frustration that arose from the feeling of hopelessness for unemployed residents who lost most of their belongings and some who lost their loved ones negatively affected how some behaved. For example, there were some cases of fire in Jerusalema, which one of the shack dwellers alluded to could be a result of the circumstances then. According to her, human beings could be

influenced by what they go through, irrespective of how good they are. The study found that shack dwellers were a mixed multitude whose cultures were not precisely the same. For example, among some of the shack dwellers, frequent misunderstanding, especially among the non-Xhosa speaking folks, was one of the features which became a challenge at that time. Though they had good relationships, some of the women clashed with one another to protect or support their children in any event of misunderstanding. This scenario mostly led to disputes between families, which became a source of worry. Given the above, it could be argued that the restriction of movement during the pandemic, which also affected many social aspects of life, could be responsible for such developments as observed above. Therefore, it could be seen as also one of their challenges.

On the move: Mobility and inclusiveness

Lungisani's (Interview, 21 September 2020) description in the quotation above "We come, we mark each person's space, and we build our shacks with our money [...]" speaks to the expansion of settlements in Khayelitsha. The participants are from both outside and within Khayelitsha, but the majority are exercising intra-mobility. This is a relatively new process of unstructured urban development grappling with lack of water and proper sanitation. It speaks to the push and pull forces of intensive intra-mobility and its impact on water. Mobility into towns is becoming a feature of most developing countries, including South Africa. People move into the towns in multitudes in search of job opportunities. Unemployment in South Africa is a prominent feature of everyday life. Millions of people are unemployed and are uncertain about their future. This precarious situation in Khayelitsha is an undisputed reality that will exist even in the envisioned 'New South Africa', which the current government struggles to advance.

Intra-mobility and migration in Khayelitsha continue despite the government's steps and measures to ensure the control of the movements of people and the provision of water to the Khayelitsha population. These removals, together with retrenchments of residents during the period of the pandemic, resulted in the wave of people moving to the new area for land, causing further congestion, with negative effects on water provision. Residents also left the places they were renting for reasons other than retrenchments. Bad living conditions, and unemployment forced some of them to move to the newly occupied area. The experiences of Radebe, Mfundisi and Mr. Mvandaba, who reported that their families moved from Site B and Site C to newly

occupied land areas, like Ethembeni, Empholweni and New Dawn, illustrate this point, as they gave unemployment reasons as some of the factors that influenced their families' decisions to move. Due to water challenges and land occupation, Khayelitsha has become visibly overcrowded.

To address this problem, the programme of installing water pipes was introduced in the Island. It involved the installation of pipes within the communal areas. The installation of pipes was introduced to bring water to different settlements. Mrs. Mvandaba from Emsindweni (in Makhaza), explained that, before the installation, residents were accessing water from two communal taps situated close to each other. This made it challenging for people to live far away from the taps. To reach the water taps, residents had to pass the danger area. With the installation of pipes, residents would not travel long distances, leaving their children protected.

While mobility is a recurring phenomenon, the problem is worsened because these people are generally unemployed and cannot afford water. The chapter argues that water challenges occur due to many factors; paramount is that poor residents cannot pay for water. Some newly occupied areas face a particular problem, flooded sewage, which some residents refer to as the 'liquid shit'. The variations in land occupation in Khayelitsha relate to socio-economic forces inherent in contemporary South Africa and the complex interplay of forces that have historically been directed at the maintenance of inequality. That process has resulted in categories of people being significantly disadvantaged. Part of that disadvantage has included neglect in providing water for areas classified by the government as illegal areas to settle.

Intra-mobility in this study is often a survival strategy for many households. Sometimes, residents from the same household in the Eastern Cape split into several groups located in different places – within Khayelitsha, so as to spread the effect of the economic challenges. The study argues that the alteration of neighbourhoods in Khayelitsha is mediated through the extent to which local populations can participate in the resignification and revalorization of their communities primarily through connectedness and involvement in reconstruction of their space and its survival.

One of the reasons residents engage conviviality is the inadequacy in water governance. The study contends that governments have failed to recognise the rights of the marginalised urban poor and hardly cope with the challenges of rapid urbanisation. Settlements like Khayelitsha are often ungoverned, hence the government of the Western Cape is constrained in controlling the mushrooming of shack dwellers. In their attempt to control the mushrooming nature of shack settlement the local government tends to limit provision of amenities which ends up impoverishing township dwellers.

Mobility and the formation of relationships

Mobility gives rise to social relationships through two processes: outsider becomes insider and insider becomes outsider.

Outsider becomes insider

The process of how outsiders become insiders (by this I mean from *eziMbacwini* to *amaTyotyombe*) occurs when the municipality enhances their incompleteness. Once the residents in Emsindweni, Island, Empholweni and other newly occupied areas have electric boxes with communal taps and portable toilets, they can be grouped under *emaTyotyombeni*. Ta Zuks (44) provided a clear explanation and analogy of the term *eziMbacwini*:

“If someone says he stays in *eziMbacwini*, that is the lowest class of informal settlement. That means *eziMbacwini*; there is no water, no toilet, and nothing. It authentically perceived as someone coming from exiles or on the run. If you are in exile, you stay in a bush with no toilet, water, and electricity, but you make a shelter. Does that make sense? So, when you are on the run, there is no time for shelter because you are hiding. That terms are also used. We also say we *iMbacu* because you are on the run. There is no toilet in the bush; you are on the run. The same applies to those shacks without electricity, no water, no nothing. The name has been introduced into society to describe those people without water and sanitation.” (Ta Zuks. Informal conversation, 09 June 2020).

Once basic service like water is provided and the area is upgraded, it can no longer carry the name ‘*eziMbacwini*’, and the person can no longer be called *iMbacu* because the government has introduced water and electricity; though it may be a portable toilet, it is no longer *IiMbacu*, it is called *amaTyotyombe*. Then when the government decides to build a house, the person can no longer be called *iMbacu* nor the area be called *amaTyotyombe*; it is called a formal house because the area has been upgraded with water infrastructure, streets are provided, government houses, and affordability per household changes. This process occurred in Philippi, Site C, Site B, Harare, Town 2, Makhaza and many other areas. Many of these areas were once called *eziMbacwini* and changed to *emaTyotyombeni*. However, some individuals with means have upgraded their RDP houses to double-storey houses with a CCTV camera 24/7 to a point that, when inside, it becomes difficult to think that this was *iMbacu* at the beginning. Thus, we see the transition that takes place within incompleteness from *iMbacu*, through *eziMbacwini* to *emaTyotyombeni*. They need to be socially and physically mobile to engage in this progression, and, through conviviality, they begin to enjoy new relationships in different areas.

Insider becomes outsider

The opposite of the above is also true. People, mostly through external forces, over which they have little or no control, are forced to mobilise and navigate to new, mostly illegal, areas. Their living conditions deteriorate, and they find themselves outsiders to their former communities. Once there, they have to, and do, develop relationships, particularly with their new neighbours, in the hostile environments in which they find themselves, as a survival strategy. They often have no access to water and rely on the help of neighbours, even in the formal areas, which are often adjacent, or ones in the same predicament as theirs to collect water in cooperation with one another, for instance, sharing someone’s wheelbarrow or cart to lighten the burden.

Outcry and anger occurred over sporadic evictions as illegally erected structures were removed from different settlements. This time in Empholweni informal settlement in Makhaza people gathered in big groups when their shacks were demolished, and material confiscated by law enforcement during the lockdown. More than 100 families were left destitute after their shacks were demolished, as they had been occupying City-owned land illegally. The eviction occurred during the Easter weekend, from Good Friday, April 10, until Family Day, Monday, April 13, 2021.

I received a WhatsApp message from Ta Zuks on Sunday evening. On Monday, I arrived in the area; more than 100 people had gathered around the area where their shacks had been, with a heavy law enforcement presence as officers watched the residents' movements while leaders from various organisations addressed them about the way forward. Before the address, law enforcement dispersed the crowd and destroyed the few remaining shacks while residents hurled insults at them.

Tensions and emotions were running high when Ma Mkhulu, one of the evictees, holding her nine-month-old baby on her back, shared her view:

“I do not know what we did to deserve such treatment. They come and demolish our shacks, knowing that people are still inside. No time or chance is given to remove our belongings. Ever since we started occupying the land, our shacks have been continually destroyed, and our material gets taken. As you can see [...] since Friday, many people have been sleeping in an empty shipping container while others do not sleep at all. Instead, some of us make a brazier to keep ourselves warm as we sit up throughout the night. *Uyabona ndinomntwana*, [you see I have a baby], *umyeni wam akasebenzi, umazala wam usebenzela umlungu kwaye nguye osincedayo* [my husband does not work, my brother-in-law works for a white man and he is the one assisting us], [...] the ward councillor promised to look for community halls so that people could have a place to sleep, but many people rejected the idea, saying we may contaminate one another and get sick. This government has humiliated us. The government says we must stay indoors. *Siza kuhlala njani ezindlwini xa singenamakhaya? Asinandlela yokugoduka. Uninzi lwethu aluphangeli kwaye alukwazi ukuhlawula irenti, kwaye abanini-mhlaba baye bagxotha abanye bethu kwiindawo zabo. Sisemngciphekweni wokosulelwa sesi sifo se-Covid* [How are we going to live indoors when we are homeless? We have no way to go home.” (Informal conversation in Empolweni, 01 October 2020).

One of the Mayoral committee members for human settlements, Malusi Booi, denied the eviction. He stated that the court ordered the removal of residents settling in unauthorised spaces with unoccupied and unfinished structures in line with the provisions of the law and based on advice from legal professionals. He argued that “[t]hese structures are illegally erected on City-owned land [...] land invasions are illegal.” When a shack is in the backyard of a formal house, the inhabitant/s presumably renting or a family member who built a shack as their home, that shack on its own is not termed or seen as *iTyotyombe* but instead called *ihoki*.

This is because that land does not belong to the shack dwellers, but instead, they are renting in an occupied space. A twist in these complexities is when an individual becomes unemployed and can no longer afford rent and gets tired of being asked for rent by the landlord, he or she moves out from the area. They move out from *emaTyotyombeni*, but when they are in a newly occupied area, that is unauthorised, they become *iMbacu* because of the living conditions where basic needs can no longer be attained.



Figure 27: Shacks being demolished by strong wind (Photo by Minga, 3 December 2020).



Figure 28: Residents of Sanitizer collect water from C-section (formal houses) (Photo by Minga, 22 August 2020).

Daily Maverick (23 March, 2021) reported on a gathering organised by the Social Justice Coalition (SJC) at Sea Point Promenade in Cape Town to protest the lack of access to essential services in informal settlements. About 250 protesters from different informal settlements, including Khayelitsha, voiced their frustrations and demanded that the city provide essential services. Mandisa Dyantyi, who is the director of the SJC, told *Daily Maverick* that there is a violation of human rights in informal settlements because residents are without access to services, clean water, toilets and electricity. One of the protesters from Khayelitsha said that she did not feel she “belongs in this city”. Another resident, who lives in a shack with nine other family members, said she has lived in the informal settlement since 1985 without water and a toilet. Dyantyi and many other leaders also raised the issue of additional distress from living in informal settlements, such as high crime rates, femicides and gender-based violence, which also correlate with Noluntu’s narratives. The SJC stated that sexual harrasement faced by women due to lack of access to basic services is often ignored by the authorities leading to loss of lives. The report aptly illustrates the condition of “outsiderness” in informal settlements, including Khayelitsha.

The report in *Daily Maverick* provides a good *entree* into the world of women, particularly in the informal settlements and their position vis-à-vis availability of water. Life in Khayelitsha has become dire, especially for those with families.

