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Spaces of contestation: The everyday experiences of ten African migrants in Cape Town

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COMPULSORY DECLARATION

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work, or works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

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¹ The names of the narrators have been changed in order to keep their identity anonymous.

² Psydoname.

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Abstract

Xenophobia in South Africa is so overt that it has taken a covert form. The 'xenocide' events that took place in 2008 were called xenophobic acts. It is the recurrent denialism of xenophobia on an everyday basis that this project has explored through the narrative accounts of ten African migrants in Cape Town. The lived everyday experiences of ten African migrants have brought forward the central argument of this thesis. From the data, it is evident that as a response to everyday pressures of prejudice and xenophobia in social and physical spaces, African migrants have developed mutable, unsettled and vagrant identities in order to cope with everyday low level violence. This argument emerged as four key stressors have been identified as the components of a more substantial explanation of xenophobia in South Africa. The four key components are: the enforcement of identity (national and group), the demarcation of spaces of belonging, the experiences of economic insecurity, and lastly a 'culture of violence' in South Africa. This thesis argues that these four stressors are the result of an on-going active process of xenophobic attitudes. In order to better understand prejudice and discrimination directed at African nationals', literature on xenophobia needs to move away from explanation solely based on nationalism and identity politics, and or as result of hostile immigration policies and citizenship discourse.

Chapter 1

Introduction

“I sincerely believe that a subjective experience can be understood by all, and I dislike having to say that the black problem is my problem, and my problem alone, and then set out to study it” (Fanon, 2008: 67).

Frantz Fanon’s postulation concerning subjective experiences as a reflection of deep collective problems, encapsulates the importance of this study. Fanon’s analysis has inspired the methodological framework for this project, as the aim of this study is to bring forward the experiences of ten African nationals in an exploration of everyday prejudice and discrimination. In an attempt to go in the opposite direction of the majority studies on xenophobia and discrimination in South Africa, this project is founded on the narrative accounts of subjective experiences.

In order to understand the lived experiences of ten African migrants in Cape Town, the following questions were posed:

- What are the everyday experiences of African migrants in working class positions (working class in South Africa, not necessarily in country of origin) of commonplace prejudice and discrimination?
- How does everyday prejudice and discrimination manifest in the lives of the respondents?
- What effect does everyday prejudice and discrimination have on their lives?
- What are their responses to everyday prejudice and discrimination?

This study is an effort to debunk the widely held notion that xenophobia in South Africa is a case of ‘negrophobia’, ‘afrophobia’ or ‘black on black violence’ as a consequence of nationalism and identity politics, or a result of antagonistic immigration policies and citizenship discourse. Instead, this project, based on the data gathered, argues that the everyday violence, prejudice and discrimination directed at African migrants are better understood in the context of a multitude of social stressors. Four main stressors have been identified as *the key* components exacerbating and reinforcing xenophobic attitudes. The four stressors are: (1) the enforcement of identity, (2) the demarcation of spaces of belonging, (3)

the experiences of economic insecurity, and lastly, (4) the ‘culture of violence’ in South Africa. The four stressors emerge out of an active process.

I will start by outlining the literature applicable to the study, highlighting the relevant theories. In order to adequately explain the formation of migrant identities as a response and tactics of survival to everyday pressures, fear, social and physical exclusion, I argue that African migrants in urban settings in Cape Town rely on mutable, unsettled and vagrant identities in order to take control over their marginalised social position.

From the Literature Review chapter, I move on to discussing the methodological approach and the theories that are employed in this thesis. A small sample population (ten narrators) will be reviewed, with emphasis on the vast amount of data collected despite the small sample, as a result of time constraint.

In the next chapter, Setting the Scene, underlying structural and contextual information will be outlined in order to provide a background for the findings (Position of the Data chapter), and establishing gaps identified in the literature. In the chapter, Position of the Data, I will briefly provide biographies of the ten participants, and the emerging themes from the narratives. I will then move on to the Analytical Discussion, before ending with a conclusion and some future recommendations.