This prompted women like Mrs Mvandaba, Siphokazi, Bongi, Azile, Pasinya and others, to narrate the precarious living conditions of women and children. Their narratives revealed that women are hit the hardest by the lack of water and economic crisis. In the discussion group with residents in 2020, many women painted a gloomy picture of women with children in their area. Due to unemployment, gender relations in many households, too, had undergone dramatic changes. Women had become decision-makers in their households. Khosi states that about fifty per cent of households in his area were women-headed; some by widows. The data also show that women are dominant in informal economic activities in Khayelitsha, such as informal trading, which includes livestock trading. This reflects the resilience of women in times of difficulty.

The empirical data demonstrate that women are not only the principal users of water, but they are also, in some ways, the cleaners of water supply access points. Existing literature on water and women disempowers women because it ignores their historical involvement in household work, making water infrastructure, water institutions and water politics the preserve of men.

This study may have failed if it does not include women at risk or erases a history of how some women achieved specific objectives with water. Ignoring women's involvement with water is actively disempowering because it contributes to dismantling an idea that women persuade men into participating in water activities or protest. Using historical forms of protest (such as the burning of tires, closing of roads, and throwing of human waste on government buildings), women also have articulated their demands effectively despite having no formal control over decision-making. It is impossible to generalise about gender relations in an area as culturally diverse as Khayelitsha, but in general, most social structures suggest that men maintain a dominant position in the social structure; however, there is still an arena for women to find ways to express their interests; there are established rituals of resistance. The critical texts on women in Khayelitsha have often emphasised the tension between a historical and a current vision of gender relations and the need for women to become politely organised (Fonchingong, 1999).

The narratives also show that, although most women have historically had low status and were marginalised, they also have tremendous power when it comes to water issues (see Nomfundiso's narratives).

The empirical material used in this study was gathered from ethnographic work, with a brief description of women's involvement in water access and usage throughout Khayelitsha with the emphasis on water and social relationships. Collecting and transporting water is made as easy as possible, but women's role in this process is considered important because they collect water from communal taps, they are involved in the communal work of constructing the paths to the communal water access points, they are the principal carriers of the water; they effectively maintain the path to the tap by using it. Since women generally gathered water, they established codes of behaviour at the communal taps themselves, only turning to men when they needed heavy lifting. The process of realising their rights hinges on women's capacity to engage actively with the government. It is a question of creating a social space where women and the government can engage and negotiate about their predicaments of being marginal.

Through negotiation, both parties can begin to lay out their rights and responsibilities and design programmes that communities can respond to. This is an integral part of the process that Nyamnjoh (2018) calls convivial relations reinforced by incompleteness to understand their responsibilities or something beyond their reach. Furthermore, women are part of the community; however, the concept of 'community' and 'community participation' is political. What constitutes a community, and who in that 'community' carries the heavy work and finance to maintain either a family or support 'upgrading' projects? Throughout this study I realised that the concept of community is a problematic one and, thus, open to manipulation. As Thornton and Ramphela (1989) demonstrate, the idea of 'community participation' is now popular in 'development' projects. It can mask the power relationships and exploitation involved. Thornton and Ramphela (1989:35) argue that women are particularly vulnerable to further disadvantaged by community projects. Women, who are already overburdened, must give their often-non-existent leisure time for communal efforts like village health work, building toilets and promoting literacy whenever there is a need for voluntary community action.

In South Africa, the issue of unfair gender relationships is often dominated by what are seen as more pressing social issues. However, this neglected aspect of inequality has significant social consequences, in this case in terms of the added burden which women must carry. Here women's issues are swept aside for the sake of the community, and women are forced into subordinate roles.

The term “community” is usually extended to aggregations of people who have something in common, such as common resistance, geographical area, or indeed a group of people who share a set of beliefs, or claim membership in a common lineage structure, or are distinguishable by similarities of economic activity or class position. However, the notion of community is manipulated for political purposes. For example, in the South African context, the notion of ‘community’ has often resulted in “a further exploitation of already exploited people, which is justified because it is all done in the name of progress” (Thornton & Ramphele, 1988:34). The problem of the notion of ‘community’ is further exacerbated in that women are often particularly disadvantaged and placed in a vulnerable position by being given large amounts of labour-intensive work in communal efforts, while the men maintain supervisory roles (Thornton & Ramphele, 1988), thus, resulting in a triple burden for women, that of being a black, female, and poor.

The precarious living conditions of women in Khayelitsha begs for ‘ethnographic descriptions’ like this one, supported by intensive fieldwork into the daily lives of women, as well as the social, economic, and political settings in which women are set. It can be deduced from the actions and activities of women described above that they are heavily reliant on interconnectedness, conviviality and the opportunities that they can create or exploit within the milieu of social relations obtained in *ubuntu*. In this way they navigate their way through their incompleteness and the incompleteness of water to enhance their living conditions and strive towards achieving their ideal lifestyles.

Conclusion

To conclude, this chapter responds to the main research question and narrates the stories of residents who moved to Khayelitsha during and after Covid-19. The most evident changes are the South African economic crisis and water distribution, which have weakened their water access and strengthened their relationships. The chapter examined water in relation to space and the aspect of social integration and how it facilitates resident’s access to water. Regarding mobility the chapter expounds on the challenges of shack building where some built their shacks at night and furnished them by pretending that they had been living in them. Later, these residents achieve upward mobility by erecting dwellings, resisting removal and investing more in social relations to improve their lives.

CHAPTER 7 WATER AND THE HUMAN BODY

Introduction

This chapter closely examines defecation, paying particular attention to the uncomfortable and embarrassing situations in which people have no choice but to relieve themselves in nearby bushes because of a limited amount of water. It further explains how residents are forced by water scarcity to condition their anatomy in terms of human excretion. It also covers topics related to water and sanitation, hygiene, Covid-19, sexuality, and defecation habitus due to lack of water.

The relationships between water and the body are of anthropological inquiry. As mentioned in the previous chapters, in a time of mushrooming informal settlements, increasing socio-economic disparity, and environmental and political uncertainty around water and sanitation, health and well-being are becoming issues of concern. Covid-19 illustrates how water is intimately entangled with the political and economic factors and how their interaction in affecting people's living environments render health, the human body, and water provision a complicated affair.

Previous chapters of this dissertation demonstrated how water plays an essential role in the formation of relationships and in unearthing the problematic dynamic of human conditions (Ortner, 2016:49) in both theoretical and empirical reports. Medical anthropologists have enhanced our understanding of how even the most intimate aspects of ill health, and water, relate to political-economic conditions impinging on the world and the humans dwelling in it. By transposing these ideas to the field of medical anthropology, this chapter focuses on how the intimate side of water can be envisioned, theorised, and empirically proven in response to multiple constraints, and examines water and the body. The chapter also covers water manhood. The chapter further contributes to the calls for a rethinking of 'poo politics' raised by Robins (2015) and elucidated in Chapter 1, to take South Africa's water distribution and inequality complexities seriously.

It responds to some of the questions of how people experience water and their body using water collected from the communal taps, tank, truck, or indoor shower, which appear not to have been asked or answered in the literature. The chapter focuses on Bonggi, Pasinya, Ted, Ase, Mandla, Arabile, Mandaba, Siphoh, Khosi and Mrs Mvandaba's experiences, their perceptions and consciousness of their bodies. Furthermore, the idea on the functioning of the body in relation to an environment where water is a scarce resource and experience in health and sickness is cross-culturally and, as such, ontologically diverse, is examined.

Many residents felt that they had the right to water and equitable water sharing. Azile explained her right to water as implicit in citizenship, saying: "Because I am a citizen with the right to choose my leader, I deserve better services, including water to wash." Like Nomfundiso, Sipati noted: "We cannot live without water; water is a source of life, as a human being we need it." I employ the term "water citizenship" from Bulled (2017) and draw on the concept of "biological citizenship" from Rose and Navos (2005) to demonstrate the basis for government service delivery. In Ukraine Petryna (2004) developed the concept of citizenship in her study, where citizens claimed rights to government social support and health services due to health effects caused by an explosion from the Chernobyl nuclear reactor. Biological citizenship in Ukraine translates into citizens demanding that the government redress the medical condition caused by the 1986 Chernobyl nuclear disaster, where many people were contaminated by nuclear radiation. The demand, together with activism, was in the form of compensation, as medical acknowledgement for a condition (Petryna, 2004).

In recognition of the government responsibility in health matters, Briggs and Mantini- Briggs (2009) employed the term "sanitary citizenship" in reference to the methods citizens in Venezuela used to claim their social and civil rights during the 1992-93 outbreak of waterborne disease – cholera. In this case, the relationship between citizenship and the government refers to citizens' health. People that portrayed an understanding of their health were deemed "sanitary citizens" and allowed to access government services (Briggs & Mantini-Briggs, 2003).

Horton and Barker (2009) observe a similar relationship among Mexicans in the United States. Here, what defines citizenship is oral health. Given their difficulties in accessing the government health care system, such as dental check-ups and fluoridated water, these scholars (2009) illustrate that Mexican immigrants can easily be identified as non-citizens because of their deteriorated oral health. This designation enables other discriminatory practices and denies them access to the government health care services to prevent disease and treatment. In Côte d'Ivoire, Nguyen (2005, 2010) illustrates how marginalised HIV-positive residents have used equivalent processes to fight for access to HIV treatment service, termed as “therapeutic citizenship”. This is comparable to Brazil, where citizens demand medical care access (Biehl, 2007; Biehl & Petryna, 2013).

Academic works have covered and documented similar cases of citizens making specific medical demands and claims from their respective governments. As part of incompleteness, poverty, chronic unemployment and TB and HIV infections, citizens in South Africa have demanded medical government grants; hence the term “biomedical citizenship”. Although different terminology is provided to explain this incompleteness and used for a political, legal, and ethical contexts in citizenship – therapeutic, biological, and biomedical – they could all be problematic in terms of othering and violating fundamental human rights (Rose & Novas, 2005). These biological related theoretical perspectives lead to the formation of particular policies and action requiring exclusive resources, “to a form of social welfare based on medical, scientific, and legal criteria that both acknowledge biological injury and compensate for it” and make efforts to prevent further damage (Petryna, 2002:4). Water citizenship relates explicitly to better development of service delivery for future disease prevention in which residents or individuals provide arguments based on a relationship with social health conditions, and biological and mental issues. For this study, I further elaborate on the different understanding of biological citizenship to comprehend different individuals in Khayelitsha with its inherited geographic structures.

The meaning of ‘body’

We use water to support life and calm us when stressed. According to science, water provides sustenance to all living organisms, and without water, most life forms cannot survive; therefore, our bodies are almost 70% water. Yet, we undervalue water in our everyday lives.

Considering that water molecule (H₂O) contains only three atomic nuclei, one oxygen and two hydrogens. Astonishingly, water structure forms the basis for the body, a tiny, vital molecule yet capable of metamorphosis into an apocalyptic bodily function (Consigli, 2008: xiv).

For the past four decades, anthropologists have been rethinking the way we think about the body, challenging assumptions about the human body as a biological fact: “The body is a multilingual being. It speaks through its Auror and its temperature, the flush of recognition, the glow of love, the ash of pain, the heat of arousal, the coldness of non-conviction...it speaks through the leaping of the heart, the falling of the spirits, the pit at the centre, and rising hope” (Estes, 1992:219). Anthropology has invested theoretical attention to breaking down the binaries of mind/body, self/other, nature/culture.

In *The Mindful Body*, Scheper-Hughes and Lock (1987) propose a theory of embodiment that views the body “as simultaneously a physical and symbolic artefact, as both natural and culturally produced, and as securely anchored in a particular historical (and political) moment”. They argued that the body is a product of its environment. The body “knows”, and we “know” the world through our bodies. Lock (1993:133) contends that the body is understood phenomenologically. Changes in the characteristics of the body are widespread including cultural notions of beauty. In the words of Scheper-Hughes and Lock (1987:10), “society is inscribed on the expectant canvas of human flesh” and how perhaps it is socially (and increasingly technologically) mediated.

Thus, the lived bodies can be understood as “assemblages of practices, discourses, images, institutional arrangements and specific places and projects” (Lock, 2007:8) and recognising that “the body mediates all reflection and action upon the world”. As humans, our bodies are envelopes or containers for forms of consciousness that the external world has shaped, which, in turn, is shaped by our consciousness (Mauss, 1973; Bordieu, 1990; Butler, 1990). Nyamnjoh (2016:21) further put it as vehicles, containers, or envelopes; bodies are malleable, dismembered, remembered, and branded.

We shall see below how social conceptualisations of masculinity, manhood, femininity, or womanhood³⁴ are related to conditions of the body that are dependent on water. We will also see that incompleteness of water is a source of discomfort, pain, and a loss of dignity.

Water-related emotional distress in the body

The body in sickness is a specific form of incompleteness, and, in Khayelitsha, can be connected with the incompleteness of the inadequate access to water. There are various ways in which the incompleteness of water in Khayelitsha in relation to people's bodies causes emotional distress. Some participants expressed concern, fear, anger, and frustration over public taps' water quality (see narratives from Mrs Mvandaba and others). In most cases, residents in informal settings express the feeling of alienation, in relation to better water infrastructure in adjacent sections. For example, Siphokazi indicated that she felt angry because, in another section, residents have running water through communal taps.

All participants agreed that lack of water access and sanitation could be detrimental to health and cause sickness. Many also expressed anxiety and concern over the possibility of infection from water-borne disease. However, even in the current Covid-19 crisis, only a few participants routinely sanitised their hands and the water taps when they collected water. Mandaba (65), an elderly woman and sangoma from Makhaza explained: "Water from the tap is clean because it flows, but we do not know what people do in the absence of the other at the communal tap." Water is essential in maintaining people's health. As the human species, we need water, despite its increasing scarcity. The body occupies a place within the social environment. Water usage shows that people develop an interest and, sometimes, excitement in learning about their bodies.

In an informal interview held in September 2020 with Zuko (63), an older man from Empholweni described what happens in his body when he cannot defecate at night: 'I suffer from] the pain and control [of] defecation at night.'

³⁴ 'Masculinity' is used interchangeably with 'manhood', or 'femininity' with 'womanhood'.

Ubudoda: Man, ‘manhood’ and hygiene

The narrative of 26-year-old Mandla, born in the Eastern Cape is instructive:

“I often recalled being forced to continually take a shower by my mother because I was getting older, and my body was changing as an adolescent. My mother would say, ‘What makes a man clean and look good and earn respect is water, because the current habit of refusal to wash may affect your future relationships with people around you that include your marriage.’” (Interview in Ethembeni 03 October 2020).

There is scholarly work already discussing Mandla’s points relating to boys, dating in the neighbourhood or at school, and peer pressure. The study uses Mandla’s excerpt to accentuate the challenge and development of boys and how such development shapes the ideas of manhood, water and sexuality, and the choices of hygiene and body care. Mandla’s story sheds light on boys’ expectations about what it means to use water as a boy and expectations around what boys *should do* with girlfriends (‘cherries’). Here we see how water plays a pivotal role in boys’ sexual development and interaction with girls. What is pivotal in Mandla’s narrative is that his incompleteness in his puberty is mediated by water and the conviviality with his mother in this regard. This leads to mature relationships with himself as a man and with girls. What we can deduce from this excerpt is that incompleteness of water would lead to incompleteness in perceptions of manhood.

Mandla also reflected on his understandings of what constituted a man in the context of water:

“Growing up, I thought a man was someone clean, tidy and had children, a father. People would say ‘*Ngubhuti lowa* [that is a man]’, *bhuti*, but, while living in Cape Town, I had many questions lingering in my head. You would find that a man is old, maybe 45 years old, but you would find that *zange oluke* [he did not undergo traditional initiation], *yinkwenkwe* [he is a boy] and Xhosa. However, you will find that this person is a businessman or taxi owner and has many other things, but *akauhlambe umzimba wake* and *ununka amakwapha* [does not wash and smells under the armpit].” (Interview in Ethembeni, 03 October 2020).

Also, we see in the second excerpt from Mandla's narrative, that a man may reside under the delusion of completeness of masculinity – shared by others in his family and community– based on his material wealth and status. Yet, he is incomplete as a man both from the vantage point of his not having undergone initiation, as well as his lack of personal hygiene despite probably having more than sufficient access to water. Here it is worth picking out three critical takeaways from Mandla.

The first relates to Mandla's early perceptions of a 'man to water' as a father who understands water and hygiene. Here the study makes the case that beyond linking manhood to cleanness, Mandla importantly shows that young men from an early age are engaged in processes of critically thinking through what it means to be a 'man'; what one must do to become a man; what makes 'a man'; and importantly, who is *not* a man?

Secondly, Mandla brings attention to an essential detail in hygiene. Boys are not merely passively accepting what is perceived to make a man. From a young age, boys are thinking through observed realities of what they are told is 'a man' and critically thinking through various inconsistencies from observations independently made on water and hygiene. Mandla shows an evident tension reflecting on what he was *told* (idealistic) as a man versus what he *saw* (reality).

Lastly, Mandla observes his memory of manhood as tied to water, age, and, notably, class. Through Mandla's lens, class complicates masculinity because even where a man may not be hygiene-conscious and have not undergone initiation, because of their economic might their manhood is unquestionable. Mandla's experience and observation challenge this assertion in his context. Mandla's life history and the matters arising from it have shown the usefulness of the life history method in showing the internal and external forces that play a role in how people come into their being. Studies of water have mirrored socialisation theories that are often taken for granted – and unproblematically – that young people merely accept uncritically their socially prescribed identities top-down without contest, resistance, and interrogation. In the case of Khayelitsha, incompleteness through inadequate access to water would affect a man's perception of his manhood since he would be unable to maintain the standard of hygiene to mark him as a man.

This section focuses on Arabile's experience. It offers more understanding of the living condition and how changes in living conditions alter, for instance, men's conceptions of intimate relationships with water. Arabile's narrative is an effort to ethnographically tell us about young men's relationships with water, especially when living conditions are challenging. From the anthropological assumption that culture is learned and that one is not born with it, I asked Arabile what it is to be a man in an environment that provides little water. Arabile, who is a 26-year-old had lived in Site C, but moved to Social Distance – a newly occupied area – as an unemployed young man, reflects:

“I believed that I was a Xhosa [but] as Xhosas, we are different. If I had grown up in Social Distance³⁵ area and my mind started to form when I was there; I would not believe the things done here in Khayelitsha. I would have a different perception, but because my experience formed when I was in Site C, I saw the living situation here and thought that ‘*Yah, kukwam’Xhosa nyani apha* [this is the place of man]’. Here in Khayelitsha, if there are five of you in a shack, you sleep in the same room and most of the time on the same bed. A child from *elokishini* [township] like Khayelitsha is different from the one from the suburbs. The one from Khayelitsha knows that you get the water from the communal tap in a 25-litre container, either using *ikiriva* (wheelbarrow) or *kanye watwale enhlokolo* (carrying water on your head), whereas the one from the suburbs would not believe that because they do not know that; they think you get the water inside the house through a tap. So, I knew that I was a man, and I was sure of that. Anything that a man does, I never thought that ‘no, this is not familiar to me’. For example, I knew that to get to school, I would wash in a small basin and only walk into sewerage water, mud, and smelly streets and, on the way back from school, I defecated in the bush next to the N2 highway. I realised that I should get used to living close to shit to grow up walking in shit. During rains and cold winters, I used to walk in the cold and feel pain from the cold; [...] I knew that I had to light my paraffin heater or stove to cook or warm myself up while still struggling with unemployment. My body warms up, and I will be able to continue searching for food, sometimes standing on the corners of the streets or next to Mew Ways,³⁶ looking for a job. These things showed I am a man because life in Khayelitsha is hard, and this carrying of water, standing on the streets searching for work, is taught down to us from those who came before, on how strong a man is supposed to live. So, it is not fun for us to do any of this because we grew up seeing people doing that. (Interview in Social Distance 27 August 2020).

³⁵ A newly occupied area.

³⁶ It is one of the roads leading to Khayelitsha, from the N2 Highway.

The period described by Arabile defines being a man in Khayelitsha as marked by differences based on water access and the location one inhabits, which determine the concept of what is 'man' and the consequent experience of being on the margin. The informal settlement experience, for Arabile relates to the difficult days of walking in sewerage water in freezing winter and ways of surviving those times, such as using a paraffin stove, and standing on the N2 highway in the work search. Though I do not intend to compare Khayelitsha with affluent suburbs, Arabile perceives a young man, who grows up in an informal settlement, as distinct from those in the suburbs due to the various ways of water access. As he stated, in the informal settlements, one must collect water manually through a communal tap, tank, truck and sometimes in a wheelbarrow, whereas he finds people in the suburbs have easy access to running water inside their homes. In Arabile's view, the conditions under which one grows up shape the experience of being a man.

The conditions of living in health-hazardous environment areas, which Arabile observes, are preparing one for tough times and are also an essential part of passing on water history from one generation to the next on how to survive in severe conditions. For Arabile, what characterises a man in Khayelitsha is a sense of sharing and community, that is to say, his incompleteness as a man. In contrast, the experience of being a man in the more urban area is individualistic.

Mandla and Arabile's narratives challenge us to evaluate our level of acceptability and tolerability of one's predicament (Nyamnjoh, 2016: 21). Lack of or a limited amount of water, and behaviour under adverse circumstances has helped this study think of manhood in Khayelitsha in a context where the young men are dealing with unemployment and marginalisation. It was important to consider questions of meaning and motivation and not just the behaviour. With these young men, the study has found it helpful to look at what manhood means to the young men, how the young men understand it and interpret it, as most, who, as participants in the study, grew up in conditions of 'chronic unemployment and deprivation' from water access since childhood, and, with many, even to the present. In doing this, I challenge the scant attention given to how men cope in mostly unfavourable socio-economic circumstances, and how their relationships with water affect them. The study also chose to focus on the behaviour and practice of some of the women.

Women's bodies and water

This section explores women's ideas of water, body, and health, and also draws on the understanding of the embodiment of self. The narratives reveal women's struggles with water scarcity and highlight their strategies for self-care and self-fulfilment. I also argue that water is politicised and yet it has implications for feminine health care and traditional gender roles. I suggest that the fight against the Covid-19 pandemic has intensified water critiques and the expression of alternatives through the adversity of moments, personal care, and social and political change. Furthermore, water has provided, and continues to provide, a significant political force that challenges our body and public health practices.

Below, I share a conversation with two single mothers, Bongi (44) and Pasinya (36), who reside in formal houses.

Born in Gugulethu, Bongi moved to Khayelitsha at the age of five. An unemployed single mother, she uses a social grant as a means of income to sustain her family. Besides her four kids, Bongi shares her house with her aunt, and other family members push to nine people in one household. Bongi experienced a water cut just before the country went into lockdown, and she consulted the municipality, but it was fruitless. Bongi is currently without water during the lockdown and survives from a neighbour. Pasinya is a mother to three children who grew up in a formal house in Khayelitsha with her grandmother and children. According to her, in the early years of settling in Khayelitsha, the toilet and bathroom were outside in the backyard. The entire family could summon water from the kitchen, bathroom or outside the house. Six people occupied the house before her grandmother passed away. Below are responses from the same question asked on different days of the fieldwork. The question speaks about survival skills and water management considering unemployment status with children.

Bongi: "I do get child grant support for the little one. [...] Yea, we do have sink water inside and tap inside, but the problem is, they have changed our metre to a prepaid one because we could not afford the normal one. They now give us 350 litres per day. Bear in mind that there are also four kids: my aunt, sister, brother, and niece, so we are nine people, two men and the rest are female, and we must manage on those 350 litres. If you finish the 350 litres before the end of the day, you stay without water until the next day. Maybe when you have a funeral or some gathering, you must only go to the

municipal office and ask for another 350 litres for that time. After that, it goes back to normal. [...] Sometimes the water ends before the end of the day, and I must ask Zami, my neighbour, for water to wash my body [...], As a woman and a mother you know what I mean about hygiene.” (Interview in C-section, 18 July 2020).