In the aim of being reflexive, it is useful to note that this research does have a number of limitations; firstly the sample population and the findings cannot be said to be entirely representative of the experiences of all African migrants in Cape Town. The aim, however, has not been to universalise the subjective experiences of ten generous migrants who have shared their stories, but rather, to highlight their individual stories with specific focus on their lived experiences. Additionally, time has been another limiting factor in further enhancing the findings. Thirdly, my own background as a refugee necessarily informs my own inescapable perceptions and emotions with regards to the narrators and their experiences. Fourthly, my social position as a middle class young female has unquestionably led to certain interviewer bias.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

“You have been brought up in other surroundings and you will never understand the inflexibility in Jante Law. You will laugh at it and you will never understand its killing pressure on the working class boy in Jante. But the ten commandments in Jante Law holds Jante Jante down. Here you will hear them:

Jante Law

1. Don't think you're anything special.
2. Don't think you're as good as us.
3. Don't think you're smarter than us.
4. Don't convince yourself that you're better than us.
5. Don't think you know more than us.
6. Don't think you are more important than us.
7. Don't think you are good at anything.
8. Don't laugh at us.
9. Don't think anyone cares about you.
10. Don't think you can teach us anything”

(Aksel Sandemose, 1933: 56).

In 1933, the Danish-Norwegian author, Aksel Sandemose wrote the novel *A fugitive crosses his tracks*³. This story has become a representation, a metaphor in Norway and Denmark, of covert social norms that guides the interplay between locals and foreigners. Not only does the novel outline the rules of interaction between these two factions, but the novel also highlights the experiences of living under the ten commandments of Jante Law. Sandemose’s famous concept, Jante Law, illustrates the way in which individual autonomy and hope is inhibited through collective action. *A fugitive crosses his tracks* highlights how those who have not experienced the rule of Jante Law, such as the locals, cannot comprehend its quashing effect on the ‘other’, its gravity on the individual and absence of possibilities.

Through the narrative, *A fugitive crosses his tracks* speaks to the laws that many communities and societies construct in order to maintain boundaries of belonging. Sandemose effectively

³*En flyktning krysser sitt spor*, Original title.

delineates the symbolic rules of social conformity where little identity space is left for individuality or diversity. This is captured through Sandemose's account of the hostile attitudes locals hold towards new-comers. Through portraying the undesired presence of outsiders in closed off communities, Sandemose emphasises the unwantedness of foreigners in host communities. Through Jante Law, the 'other' is constructed and identified through symbols, language and legal frameworks that govern social and physical space. It is through such laws that the 'other' - the stranger - is told who she or he is, within the new community. Once the 'other' is labelled and the social boundaries are emplaced, everyday rituals may begin.

In a time of unprecedented human mobility, Jante Law has accelerated in the disguise of prejudice, discrimination, racism and xenophobia. Across the world, the number of migrants is growing. From the conducted interviews, the lived experiences of ten African migrants⁴ in Cape Town and their stories reflect how new forms of 'othering', beyond racial distinctions, have begun to emerge within post-apartheid South African society. Despite their efforts to fit into their new host communities, the narratives of the African migrants, in many ways, signal the presence of Jante Law. "Don't think you are anything special" and "don't think anyone cares about you" are phrases that are part of the everyday message communicated to African migrants. When Lodi, a Congolese refugee, had sustained gunshot wounds as a result of a violent xenophobic attack, the police and hospital staff were not interested in helping him because he is a *kwerekwere*⁵. By refusing emergency assistance to African nationals, the message "Don't think you are important" is clearly communicated through the exclusion of access to services such as protection by the law and emergency health care.