Through her incompleteness Bongi mobilises her social capital to reach out to her neighbour Zami for water. She highlights/indicates the disparity between the household demands of water and the limited supply from the municipality. The demands are also attached to her being a woman and her role as a mother in relation to hygienic standards she has set for her households which she implies are universal.

However, it seems like the authorities are aware of the cultural practice around funerals and they are compelled to accommodate residents with water to fulfil this customary need.

Pasinya: “I depend on child support grants. Five years ago, when Cape Town started experiencing drought coupled with water [restrictions], the municipality sent people to install the water metre. The amount of water allocation was reduced to 350 litres a day; [...] but we would notice that around 10 am we do not have water until the following day. What we did was we would set up the alarm and wake up around 5 in the morning. When the alarm goes on, then we fill up our buckets of water, and if there is any left, we fill up the bathtub with water that will help to flush the toilet and do the laundry. The water in the bucket we will cook and wash with it.

No [...] sometimes there are little fights and tension at home because of the number of occupants, remember we are six in one household. My aunt misuses water and then does not want to go and fill it up. I sometimes take two buckets and hide them in my room to be able to wash my kids. One of my neighbours is working, so he is hardly at home during the day. Sometimes I would go to his house [...] I go to the backyard; my aunt will be ready with the buckets. I then give her the hosepipe and open the tap, and we will be sorted for that day. Another neighbour is an elderly lady; she lives alone and is blind. Luckily for her, she had a nephew working at the municipality. He came with his colleague and tampered with the metre box; now, she has water. It is a struggle[...] We also go to her to ask for water [...] we will put a bucket in a sink situated outside her house to collect the drops that come out of her tap.” (Interview in Makhaya, 27 March 2021).

There are similarities in Pasinya and Bongi's experience. Water cuts experienced by both provide them with creativity, and interconnectedness in finding solutions to the problem in order to attend to their daily needs, which is part of their everyday life. Both Pasinya and Bongi's incompleteness further enable them to reach out to their neighbour through conviviality as stipulated by Nyamnjoh (2015, 2017) to access water. In the case of Pasinya, incompleteness led her to rely on their ingenuity. The filling of the bucket with drops from her neighbours highlights the simplistic creativity and tenacity of living in a challenging environment. Pasinya's action relates to opportunism alluded to in chapter five. The other question is based on relying on neighbours for water to wash and how to deal with the Covid-19 pandemic and water. Bongi and Pasinya described how they managed their families' water situations, similar to the narratives presented in Chapter 4.

As a reminder, Bongi's water was cut, but they filled the bath from a dripping tap and apportioned what they collected for various purposes. Pasinya's family is in the same predicament. Their strategy is to transport their buckets in a wheelbarrow to the communal taps in the neighbouring squatter camp.

The depressed economic situation resulted in poverty, with many residents relying on social grants. Bongi and Pasinya's narratives on water have illuminated the experience residents are confronted with and vulnerabilities when accessing water and demonstrating creativity in dealing with water cuts. I use Bongi and Pasinya's narratives to stress the challenge or even failure of service delivery and how such failure shapes the ideas of incompleteness and the relationship with her neighbour. The city's response mechanisms have disproportionately affected the communities in these informal houses more than the formal houses. Application of the different modes of water distribution principle demands institutional reform and policy shifts to encourage the nation's effort to protect this fundamental right of the disenfranchised citizens. The city's political setting is challenging because party politics influence elections for public offices. It means that the informal settlements' residents do not have the support or the backing of major political parties. They are not represented fully in local, provincial, and national government, which leaves the informal settlements unaccounted for in policymaking processes that affect their access to water.

For this reason, this chapter has identified myriads of issues, but the main and concerning ones that came out of the empirical study are presented below. Driven by unequal water distribution and response to the limited nature of accessing water, the narratives show a growing interest in holistic body care. Despite the limited amount of water, women have the ability to control their bodies and monitor them through self-discipline, within the bounds of the limited amount of water.

Bongi, Ase (22) and Pasinya's experiences tell us that the body has its challenges and subjectivity. The residents expose the challenges of lacking water and its relation to the body. This relates to the hygiene-centred approach of women's body care. Despite their differing social statuses, women in this study desire to look after their bodies.

The central strategy noted, as alluded by Ase, is "listening to the body's needs, even in the absence of water" (interview in C-section, 27 March 2021). As mentioned above, I therefore examine the ideas of water, body and self-care constructed by women with a limited amount of water. I drew on their narratives about water. In understanding femininity, the chapter refers to structures and conditions that delimit being a woman in Khayelitsha and their lived reality.

Water as determinant of women's bodily lives

According to Michel Foucault (1982 cited in Blau, 2009), behaviour and norm are shaped by disciplinary power. Thus, women's use of water becomes the norm through their self-discipline also reflected in the use of communal taps by the community with limited chaos and confusion. Through incompleteness and self-discipline, the residents accommodate each other using the communal tap, leading to social cohesion (Kongo, 2019). Power relations and constant interaction tend to result in stable social relationships (Bourdieu, 1977; Foucault, 1982). The data revealed that women's relationships with water and the approach to the body involve the ongoing interpretation of their lived experience. The study notes that the emotions and stress experienced by Bongi, Pasinya and Ase are manifested/reflected in their predicament – uncertainty regarding water, insecurity due to outdoor sanitary facilities and anxiety during their menstruation. Ase's circumstances are further explored in a subsequent conversation where she highlighted the challenges of balancing personal and communal needs in relation to water.

A closer look at the women's understanding of bodies and water reveals a plurality of coexisting hygiene perspectives. These are underpinned by a notion of 'balance', which is conceived of in biology. However, they tend to maintain balance while adjusting to optimal circumstances for survival. In Khayelitsha, this balance is linked to incompleteness of water, which, through conviviality, leads to social relationships around access to, and collection of, water. These relationships provide support, which assist women in their survival and in maintaining their womanhood through hygiene. Others express the notion of balance through ideas about divine harmony.

They refer to conceptions such as "Divine Feminine" that are perceived to infuse bodies and the Universe, enabling spiritual union, interconnectedness, and harmony in all aspects of life. However, like Mandaba, others hold ideas about a close mind-body relationship. Interconnections between physical and emotional aspects of people's lives are underlined, and the importance of socio-cultural and economic environments and influences on hygiene and illness is acknowledged (for details, see Mandaba's narrative). Despite the multiplicity of understandings of 'balance' and their implications for conceptualising water bodies and body care, the notion of balance held by these women becomes the standard for action, as I sought to identify and understand the relationships they have with water.

This process of identification or understanding is grounded in experiential ways of knowing, whereby the bodies of individuals constitute the focus of attention, reflection, and insight for both women and body care. The study suggests that we can consider the individual body as a way of being-in-the-world that ties subjectivity to the specificities of the bodies, recognising that a person's subjectivity is conditioned by socio-cultural facts and the behaviour and expectations of others in ways that these women have not chosen. As noted earlier, traditional patterns of femininity and masculinity are critical to such conditioning.

How women understand water and the body illustrates both the centrality of lived embodied experiences in life and an understanding that we experience water in and through our bodies as embodied selves. In the first open discussion, the researcher encouraged women to talk about their water and bodies. Importantly though, their embodied experiences are rarely seen in isolation. They are explored in their variations: before or after menstruation, childbirth, and before or after sleep.

Thus, I listen to the detailed emotional, mental or spiritual experiences; manifestations of, and responses to, their circumstances and other embodied practices; and personal beliefs and values. These and other aspects were followed up in subsequent discussions to deepen our relationship. Many women disclose profoundly intimate details about their lives. Throughout these explorations, their bodies are present as a series of symptoms and experiences mediated by women's perspective and self-observations; and their embodied subjective constructions are constructed 'holistically' and perceived as evolving in individual lives.

Personal embodied experience as a source of knowledge about one's body and life engage with ideas about one's body. The study contends that, consistently, women train themselves to 'listen to their bodies' and 'to listen to [their] heart' as a way of understanding present life experiences or physical or emotional responses. They train themselves to engage with an interiority critical to self-discovery and self-knowledge while acknowledging that women know their bodies best and trust their judgement most. By attending to their bodies and lives, women communicate their ideas about their body's hygiene to their society.

During discussions, I critically engaged with discourses surrounding the materiality of water bodies and the socio-cultural ideas and norms that shape women's lives. The narratives reflect women's views of water bodies explored in the previous section and their commitments and worldviews. Women's discourses about their bodies and embodied experiences are regularly re/framed and re-interpreted by themselves. They are shown to resist the dominant descriptions of their bodily experiences that reflect negative cultural metaphors about women's bodies. Women's ways of enacting water to the self-counteract socio-cultural norms and expectations of women's traditional gender roles, and are associated with other-directed femininity. By taking care of their own, women's bodies and selves come into view as arenas for self-care, self-fulfilment, insight, agency, and transformation. Simultaneously, the self's practice can also slide into forms of disciplinary practices that regulate women's bodies, such as their size, shape or appearance, and reinforce normative femininity ideas. In her feedback, Ase comments: 'The limited amount of water has helped as it has forced me to monitor my health, body and when to collect water from communal water taps every day.' This ambiguity points towards a fine line between women using their bodies as a site for action and transformation or objects of discipline and normalisation.

In describing how women conceptualise and experience water and body and talk about, act on, and interact with body and self in women's practice, a complex and multifaceted picture of the body praxis emerges. Considerations of gender and subjectivity are critical to understanding the associated practices and processes in acknowledging that women's gendered existence is inscribed in their bodies. This chapter shapes ideas and practices concerning water and body care that bridge the body, self, and society in the complex realities of women's lives.

As used by women, water is inherently reflexive, considering biological, emotional, spiritual, social, cultural, and ecological contexts. The gendered body, a living experience, emerges as a source of highlighting tensions and dilemmas in women's lives. Women's engagement with water is associated with re/asserting the value of self and re/negotiating one's identity between living for others and living for oneself, alongside promoting women's autonomy.

By acting in ways consistent with ascriptions of subjectivity, which are traditionally conceptualised as feminine, women support the value of caring and reinstate the significance of relationality associated with representations of femininity. In doing so, they validate women's caring roles within a culture that can overlook such concerns. Thus, both embodied and social, water represents a form of holistic and politicised body care, which contributes to a culture of challenge where potentials for personal change are mobilised, dominant understandings of water and bodies; and body care practices are contested when new ideas and forms are experienced and practised.

Lack of indoor water and the hidden politics of defecation

Socially people learn the acceptable 'standard and exception norms'; they are not innate. As social beings, we learn how to defecate in 'dignified manners'. People who live in a state of powerlessness on the margins of society, probably have to learn how to do it differently within the uncertain environment of an incompleteness that is characterised by scarcity of water and crime (See Powell's powerful description of the act of having to use a bucket inside a shack at night in Chapter 1). This holds equally for people with a physical disability, illness, or old age. For all of these people there is the understanding that this is, in some way, different. It certainly is different from those more powerful, living in formal housing and enjoying more benefits from the municipality in terms of water, sanitation, and visibility.

The powerless find themselves to be invisible. When precarity becomes the norm with the challenge of water and sanitation, residents of Khayelitsha may have to adapt their practices to their environment. This learning to do defecation properly occurs over temporal trajectories, that of childhood learning throughout infancy and that of the historical progression to what some scholars may call “civilisation”.

Activities that once took place privately or semi-publicly increasingly become public acts; it becomes increasingly socially acceptable to relieve oneself within sight of others. Defecation and urination were reframed from intimate, personal acts to focus on the relationship between individual bodily practices, the nature of feeling, and the state.

Euphemism replaced direct reference as bodies and bodily functions became increasingly masked from others – and even from people themselves. For Schutte (2015), Jackson and Robins (2018), this process is a social hierarchy product, particularly among the South Africans, who sought to differentiate themselves from others, including bodily habits with water and sanitation. Following Bourdieu (1977, 2018) and Schutte (2015), Jackson and Robins (2018) identified habitus and practices consonant with the general values of that class’ habitus related specifically to excreta.

However, as water and sanitation infrastructure are lacking in terms of faecal disposal in Khayelitsha, which corresponds to the denial that the body could be productive of such a dirty/unbearable substance as faeces happened – faecal habitus has faded as a site of distinction. As sewer-connected, odour-minimising water closets are not a standard feature of all Khayelitsha houses – particularly for those informal houses without municipal service – shame, embarrassment and disgust, this habit – with its collective repulsion at faeces – came to be normalised. Due to the entanglement of the settlements and the resulting close proximity of different kinds of habitation, invisibility could no longer be easily practised. The shack dweller’s faecal habitus became a contested discourse across South Africa and the visibility of what was once invisible of the resident’s faecal habitus remains prevalent. Throughout the Covid-19 crisis, this discursive and sensory visibility nevertheless remains. It is brought to the fore in those situations where residents cannot comply with the unspoken, invisible rules that render excretion invisible, as in disability or infirmity.

In analysing people's narratives, the study reveals the challenges people face using bushes, open space to defecate, the bucket system, and accompanying incontinence. Siphokazi, Sipati, Mrs Mvandaba and a few others spoke of shame and embarrassment due to the shared and visible nature of something these residents had been socialised to experience as discreet and private. Similarly, Pheliswa and Mfundisi, in their narratives, highlighted how many residents around the area pass faeces and urine through an opening in the shared bedroom into a bucket; this way of releasing oneself or intervention negatively affects their intimate personal life, broader social life, and sense of self. For them, this threatened self is intimately linked to a condition of their biology and control over bodily boundaries, and consequently having that which should be intimate and private (the appearance, smells of defecation/urination) being experienced as public, whether by a spouse or children in a shack. In approaching the same matter from an older person's perspective, I note the multifaceted invisibility of body care rendered out of sight by focusing on senior privacy. As Zuko put it:

“You take someone who has been living with grandchildren. Then ask them about this question; they will say, ‘Our parents are wonderful.’... However, I think they would not talk about how we control our bowels. I think they will talk about other issues like food, water, but they will not talk so much about the pain and control [of] defecation at night.” (Interview in Empolweni, 18 September 2020).

Defecation is done by everyone regardless of your class, race, or gender (Schutte, 2015). What then is normal defecation practice? For residents, control of the evacuations of human waste requires both physical and emotional strength. However, what is relevant here is the residents' understanding of control as limiting bodily evacuations to socially appropriate times and places. Furthermore, understanding control relating to the uncomfortable experience where the inability to hold on constitutes a source of embarrassment and humiliation. An understanding of how one controls his or her bowel does not only relate to not conforming to the behaviour within socially prescribed places and times, as stated by the older man, but the ability to control the body's ability to defecate when one feels the need to. In the formal houses, excretion is private.

The narratives illustrate the expansion of digestive control beyond understanding correct bodily comportment within a modern faecal habitus, compromising success in containing action only within socially sanctioned times and places. However, for all this, the complexity in stories based on water access remains outside an expected register of body talk, the practices they depict outside the modern faecal habitus, and almost invisible.

Asina amanzi, the toilet at night? Oh, so fearful!

‘Eish, bro, we do it sometimes in the basin’, said Khosi (36). This comment by Khosi illustrates the change and the discipline of conditioning of the anatomy to defecate. There is a kind of conviviality with one’s own waste as a result of water scarcity. For those with toilets outside their homes, the story is one of the uncertainties around kidnapping or disappearances. No more did residents describe “defecating comfortably”. Instead, some residents generally responded to defecation questions uncomfortably. They say, once inside the shack, questions about excretion do not feel unusual or weird, invasive – “That is a very personal question!”, or merely uninteresting “I do not have a problem with that [going to the toilet], but my periods must not disturb me at night”, says Sipho (45). Digestion discourse had seemed to disappear; people no longer felt comfortable or talked about it – the modern faecal habitus held sway. The disappearance of talk is encapsulated in the “normality”, of “normal” bowel functioning in the early morning. However, some residents often use the word ‘normal’ and feel almost a dismissal, a request to move away from the topic. Asking what residents meant by “normal” reinforced the discomfort. Ted resides in a house with no water and sanitation infrastructure. When asked what she meant by going to the toilet “normally”, her detailed response was short, soon followed, with uncertainty on her face, by “I do not know.”

“I used to go to the toilet incredibly regularly when living with my aunt in a formal house and proximity to water and a flushing toilet. Since I have been living here in the shack for some time, I have become accustomed to not going out at night. Regular is a once-off-at-night sort of person, rather than a few times at night; I do not know” (Sipho. Interview in Site-B, 18 November 2020).

It may be uncomfortable to ask someone about their bowel movements; to answer, even more so. Nevertheless, while some are reluctant about this topic, others enjoy the opportunity to talk about a facet of their lives so profoundly hidden from public view.

So, too, with a lack of water sanitation, actively and continuously using open space, bushes, and communal toilets. Some maintained that their bowel movements have always been “fine” or ‘normal’, often hastening the interview to other less uncomfortable topics, while others happily talked on. Those who lived in formal houses were generally less keen to go into detail than those in informal housing. The narratives of those in informal houses, reflected not only in the experience of defecation but also in the talk about it. Perhaps it was unfair to push participants to explain what they meant by ‘norm’ - to find out about frequency and focus on the cultural invisibility of ‘normal’ defecation practice in an informal settlement. The combined analytical narratives show no single, standard, culturally normative formula for defecation in Khayelitsha. ‘Normal’, may differ; it can be anything from once at night or once every three days or three times a day. There are rules, or at least norms, about where to defecate –not in a public place, only in one's own toilet, and so on. Nevertheless, there are no rules (explicitly articulated or otherwise) about the frequency, which Ted (25) can identify. Consequently, there remains an existential uncertainty, sometimes resolved, sometimes not, for those lacking water and sanitation infrastructure.

My digestive system, bowel movement, and stuff did not take me time before it started getting back to normal, and even still, sometimes, it is not like how the most normal average person should be. I know how my body responds to the condition of not having water and a toilet close to me (Ted. Interview in Empholweni, 18 September 2020).

Sometimes, Ted remained uncertain about whether she was defecating ‘normally’. In measuring herself against ‘how the most normal average person should be’, it can be argued that Ted measured herself against those with excellent infrastructure with a firm grounding. However, this ‘normal’ Other cannot be understood and explained due to years of bodily practice resulting from the environment. However, no one is doing it, so to defecate ‘normally’ is a highly social process. It also requires an understanding of what is ‘normal’ for those seeking to re-establish ‘standard’ defecatory patterns.

Nevertheless, here the fear of crime at night comes up against a wall of silence, a collective reluctance to recognise these porous body parts which disobey them, whose recognition threatens the faecal habitus of these residents’ – men and women, all residents of the area. According to Ted, at least, what constitutes ‘normal’ defecatory practice in Khayelitsha is delaying the act until morning.

Something so private and personal as to be absent from polite conversation remains hidden from all of us but living in an environment with potential existential uncertainty for at least some of those learning to condition their bodies subjects them to live with the full range of profound changes in the body functioning in holding up excretion till the morning. It is not easy to separate the personal from the social as the view of holding up defecation in the night provides a powerful lens through which to view the challenge of lacking water infrastructure in Khayelitsha and faecal habitus in action.

The behaviour towards discretion and people's attitude toward excretion in Khayelitsha – with its historically disenfranchised communities – is reflected in the narratives from different settlements and finds expression here in narratives about going to the toilet at night with uncertainty. It is mirrored both in uncertainty about whether one is defecating 'normally' in a society where water is either absent or far from one's residence, and the uncertainty evident where crime is resolutely being rendered explicit and connected to residents' reluctance to go to the toilet at night for fear of being attacked. Those willing generally did so, while others could only do it in the early morning. Despite uncertainty about whether one was defecating normally or what it usually even meant, some of these residents became accustomed to the 'digestive control' and managed it well. In doing so, the experience of defecation and the digesting, defecating body become healthy, as emphasised by some residents. As it disappeared, residents, indeed, not only experienced the disappearance in the invisibility of defecation, but particularly in the talk – so central to the ubiquitous modern faecal habitus. This invisibility established itself so firmly that those who had provided graphic descriptions just a few months earlier now experienced and expressed the shame, embarrassment, and disgust distilled into today's modern faecal habitus (Schutte, 2015).



Figure 29: Potapota (portable toilet), waiting to be collected by municipal contractor in Site B (Photos by Minga, 3 December 2020).



Figure 30: Clean portable toilet at Siphokazi's shack (Photo by Minga, 3 December 2020).



Figure 31: Dumped potapota within the settlement (Photo by Minga 15 September 2020).

Water and Covid-19

Water, according to The World Health Organisation (WHO), was considered as the first line of defence against the Coronavirus. Standard operating procedure required people to wash their hands with soap and water as often as possible (for at least 20 seconds). However, communities in distressed areas have trouble accessing these most basic resources. Washing our hands frequently presupposed water was available to everyone. So, where does this leave the people living in the informal settlements, like Khayelitsha, who must walk distances to access this most basic need from communal water access points? Covid-19 has highlighted the challenges facing South Africa and will help fast-track the upgrading of infrastructure and the uninterrupted supply of good quality water and sanitation to all residing in the country.

Furthermore, it will force the municipalities and the Department of Human Settlements, Water and Sanitation to re-look at free essential water provision to its people and ensure that everyone has access to these most basic rights; also, to provide the necessary infrastructure for said provision.

The multiplicity of water usage

Water storage in 25-litre containers can be a health risk if not well preserved. Residents hang around the water tap for water collection used for drinking, cooking, personal hygiene, cleaning and washing, and business. While many residents do not have showers, some use buckets when bathing. Some share hot water using a 1.7-litre kettle. Residents' close to the communal water taps may use one 25-litre bucket or container to collect water, while those further away use two or more buckets of the same size to avoid frequenting the tap too often. Water is used in informal businesses, some for car-wash activities, mostly a male-dominated business. These men frequent the communal water tap several times to collect water. Women also use water for their businesses, like cleaning the inside of goats, sheep, or cows. Those who own hair salons also collect water for different uses.

The study finds that another challenge with drinking water in an informal settlement is how it is accessed, used, and stored. The incompleteness of water in informal houses presents difficulties, and it can also be manifested in the limited amount of water people collect daily. The same applies where water supply is cut off for non-payment in formal houses and water must be collected from elsewhere. Most households that access water from the communal water taps or are without a piped water connection, store water in large containers where it can be later used for household activities, such as cooking and drinking. The deterioration of water quality often occurs when individuals dip contaminated objects or hands into the containers exposing the body to the transmission of pathogenic elements to the stored water. Mrs. Mvandaba alluded that domestic water storage is also one of the primary contamination points, as clean water often becomes contaminated unnecessarily due to inappropriate practices in storage, as it is used and recycled for different purposes.

Improved water access, sanitation, and hygiene knowledge enable communities to avoid contamination of their water sources, improving water access and the overall effectiveness of hygiene interventions.