These kinds of experiences have been theorised by Fanon, who said "There is a psychological phenomenon that consists in believing the world will open up as borders are broken down" (2008: 5). Indeed, this is still a widely held belief. This notion speaks to Castles' (2008a) categorisation of the world population: 'the welcomed group' and the 'unwelcomed group'. The world is open to those in the former group. But, for the latter group, the world remains closed despite the openness of its borders. This postulation is evident in the world-wide

⁴ In this text, African migrants, i.e non-South African African migrants will be referred to as 'African nationals'. African migrants can often be contextually misunderstood as referring to South African African migrants. Thus in order to avoid any confusion as to whether or not the text refers to domestic migrants or not, African nationals is deemed suitable. Lastly, the term African migrants when referring to non-South African African migrants contains negative connotations bearing with it exclusionary South African state practices and discourse.

⁵ Apparently a new term has emerged recently, as a replacement for *amakwerekwere*. The new term is *Ligweja*. This term has emerged in response to exclude African migrants, when speaking about them, without their knowledge.

tightening of policy on immigrants, refugees, asylum seekers, and internally displaced persons (Idp's) (Bauman 2000; Sivanandan, 2001; Appadurai, 2006). Fanon's notion is somewhat crystallised with the understanding that globalisation means different things to different groups. Mobility, the movement of skilled professionals and the affluent classes, is perceived as having positive connotations, while migration, referring to the movement of unskilled and semi-skilled workers, Idp's, refugees and asylum seekers, is a pejorative term in global politics (Bauman, 2000; Sivanandan, 2001; Appadurai, 2006; Castles, 2008a; Castles, 2008b; Peberdy, 2009).

Despite optimistic interpretations of globalisation, little appears to have changed in the lived experiences of migrants since John Berger and John Mohr (1975) documented migrant workers' lived experiences in Europe in the 1970s in *A Seventh Man*. The story showcases certain common experiences of migrancy and alienation. The narratives of the African migrants whom I conducted interviews with bear the same hallmarks of alienation, inferior status, invisibility, exploitation and exclusion that Berger had captured.

There are similarities between the attitudes and perceptions held by Europeans in Berger's study (1975)⁶, and the reported anti-immigrant attitudes directed at African migrants in Cape Town. The common experiences of tension and alienation that are felt by migrant workers reflect structural conflicts between groups of people who live on the margins, who are spatially and socially excluded from the wider, more affluent population.

Those whose rights have been erased as they are 'stateless' and poor are perceived as a great threat to societies, cultural identities and economies. So what is it about a group of marginalised people that is so threatening to the host population? I argue that the 'imagined' threat of marginalised people – specifically, African immigrants in the context of Cape Town, is the result of four stressors that, when combined, produce an atmosphere of anti-immigrant sentiments and everyday discrimination. The four stressors are identified as: the enforcement of identity (national and group belonging), the demarcation of spaces of belonging, economic insecurity and a 'culture of violence' in South Africa. This toxic combination must be understood as a greater force than just deep underlying hostile feelings towards the 'other'.

⁶Berger does not elaborate or cover the issue of race in his documentation of migrants' experiences of alienation.

These four circumstances reflect deep seated structural issues experienced by the majority of South Africans⁷.

The central argument of this project is that African migrants manoeuvre between mutable, unsettled and vagrant identities, on a daily basis, in an attempt to fit in, as well as to cope with alienation and exclusion within volatile urban spaces. I argue that the presence of everyday prejudice and discrimination directed at African migrants must be understood as the product of all four stressors (identified above) having equal weight and importance in this process.

What are the unwritten Jante Laws in Cape Town? It is through conceptualising the four components outlined above that I have gained insight into the lived experiences African migrants in Cape Town. Through the co-construction (Ochs, 1997) of the narratives of these people, this thesis explores how everyday prejudice, racism and xenophobia are used as tools of discrimination in the manifestations of the exclusion of physical and social spaces (Lefebvre, 1991a) in Cape Town.