Washing hands primarily includes access to water and improved cleanliness by providing adequate infrastructure, education, and hygiene awareness. As such, washing hands requires access to clean water to avoid the faecal-oral transmission of germs by observing and improving the hygienic practices to reduce the risk of infections and further water contamination. Since the Covid-19 pandemic, washing hands at funerals or homes represents a genus of development rather than a specific replicable model. Although there are many general similarities, most washing modes are implemented differently, as they vary in households and environment. These methods have been developed from numerous families and applied differently throughout many regions, respecting changes in geographic and cultural needs. That said, most washing methods follow a similar design, which includes planning, implementation and, to varying extents, follow-up components; for example, communities like Khayelitsha, where there is the use of communal taps and constant open defecation, are often determined as a goal for implementation, followed by an emphasis on promoting awareness of improved sanitation and hygiene activities. The implementation consists of constructing new facilities to access clean water and for proper disposal of human waste, alongside promoting awareness and education of sanitation, such as the importance of handwashing and how to use the provided facilities.

I contend that some residents are self-trained, within the context of their awareness of their incompleteness, to use water facilities and educated about the importance of water and sanitation that may impact their health. They could teach other generations in the community but find it difficult to maintain new water facilities like a communal tap through lack of control. The study contends that facilitating washing hands during Covid-19 evolves as a new method to address the ongoing challenge of enabling people to access water and sanitation facilities and improve the long-term adoption of hygienic activities. For different reasons, encouraging informal settlement residents to adopt washing practices remains a consistent and considerable challenge due to lack of water infrastructure or water.

Furthermore, residents reflect that large sanitation practice numbers are problematic because the water supply and facility are generally accessed through communal taps, most of which are not maintained. The washing practices are often reduced to mere water access or latrine cleaning exercises, hygiene, and sanitation education. Robins (2014a, 2014b) provides an example of this type of failure experienced in the informal settlement community.

Khosi pointed out the lack of water and latrines when he moved into the area and argued that it was only Covid-19 that forced the government to install two water pipes and latrines for the selected area, with eighty-six water tanks to accommodate approximately two thousand households. This model is challenging because the residents in other new areas would have had the same expectation that latrines would be provided. Khosi states that communities do not understand installation, maintenance, and repairs costs and are not prepared to manage them. Once the infrastructure is built, and education is provided, the new healthy practices frequently fail to be widely adopted, and some community members often revert to old habits, including leaving the water running freely and breaking taps. Recurring informal settlement themes often indicate unused, misused, abandoned or broken facilities coinciding with the discontinued repair. Once the water facilities have been completed and implemented, the communities are left to manage and continue the practices, frequently conflicting with the residents' entrenched way of life.

During my fieldwork I noticed that water facilities are not being maintained against general wear and tear or, if necessary, replaced to ensure continued provision of the clean water conditions necessary for residents to continue with hygiene practices. Unfortunately, the water facilities provided through communal taps are commonly broken down, and evidence suggests that the municipality rarely chooses to repair them. Empirical evidence reveals that many communal taps in Khayelitsha are dysfunctional and require repairs. Lack of reporting these challenges presents a difficulty that renders it difficult for residents to access water and practise adequate hygiene. While public awareness of hygienic practices is almost non-existent, it is not helped by the status of communal taps, which, if they exist, are often in poor and unmaintained conditions, lacking the necessary water decontamination supplies. It is clear to me that hygiene practices are a challenging exercise with the above findings. Encouraging residents to adopt hygiene practices has always been a considerable challenge for public awareness.

Even though, during the Covid-19 lockdown, the South African government mobilised efforts to drive demand for water access improvements to avoid spreading the virus, it still struggles to provide clean water and sanitation facilities, which would encourage hygienic practices and increase attention to the importance of water and sanitation in these communities. Covid-19 has continually changed the way residents see, understand, and consume water, based on the assumption that it will be possible to achieve better results with a couple of adjustments. Conversely, the narratives above demonstrate that government efforts still fail to encourage the long-term adoption of improved water access. Instead, they appear to be perpetuating the same challenges without addressing the root causes of why the government is failing to achieve long-term water distribution.

When communal taps are introduced in a new settlement, a relatively stable social formation of collecting water from other nearby neighbourhoods already meets society's biological and psychological needs. It then follows that the patterns of the population's washing-related behaviours are met by resistance from other system components. In other words, individuals already have existing routines related to sanitation and hygiene supported by other long-standing components that satisfy their societal needs. Expecting the hygiene-related practices to be continued long-term does not consider the various interrelated components that encourage reversion to the previous activities. If the other supporting components of the social system remain unchanged, maintaining hygiene-related practices will be challenging. This line of thought is somewhat present in residents' narratives, possibly helping to contextualise why communities frequently revert to previous practices but are not made explicit in a social sense.

Conviviality is a way of life in this neighbourhood. Social relationships create and align the shared norms and beliefs with what is best for society. Many residents in these new areas share the same ideas, and what distinguishes the area one occupies is water infrastructure. I referred to this as 'collective value', representing the shared set of values resident's construct to respond to their survival needs predicaments. The relationships allow them to maintain and to define rules for social life. Similarly, Khosi argued that social order is attained through society's commitment to shared values by performing an integrating role between balancing the needs of water and other services while avoiding internal conflict.

He maintained that norms and beliefs become part of motivation through shared relationships with residents in their environment.

Khosi also said: “Our government has taken our lived reality for granted and fails to understand or engage us in understanding our reality”; in other words, to understand how one comes to know the reality, it is necessary to understand the predicaments of everyday life. The predicament of everyday life presents itself as the reality par excellence, which is taken for granted and organised around water. Open space in Khayelitsha allows people to realise how they can occupy and not observe any municipal demarcation. These open spaces then become translated back through the reality of everyday life, which is the need to own a house.

Open space presents a new reality to individuals who were previously unaware. Individuals then become confronted with deciding which land to occupy and which of their practices to continue, as is the case for most areas in and around Khayelitsha. There is a lack of understanding of the municipal demarcations, other than being identified as space for the land occupation, more opportunistic and, in some cases, more expensive than can be justified if evicted. Residents rely on the intellectual capacity to provide a social structure of their community. Within this context, residents organise their environment and create space for one another by distributing land among themselves. This cycle helps understand how a social relationship is sustained and becomes internalised by a community.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I looked closely at defecation and paid attention to those uncomfortable instances where people must release themselves with a limited amount of water. The silence surrounding these issues is critical to understanding what defecation in Khayelitsha means. It reminds residents that disappearance, which can be felt biologically, is necessarily social in nature and perceptual. The body does appear to come to the fore at moments of dysfunction, at least with defecation at night; residents describe those moments.

This chapter has examined the issue of water citizenship, the experience of water scarcity in relation to livelihood, and how water impacts one’s abilities to be an active citizen and the government's responsibility to provide adequate water supply.

CHAPTER 8 FINDINGS, CONCLUSION, REFLECTION AND RECOMMENDATION

Introduction

This chapter critically engages with findings and discussions presented in the empirical chapters. It illustrates how, within the incompleteness of access to water, people engage in conviviality and mobility as a strategy to enhance their life situations and better their lifestyles. In this process social relations are formed and reformed, which are catalysts to their transformation. The chapter includes my reflections on the study and ends with recommendations for further study. As stated in the introductory chapter, this ethnographic study sought to understand how residents of Khayelitsha perceive the reality of water and its relationship to their lives; how their identity and relationships are formed around water. To do this, I posed the following key research question:

What forms of social relationships does water afford for residents of Khayelitsha facing challenges with access to water?

The research question for this thesis forced me to see some of the most pressing water issues using an ethnographic approach which confirmed the importance of anthropological research, or fieldwork, as rooted in ethnography. This concluding chapter brings together everything I learned during the fieldwork and have written in the thesis to consider contemporary applications of anthropology in South Africa. The data support the argument that water is a substance that fosters relationships and suggest that people in Khayelitsha maintain an ideal of self-sufficiency with the limited amount of water they have, and can only partly fulfil this ideal, which speaks to incompleteness.

This research set out to examine the social relationships residents have around water and to challenge all of the theoretical assumptions about water access, inequality and water discourses, generally, in South Africa.

Working with the main conceptual framework of incompleteness, I have demonstrated how water, as a social good, mobilises social relations and how inequalities are related to access to water in Cape Town produced by inequitable development patterns.

In seeking to understand the dynamic of how the social relations identified in the thesis are formed through domestic water, I engaged the concepts of mobility and conviviality, marginality, and exclusion. I found a strong connection between conviviality and *ubuntu*. Briefly, incompleteness is the desire to enhance oneself in the quest for the ideal state of living one cherishes. Mobility, conviviality, marginality, and exclusion all play a central role in this journey. Conviviality can also be seen as encapsulating the social relations that exist within the social structures.

Water scarcity activates incompleteness in the lives of residents because of the ways in which it plays a central role in providing dignity. The incompleteness of the residents of Khayelitsha in relation to domestic water is reflected differently between those in informal housing and those in formal housing. The formal dwellers' incompleteness resides, not in their access to water, which is adequate and convenient for the most part, but in their superior and self-centred attitudes to those whose access to water is inconvenient, and often, dire. I am speaking here of the weakness of their conviviality in this respect. This is not to say that this condition applies to *all* in formal housing. The data show that some of them support their less fortunate neighbours and former tenants in accessing water and sanitation.

On the other hand, many residents in the informal settlements rely heavily on their conviviality with kin, clan, neighbours and, even in some cases, former landlords. This is largely because of the incompleteness within the relationship structure between them and the authorities. The unequal distribution of water between formal and informal settlements resides in the historical marginality forced upon the residents of informal areas on the fringes of society by colonial and apartheid governments, and, sadly, perpetuated by the democratic state. Participants in the study have expressed their feelings of otherness in this regard, particularly in the nature of their relationships with the municipality, which often amount to complete disregard for their wellbeing.

Where people live is defined in terms of their incompleteness in regard to water and the nature of their dwellings. Thus, there are the *Imbacu, amaQaba*. People activate their mobility, both physical and social, to navigate to conditions which they perceive to be an improvement on their current situations. Some of these turn out not to deliver on their hopes, and others do, as in moves from lower-status areas to better ones. These moves mark a progression from ‘outsider’ to ‘insider’, but also vice versa.

I must distinguish between residents of formal housing and those in informal housing, and how they experience water very differently. The former have water piped into their homes and/or onto their properties. The latter are forced to make do with relatively few communal taps, and water tanks and trucks, and some have none of the above in close proximity. So, the central issue is not water *per se*, but its scarcity and the manner in which it is accessed by different groups and individuals. Inequality of water access is pervasive in Khayelitsha, as I found in my research, and warrants highlighting here in all its forms. Furthermore, the different modes of access have resulted in social and economic hierarchies in the township, with people’s status dependent on their specific mode of access. The study presents four main findings regarding the water and social relationships in Khayelitsha.

How water, as a social good, mobilises social relations

The importance of water is its universality as a common good to a human’s survival. In Khayelitsha, water is accessed on a community basis, for the most part. So, how does this relate to the mobilisation of social relations? Firstly, on a basic level, there are the social relations that develop around the communal water access points, which may be either good or contested/challenging. Conviviality is prevalent in the groups that utilise these collection points, with supportive relationships among women, and also between different generations of women, where the elders guide the younger women in all kinds of issues and activities, within the sociality of their connections. On the whole, residents recognise water as a social and common good, and this motivates them to practise conviviality in the social relations around water collection.

This manifests in the disciplined behaviour and respect for other users who are collecting water, which is expressed through their patience with the one who is drawing water at the tap, tank or truck. On the other hand, there is the tension which arose when residents prevented those from other areas from accessing water at the tap which they regard as 'theirs'. For people with no access to water at home, such as in newly established areas and where people have been forced to relocate as a result of flooding or leaking sewerage, social relations with former neighbours and kin living in other areas are maintained, or new relationships are established with current neighbours. This also applies to people who have no shelter or have lost their shelter through eviction and/or demolition of their shacks.

Then there was the case of residents in formal housing attempting to form exploitative relations with people whose shacks had been demolished in the area alongside them. This entailed them trying to sell water to the homeless people and charging them to use the toilet. The illegal connections to the municipal pipes serving formal houses also created friction and negative relations from the part of the residents of these houses. These elements are considered when explaining the incompleteness of water and Africans in urban areas, particularly in Khayelitsha.

How the distribution of water produced inequality

Khayelitsha is situated in a complex socio-economic environment characterised by lack of well-established water infrastructure. Nevertheless, forms of accessing water has remained profoundly shaped by unequal distribution of water and the environmental circumstances, which together produced relationships/conviviality. The evolution of, and politics around, water within Khayelitsha is incomprehensible without understanding the phenomenon of being on the margin; having limited access to water, which is rooted in the lack of service delivery.

The data from this study show that many municipal officials do not understand and accept that what is 'real' from their perspective does not necessarily reflect the reality of the residents of informal settlements.

Unequal access to water in Khayelitsha is embedded and supported by apartheid-framed service delivery. The people in informal houses have access to water through communal tanks, taps, or trucks, which serve dozens of households. This means that it is easy for the water infrastructure to become damaged; yet the city's urgency in responding to such a problem is limited, in most cases, non-existent. Inequality is also present in this situation since restoration of water supply is much less efficient here than in the formal houses or suburbs. Contrary to this, the water cuts experienced in (paying) formal areas are far more frequent than anywhere else in informal areas of Khayelitsha. In general, however, residents of both areas explained that they felt that Khayelitsha as a whole area is targeted when reducing water pressure to the communal and indoor taps.

Furthermore, those settled in unauthorised areas of informal sections are treated in terms of informality and undesirability, which affects their access to water. The intersection of incompleteness and conviviality and social relationships theory emerged from the interactions of people pursuing similar interests. The data show that incompleteness and conviviality are not easily distinguished. I draw on my ethnographic data that perceived categorical incompleteness, conviviality, and marginality based on water access coincide with stereotypes and prejudice. Besides, there is a stigma attached to those living in settlements without water and sanitation, which, due to rezoning reasons, often lack adequate services and infrastructure and are not well integrated into the city's water distribution. But the lives of residents were in direct contradiction of convivial relationships, namely *amaQaba*, *eziMbacwini*, and *amaTyotyombeni* associated with the mode of water access. For example, how residents see themselves has a bearing on defining one's incompleteness.

Construction of economic hierarchies and the access to water

Khayelitsha has a diversity of housing units that cater to various people, namely, urban areas; formal houses, informal houses and eKasi. The social hierarchy progresses from *eziMbacwini*, *eMatyotyombeni*, RDP housing to *Ekasi*. In terms of access to water, these categories coincide with not having water at all, to communal taps, to piped water directly onto the property and, finally, to access to all services. The economic hierarchy mirrors the social hierarchy. Those at the bottom rung are the unemployed, who have no form of income except social grants for those who qualify.

In the next group there is a very low level of employment, but for the most part the people are in the same position. The groups at the top two rungs inhabit houses of brick, though RDP houses are smaller and simpler. Currently the residents are also bearing the brunt of the unemployment crisis. Those in eKasi are much grander and inhabited by the most affluent residents. Residents in Khayelitsha are aware of their incompleteness in terms of their social and economic status. They activate their incompleteness through mobility in the search for a better standard of living.

Residents of Khayelitsha are demanding recognition of differences set in historical, socio-economic injustices that have been ineffectively addressed. Furthermore, they contend that a political shift from common citizenship toward recognition of difference is a crisis that has brought an end to apartheid. Implying that unequal water distribution and different house types reproduce inequality if contestation is not applied to historical processes. Therefore, social hierarchy requires a broad understanding of the multiple influences that contribute to it. Understanding the historical knowledge of how water is distributed and produced also requires one to look outside the establishment for historical production and how this interacts with the production of formality and informality in the field. In contrast, water remains a powerful resource and can offer some valuable relationships.

How ideas are produced, reproduced, and contested concerning water

Firstly, there is the dichotomy between formal and informal spaces, which determines the degrees to which water is made accessible in the different areas. Geographies are social constructions that allocate space and notions of place to societal groups based on structural power and dominance hierarchies. The study suggests that the mode of water access and living conditions create a contested space that exposes the dynamics of inequality and the exclusion of their marginalisation as embodied by this symbol of the water truck and communal taps. Social hierarchy is multifaceted and requires a deep understanding of the social arrangements of any given geographic location. Social hierarchy inequality in Khayelitsha is a direct result of efforts not to alleviate poverty during the unequal water distribution or provide low-cost housing in urban spaces. However, unequal distribution of water and some housing projects follow the city outline model created by the apartheid state and reinforce segregation in racial terms and the distribution of natural resources and general

service delivery. Within the historical Non-White racial category, there are disparities on the grounds of *eziMbacwini*, *eMatyotyombeni*. At this time, the government is being challenged, characterised by insurgencies and uncertainty. The social hierarchy is part of the capitalist discourse that aims to impose who gets water and when, and its history, thus creating spaces that carry the influence of their heritage and cultural memory and power above water access, values, and standards. The unplanned consequences of the current settlement expansion gave rise to a considerable debate around social status.

There is a tendency to homogenise the various peoples who make up the category of residents in Khayelitsha. The separation of 'Black' and 'Coloured' residential areas follows the initial Afrikaner nationalist perception of non-white as rural and only meant to occupy the urban spaces temporarily as labourers. As a result, the residential stands in 'informal settlements' and townships are small and host poorly built houses with poor water infrastructure. In the instance where conventional residential disparities cannot thrive, the legacy of apartheid adopted by the current government has appointed social hierarchy as the primary means of differentiation.

Lastly, I showed the relationships between water and the body. People have ideas about their bodies, in terms of hygiene practices which impact on their perceptions of themselves as human beings, their self-images, their sexuality and their status as adults. Lack of water is a highly complex social phenomenon. I show how people's behaviour is constantly evolving in relation to the environment and behaviours of those around them. Thus, with the awareness of their incompleteness in this situation, they engage their conviviality and resilience in adapting to it and continuing to reproduce their ideas of good bodily hygiene.

How this thesis contributes to knowledge

The narratives presented in this thesis now function as new ethnographic data on the personal and domestic challenges of residents, who are primarily unemployed, self-employed and breadwinners, who had been forced to live in water-poor and unsanitary environments. The narratives are unique in that the respondents would not have described their plight under other circumstances, and therefore, no other collection of lived realities offers such an accurate picture of residents.

This ethnography provides new information about the formation of relationships around water by residents as a group and as individuals and the social dynamics within Khayelitsha. The thesis describes the challenge of inadequate water infrastructure in Khayelitsha that forces residents to resort to communal taps due to the limited municipal water supply. As stated before, these challenges are not unique to Khayelitsha; similar patterns of access to water are observed in other informal settlements. Therefore, there may be a possibility that the study may shed light on those cases.

The thesis adopted a narrative approach that allowed for the vivid description of residents' lived experiences. Using the concept of incompleteness, I attempted to highlight the marginalised nature of the community in Khayelitsha and their quest for visibility. The theoretical framework of the study draws from the concept of incompleteness and conviviality that are embedded in *ubuntu*. This enables a shift from individualistic to collective epistemologies hence allowing for representation of experiences by marginalised people.

Concluding remarks

The objective of this study was to examine the ways in which access to water forges the formation of social relationships in Khayelitsha. Incompleteness and conviviality are central to the processes that lead to social relationships being formed, whether harmonious or not. Residents value their ideal conception of what their lives should be. They recognise their incompleteness in relation to adequate water supply to achieve their ideal. Access to water determines both social and economic hierarchies in Khayelitsha. Navigating access to water results in numerous relationships based on *ubuntu* in the conviviality that exists among residents, although this is not the case in a few instances. More research is needed to unravel the complexity that exists in the dichotomy between the formal and informal areas, and within the various informal areas in Khayelitsha, and cast further light on the inequalities that are embedded in the distribution of water to the various areas.

Reflection

Walking around Khayelitsha, week after week, taught me what to see, touch, hear and name. Presenting Khayelitsha in a different light was challenging, more like riding a bicycle through the bush. I liken the latter two different ways in which I was able to see through the eyes of Khayelitsha residents during the covid-19 lockdown and life without water. The collection of narratives was done during the lockdown, a difficult time. The respondents, of whom the majority were women, are frustrated by their predicaments of living in proximity to an unsanitary environment with a limited amount of water. To bring the contents of these narratives into the public realm, as I try to in this thesis, is to assert that the water challenges and the residents' fortitude and strategies to navigate a dignified livelihood deserve attention. As an outsider and black male academic collecting data from women and writing during the lockdown, my position as a scholar on these narratives may be limited.

I do not pretend that I have first-hand access to the circumstances that the residents experience, particularly women, and depict their living conditions, which I never endured as a man and outsider. This 'outsiderness' might affect the response of any scholar or author who attempts to frame and present the data, though not to the same degree in all cases. I was constantly engaged in reflexivity and conscious of my positionality as an outsider in Khayelitsha. It cannot be argued that I am 'speaking for' the women from whose narratives I present extracts. Nevertheless, I am influencing their perception by selecting, providing a context (though that context is primarily a lived experience) and interpreting the narratives. My subject matter consists of narratives in which women, for the most part, reveal their experiences to an outsider man making explicit their challenges to discuss their lived realities and, at times, their intention to deepen and personalise the relationships with me. I claim that my view and interpretation of the narratives have the validity of an outsider's understanding.

I was intrigued by a range of challenges. How do different ideas about water access and sanitation play out in residents' everyday lives? Are children and babies safe from the open drains and uncollected refuse? On other days the wind moved in, bits of plastic flew into the sky on gusts of south-easterly winds, and sand waste from burnt shacks entered my eyes. I walked around the area like an insect on the edge of shacks.

Keeping observing was the focus. After a long time, my olfactory sense of everything from meat to the sewerage rises from nowhere. Most importantly, many small pathways take me past the back of and sometimes the front of people's shacks and their families. Next to those shacks are public toilets with a communal tap that feeds over a thousand residents in the area.

Recommendation for further research

In South Africa, townships are areas where formal and informal living arrangements are produced and reproduced with a kind of settlement affordable and accessible to the poor, where challenges for municipal service delivery are prominent. Mobility of people from one area to the area in an urban setting is not a new phenomenon; much of this urban growth is taking place in Khayelitsha and within different areas. Mobility has been part of the history of Khayelitsha, particularly in the early years of its inception, but it has become more intense during the current period of the lockdown forced by Covid-19. As a result of the vast growth in urban population coupled with unequal water distribution in Khayelitsha, stresses are placed on water, with massive water shortages occurring. The problem is worsened because many residents are generally unemployed and cannot afford water. Besides the population growth and water stress, Khayelitsha has become a breeding ground for incompleteness which enriches residents to cultivate conviviality to access their basic needs.

This study suggests that water challenges occur due to many factors such as apartheid, racial planning, and economic challenges; paramount is that poor populations cannot pay for water. Some newly occupied areas face a particular problem, flooded sewage, which some residents call the 'liquid shit'. Land occupation in Khayelitsha relates to socio-economic forces inherent in the post-apartheid city and the complex interplay of forces historically directed at maintaining inequality. That process has resulted in categories of people being significantly disadvantaged. Part of that disadvantage has included neglect in providing water for areas classified by the government as unauthorised and illegal to settle.

The study contends that there are two main reasons that Townships develop: population growth and inadequacy in governance. Khayelitsha is urbanising rapidly as more people migrate from the Eastern Cape and other parts of South Africa to different settlements. Today, more people live in unauthorised areas. The study argues that the alteration of neighbourhoods in Khayelitsha is mediated through the extent to which local populations can participate in the

resignification and valorisation of their communities primarily through conviviality involved in the reconstruction of their space and its survivorship.