I will broadly outline theories and studies of xenophobia in South Africa – moving on to discussing the abovementioned four components, ending this chapter with theories of everyday life and their relevance in this study.

NkosiSikelel' iAfrica

During the apartheid era, South Africa's borders were tightly controlled. Rigid mobility restrictions were used by the apartheid regime as a tool to control segregation as well as access to spaces and resources. Confining people to restricted areas was the quintessential tool of power and oppression. Domestic migration was as tightly controlled as regional and international migration. The migrant labour system ensured that foreign migrants would only be able to stay in South Africa on short term contracts (Crush, 1999; Crush & McDonald, 2001; Murray, 2003; Neocosmos, 2008; Trimikliniotis, Gordon and Zondo, 2008; Peberdy, 2009; Landau, 2009). As African migrants were brought in as either commercial farm workers or mine workers, African migrants' presence in the urban areas was rather restricted.

⁷Essed (1991) in her examination of Black women's everyday experiences of racism stresses that everyday racism is indeed markers of structural and power conflicts. Similarly, Petkou (2005) in this PhD thesis on West African migrants in Johannesburg and their responses to anti-immigrant attitudes and xenophobia, argue that the basis of such hostile perceptions are combination of deep seated structural issues.

During this time, refugees and asylum seekers were not permitted entry. Only white skilled Europeans were allowed in the country and encouraged to stay and become citizens (Crush, 1999a; Crush, 1999b; Crush, 2000). After the demise of apartheid, and with the democratisation of South Africa, immigration policies were changed; for the first time, asylum seekers and refugees were granted safe haven (Crush, 1999a; Crush, 2000). Klotz (2000) argues that in fact very little has changed since the 1913 Immigration Regulations Act. Similarly Klotz (2000), Crush and McDonald (2001), Nyamjoh (2008), Peberdy (2009), Dodson (2010) among a number of scholars, posit that the Aliens Control Act of 1991 was inherited from the apartheid regime.

Crush and McDonald (2001) proceed to highlight four main elements inherited from the previous regime's immigration policies that are still present in the current South African immigration act. The four pillars are: "racist ideology and practice (policy and legislation)", "exploitation of migrant workers from SADC"⁸, "strict enforcement of legislation", "ignorance" and "denial of international refugee convention" (Crush & McDonald, 2001: 2). The authors argue that the inherited discriminatory state practices are means of maintaining South Africa's state sovereignty and simultaneously ensuring the South African public that these legislations are for the protection of its citizens and for nation-building.

The movement of people across borders were previously conceptualised in a way that is almost synonymous with South-North migration, from developing to developed countries. Crush and Ramachandran (2011) posit that this trend has changed: the flow of migrants from South to South countries has increased substantially. Moreover, as one of the very few African countries whose liberation struggle did not escalate into extended country wide civil war, South Africa is deemed desirable and safe (Masade, 2007). As a result, African asylum seekers and refugees come to South Africa to seek safety and protection (Crush & Ramachandran, 2011). However, the presence of African migrants and the spaces which they occupy in South Africa is contested.

Since the large-scale xenophobic attacks in 2008 the literature on xenophobia in South Africa has grown substantially. Literature focusing on xenophobia tends to emerge out of studies on migration (Crush, 1999a; Crush, 1999b; Crush, 2000; Crush, 2001; Murray, 2003; Trimikliniotis, Gordon and Zondo, 2008; Trimikliniotis, 2008), often highlighting the danger of xenophobic attitudes, official and the general public, that are growing as a response to

⁸South African Development Community (SADC)

migrants from African countries and the fragility of post-apartheid nation-building (Crush, 1999; Crush, 2000; Klotz, 2000; Minnaar, 2000; Crush & McDonald, 2001; Peberdy, 2001; Warner & Finchilescu, 2003; Murray, 2003, Peberdy, 2009). Increasingly, studies are trying to make sense of the horrid events, the 'xenocide', which shocked South Africa and the world. The theoretical approach has not changed per se; perhaps the one noticeable 'change' is the emergence of two theoretical schools of understanding xenophobia in South Africa. Steenkamp (2009) identifies these as: the *citizenship and nation building approach* and the *immigration and policy perspective*. She argues that South African theorists tend to lean on one of these two approaches when explaining xenophobia in the South African context. That said, a few scholars have combined the two approaches.

The origins of xenophobia in South Africa are often explained in terms of race, nationality and ethnicity. The previous socio-political context has laid the foundations for a divided and conflicted contemporary society. Dodson (2010) building on Neocosmos (2008) stipulates that the origins of xenophobia in South Africa can be identified to stem from: racism, nationalism, violence, and isolation of the apartheid era. There are a number of scholars who lean on racism and ethnic divisions as an explanation for xenophobia. Gqola (2008) terms the xenophobic events of 2008, as well as general anti-immigrant attitudes held by the South African general public, 'negrophobia', claiming that the xenophobic attacks in 2008 were 'unexpected'. Other scholars use phrases such as 'black on black violence' or 'poor on poor violence'. Although scholars (including Crush, 2000; Murray, 2003; Steenkamp, 2009) acknowledge the Southern African Migration Project's (SAMP) conclusion that South Africans across class, gender and race are equally xenophobic, why then does the literature explain xenophobia in South Africa almost exclusively in terms of 'negrophobia', 'Afrophobia', 'black on black violence', and poor on poor violence? How does such an explanation account for the other identity markers (class, race and gender)?

In contrast to explanations of xenophobia that rely primarily on race, nationality and ethnicity, Everatt (2011: 10) stresses that low level and large-scale xenophobic violence directed at African migrants, is the result of:

[A] combination of deep structural social, economic and spatial inequalities; an ongoing reliance on cheap labour; housing shortages; township retail competition; racism; a history of the use of violence to advance sectional interests; and a sacred national psyche were important contributing factors to the xenophobic outburst.

The theories discussed above provide a basis for the recent South African xenophobia studies. Having contextualised the scholarly debates concerning this controversial topic, I have outlined the various approaches to migration and xenophobia scholarship. In order to arrive at the argument about the everyday low level violence directed at and experienced by African migrants, it is important to outline the other contributing social markers: the enforcement of national and group identity, the demarcations of spatial inclusion, economic insecurity and a 'culture of violence', that accentuate alienation, prejudice, discrimination and exclusion.

Below, I will briefly outline a few theories of identity and identity construction. The enforcement of national and group identities are often relied on as explanations of prejudice, discrimination, racism and xenophobia.

Identity: National and group

In *Ethnicity and Globalization*, Castles (2008b) states that rapid movement of people around the world is resulting in shifts within national and group and cultural identities. He further argues that the argument of ethno-nationalism is not sufficient as an explanation to the new forms of racism and discrimination that is being observed around the world. Castles' case study of Germany on issues of migration and discrimination are useful accounts when theorising about xenophobia, discrimination and prejudice in South Africa. Castles case study highlights the 'invisible' social factors stressed by Berger (1975). Correspondingly, Castles thesis builds on the work of Essed (1991) in uncovering manifestations of everyday racism.

Elaborating on the German case study, Castles (2008b) states that the acts of violence towards immigrants in Germany in the 1990s until mid-1991 (that resulted in a number of killings) must be understood in the light of a number of socio-political problems. The 'new' German state/nation encountered a number of structural problems when the East and West consolidated. Unemployment, construction of a unified national identity and equal access to service delivery was amongst a few of the structural issues that had to be dealt with. The presence of immigrants and refugees were met with hostility. German society was rife with conflict, and the presence of the 'other' thus served as the 'classical blame the victim' approach. The German government used immigration policy as a political explanation to

comfort a highly divided German society. By implementing new immigration policies and 'denying' immigrants and refugees citizenship rights, through discriminatory immigration policies, the new government indicated support to the German population (2008: 154-7). What is interesting about Castles' argument are the structural and social problems that the 'new' Germany faced. His argument resonates in a number of similar concerns South Africa has been facing since 1994.