The study further contends that governments have failed to recognise the rights of those on the margin and urban poor and incorporate them into urban planning, thereby contributing to the growth of its expansion. The City of Cape Town cannot respond to the rapid mushrooming of shacks quickly enough. Mobility of people into the city is far faster than the planning process can incorporate them. Often, residents find land and build a shack before the government is aware of their existence. Government responsibility towards urbanisation is also an important component. The South African governments, particularly the Western Cape, take a different approach to urbanisation. They believe providing urban services to the poor will attract urbanisation and cause shack expansion. The view is that very few people come to the city other than for resources like water and searching for a better life. In many cases, governments take a more passive approach to urbanisation. They either do not have the planning capacity to deal with the rapid urbanisation particularly during the lockdowns, or the tools in place are not sufficiently responsive to the reality on the ground.

This study points to the need to expand research on water and social relationships around communal water access in African countries. The study uses ethnographic research to obtain empirical data that provides reliable knowledge of any phenomenon (Bernard, 2006). This study intends to offer scholarship insights on relations between water and social relationships though the study sample does not reflect a typical marginal population as expressed by scholar Perlman (1976), whom I refer to in Chapter two. However, the study addresses the formation of social relationships around municipal water in Khayelitsha using incompleteness as a framework that remains an under-conceptualised that renders it marginal from an academic perspective. The lack of knowledge around Khayelitsha contributes to its perceived marginality as there is not enough empirical data to prove otherwise, but I digress. Empirical data on the social relationship around communal water, incompleteness and conviviality might help to change the current profiles of Khayelitsha.

While there are many reasons for dissatisfaction around the use of municipal water through communal standpipes, particularly as the growing demand for water access does appear to be a challenge, it is crucial to consider that water access in informal settlements does not always positively impact users in developing countries, particularly in South Africa. There is too much discontentment with service delivery in Khayelitsha, which has caused residents to protest and

neglect the reality that authorities do not supply complete solutions to more significant development challenges.

Further research should be undertaken to understand social relationships around communal standpipes and assess the potential of water devices, particularly in an African context where lack of empirical data has meant that the euphoria around municipal water has neglected an in-depth evaluation and understanding of conviviality among populations on the continent.

Furthermore, existing gaps in scholarship on theorising and conceptualising the formation of social relationships around municipal water access through communal standpipes and society should be addressed with new focuses on social relationships – drawing out the sometimes complicated yet taken for granted relationships forge though incompletes and conviviality. For example, people’s relationship with water portrays a lone yet far from the unique experience of love and hate with water device technology, ultimately showing some of the ways residents are affected physically and emotionally because of water cuts. Residents in this study also contribute to the variety of ways that water usage is controlled by technological devices that render livelihood difficult. The time that they cannot afford to pay for water increases their mobility within the different settlements in search of water can create oscillating movements between social inclusion and exclusion. Sometimes governments think that adopting alternative policies, such as shack demolition, focusing on rural development, will stop the mushrooming of informal settlements. This approach is ineffective.

A few basic things a government can do to prevent the challenge of water, toilet, and land occupation from occurring. One is to recognise that mobility and urbanisation cannot be stopped. Governments should understand the reality of incompleteness, they may plan for it and determine where the new residential area will be allocated because once people settle on either authorised or unauthorised land and feel entitled to live there, they will begin investing in it. Over time, the area will be upgraded by residents incrementally.

In conclusion, the study suggests a need to review the “single story” (Adichie, 2009) regarding Khayelitsha. While there are positive and negative characteristics of Khayelitsha life, this is correct for any social environment. It is problematic to blindly accept the marginality of any specific informal settlement, grounding this perception on, among other things, stereotypes without empirical information.

This study evidences the lived realities of Khayelitsha residents and argue that stereotypes, in general, may be done away with in favour of similar studies that would reveal more accurate and credible knowledge around water access and a population or a particular phenomenon. Furthermore, the urge to investigate the notion of incompletes beyond its surface definition is essential to understanding and offering insight into the nuanced and complex realities where conviviality is cultivated.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Meet the Participants

Table 1: The participants

		Location and house type	Interview date	Marital status	Sex	Age	Place of birth	Moved to Khayelitsha	Moved into a new area	Mode of water access	Mode of defecation
1	Pheliswa	Site-B/brick house	19 April 2019	S	F	27	Eastern Cape	1985	-	Communal tap	Communal toilet
2	Bongi	C-section/brick house	18 July 2020	S	F	44	Gugulethu	1985	-	Indoor	Indoor
3	Mr. Mvandaba	Emsindweni/shack	19 August /March 2020-2021	M	F	34	Eastern Cape	2018	2018	Tank/Communal tap	Communal toilet
4	Tim	Ethembeni/ Shack	28 July 2020	S	M	36	Eastern Cape	2003	2020	Truck	Communal toilet and bush
5	Lindela	Ethembeni/ Shack	28 July 2020	S	M	54	Eastern Cape	2000	2020	Truck/communal tap	Communal toilet and bush
6	Sipati	Ethembeni/ Shack	28 July 2020	S	F	29	Khayelitsha	1991	2020	Truck	Communal toilet and bush
7	Azile	Phola Land/ Shack	28 July 2020	M	F	36	Eastern Cape	2006	2020	Communal tap	Dug hole and bush
8	Bongani	Phola Land Shack	28 July 2020	M	M	39	Eastern Cape	2006	2020	Communal tap	Dug hole and bush
9	Siphokazi	Taiwan -Site-C/shack	14 September 2020	M	F	29	Eastern Cape	2009	-	Truck/Communal tap	Personal toilet /potapota
10	Nomfundiso	Ethembeni/ Shack	14 September 2020/2021	M	F	36	Eastern Cape	2013	2020	Truck	Communal toilet/ and bush
11	Mpumi/Mandaba	Makhaza Brick house	23 October 2020	M	F	65	Eastern Cape	2001	-	Indoor	Indoor
12	Selwa	Site-B/ Brick house	19 April 2019	S	F	27	Khayelitsha	1992	-	Pipe in yard	Personal toilet
13	Lungisani	BM /France Section/shack	21 September 2020	S	M	43	Eastern Cape	2001	-	Communal tap	Shared latrine /Mjengu
14	Zuko	Empolweni	20 September 2020	S	F	63	Eastern Cape	2008	2017	Tank	Shared latrine /Mjengu
15	Bongani/Ch	Ezwezwe/ Shack	21 September 2020	M	M	30	Eastern Cape	2003	2020	Communal pipe	
16	Njabulo/ Ndooyisile	Makhaza/ Shack	18 October 2020	S	M	30	Khayelitsha	2008	2020	Communal tap	Communal toilet
17	Khosi	Emsindweni/shack	August 19 /March 2020-2021	M	M	36	Eastern Cape	2000	2018	Tank/Communal tap	Shared Mjengu
18	Siphokazito	Makhaza/ Brick house	23 September 2020	S	F	48	Queenstown	1991	-	Indoor tap	Indoor toilet
19	Sibongile	New dawn/ Shack	December 2020	M	F	36	Eastern Cape		2020	Municipal pipe	Dug hole in yard /neighbour
20	Busiswa	Site-B/shack	09 December 2020	S	F	49	Eastern Cape			Communal tap	Communal toilet
21	Siviwe	Enkanini/ Shack	01 October 2020	S	F	29	Eastern Cape	2012	2020	Communal tap	Communal toilet
22	Sipho	Site-B/shack	18 November 2020	S	M	45	Eastern Cape	2011	-	Communal tap	Communal toilet

23	Zoleka	Site-B/brick house	27 October 2020	S	F	54	Eastern Cape	1985	-	Communal tap	In yard toilet
24	Noluntu	Covid-19/ Shack	19 September 2020	S	F	47	Eastern Cape		2020	Communal tap	Dug hole in the yard/bush
25	Mandla	Ethembeni/ Shack	03 October 2020	S	M	26	Eastern Cape		2020	Truck/Communal tap	Communal toilet /bush
26	Fezeka	Enkanini/ Shack	09 December 2020	S	F	31	Gugulethu		2017	Communal tap	Communal toilet
27	Mam' Sithole	Enkanini/ Shack	29 September 2020	M	F		Pretoria	2000	2014	Communal tap	Communal toilet
28	Mbulelo	BM/shack	15 September 2020	S	F	38	Eastern Cape		2010	Communal tap	Communal toilet
29	Arabile	Social Distance/ Shack	27 August 2020	S	M	26	Eastern Cape		2020	Indoor/C section	Dug hole/ neighbour in door
30	Ase	C-section/shack	27 March 2021	S	F	22	Khayelitsha	1999	-	Indoor/C section	Private toilet
31	Mfundisi	Empholweni/ Shack	01 October/February 2020/2021	M	M	32	Eastern Cape	2010	2019	Communal tanks/taps	Communal toilet
32	Ma Mkhulu	Empholweni/ Shack	01 October/February 2020/2021	M	F	29	Eastern Cape	2010	2019	Communal tanks/taps	Communal toilet
33	Ted	Empholweni/ Shack	18 September 2020	S	M	25	Eastern Cape	1997	2019	Communal tanks/taps	Communal toilet
34	Pasinya	Khaya/brick house	27 March 2021	S	F	36	Gugulethu	1988	-	Indoor	Private toilet
35	Nomzamo	Site-B/ Brick house	30 September 2019	M	M	54	Eastern Cape	2000	-	Indoor	Communal toilet
36	Dabawo	Site-B/shack	30 September 2019	M	F	52	Eastern Cape	2000	-	Communal taps	Communal toilet
37	Asakhe	Site-B/shack	30 September 2019	S	F	19	Khayelitsha	2000	-	Indoor	Private toilet
38	Bhutana	Site-B/ Brick house	30 September 2019	M	M	59	Eastern Cape	1999	-	Indoor	Private toilet
39	Nomfundo	Site-B/ Brick house	30 September 2019	S	F	19	Khayelitsha	2000	-	Indoor	Private
40	Ta Bhiza	Site-B/shack	10 September 2020	M	M	49	Eastern Cape	2006	-	Communal taps	Communal toilet
41	TaZuks	Site-C/ Brick house	09 June 2020	S	M	44	Eastern Cape	2000	-	Indoor	Private
42	Radebe	Covid-19	09 September 2020	M	M	32	Eastern Cape	2010	2020	Communal pipe	Bush

Comments: Table developed by author from information obtained from the fieldwork. The pseudo names reflecting in the table are not classified in alphabetic order. These residents are from different settlement, classified by the interview date, age, sex, marital status, place of birth, time relocate to the settlement, mode of water access and defecation strategy.

Appendix 2: Notes on the usage of capital letter in isiXhosa

The use of capital letters in the IsiXhosa language comes in many forms. When the word is not a plural/does not have a plural, additional words are added that act like prefixes, e.g., *amaBhokobhoko* (the national rugby team, The Springboks). The word 'ama' acts as a sort of prefix to make a plural in some IsiXhosa words hence why it is put in lowercase than the actual word is in uppercase. 'ama' is not the only word. There are others, too, like 'ezi' and 'Ii' (the use of the double letter I in the IsiXhosa language is also meant to create a plural and the whole pronunciation of the word. An excellent example is the words *iMbacu* and *IiMbacu*, with *iMbacu* being singular and *IiMbacu* being plural with an additional 'I'.

The variety of the word *iMbacu* can be used to identify a person or the premises they inhabit (*imbacu*). Hence, when describing a person, a capital letter should be used to ascertain the difference between calling a living person *iMbacu* or their house *imbacu*. The words in brackets are not given the uppercase title unless it describes a person, e.g. (*iMbacu/iQaba/iQoboca*); these three words are used to describe people. Hence, they are excused, given the right titular, and used the uppercase.

IiMbacu is a plural of *iMbacu* it can also adopt the 'ama' phrase just like other words creating a new plural to the word *iMbacu*, which is *amaBhacu* (see how once again the actual word keeps its uppercase form and the 'ama' stays in lowercase because it is added to create a plural form of the word). Also, capital letters can be included midway through the sentence, e.g., *amaTyotyombe/ emaTyotyombeni*. It is the same case as before, with additional words needed to create a plural version of it.