'Othering', the framework which groups and communities use in order to distinguish the unfamiliar and the strange, is linked to stereotyping along distorted images that are often far from reality. Writing on distorted representations of the 'other', post-colonial political theorist, Edward Said (1995), argued the distorted representations of the other have very little to do with 'reality'. Large abstract categories are used to explain why people are different, from skin colour to culture. The framework of 'othering' is often applied when constructing and enforcing identities, be they national, ethnic or group identity. 'Othering' is commonly the first stage in what Castles (2008b) refers to as the classic 'blame the victim' or scapegoat approach which is evident in South African society. The scapegoat hypothesis is widely relied on as an explanation for the increasing types of prejudice and discrimination directed at migrants, refugees, asylum seekers and other minority groups within receiving communities. National identity is often provided as the explanation for xenophobia in South Africa (Klotz, 2000). However, the scapegoat hypothesis on its own does not serve as sufficient theory of xenophobia. Spatial entitlement and boundaries of belonging are intertwined in this complexity of identity politics.

In his book, *The Fear of Small Numbers*, Appadurai (2006) theorises that one of the 'darkest' characteristics of globalisation is the enhancement of ethno-national identities. Appadurai's thesis regarding 'the fear of small numbers' links to Murray's (2003) argument concerning politics of identity and entitlement rights as the means of inclusion and exclusion. Equally Appadurai (2006) argues that this trend of 'us' verses 'them' is further strengthened through scare tactics of the media. The construction of 'mega identities' (Ibid: 4-6) is founded on the large scale nervousness and insecurity within societies as a response to the rapid social changes as a consequence of globalisation. As the nation-state is experiencing loss of sovereignty, a scapegoat is needed. This kind of anxiety has a tendency to seek out a target group that can be named responsible for its infiltration into social structures. In an attempt to maintain national sovereignty, curb a threat to livelihoods and local security that minority

groups are depicted as the 'demon' and the root of social ills. Based on cultural and ethnic differences the 'other' is distinguished via phenotypes. Not only is it easy to point out the obvious 'other' as the problem, but those who have less - the Idp's, refugees, asylum seekers, unskilled and semiskilled economic migrants - are further perceived to be burdens on the economy, welfare benefits, as well as criminals and thugs. In short, "minorities are produced as the classical scapegoat" (Appadurai, 2006: 42) as they are perceived to be "metaphors and reminders of the betrayal of the classical national project" (Ibid: 43)⁹.

Unpacking issues around nationalism and national identity Anderson famously coined the term *imagined communities* (1986). Anderson argued that nation-states and nationhood is constructed on the notion of imaginary similarities within groups of people. Language, ethnicity, race and cultural practices are some characteristics that are used to build imagined communities and feelings of unification and 'oneness'. In other words, belonging, inclusion and exclusion of a group emerge out of these constructed variables. Following Anderson's theory, Murray (2003) claims that after apartheid, South Africa embarked on a new path of national identity construction. Post-1994 the construction of an 'imagined community' has been pivotal for maintaining a sense of nationhood. Henceforth hysteria around an alien invasion (African migrants) has emerged; "naming of others is a key component in the relationship between the politics of identity and attachment to place in contemporary nation-states" (Murray, 2003: 447). Murray's argument is linked to Peberdy's argument that as a result of the nation building process post-1994, the democratic South African state has stressed an inclusive national identity founded upon citizenship rights and national belonging in order to construct and maintain the imagined 'oneness' of the new South African national identity and the 'rainbow nation' (2001: 16). Similarly then 'insurgent citizenship' which von Holdt, Langa, Molapo, Mogapi, Ngubeni, Dlamini and Kirsten (2011) refers to is based on similar arguments.

Having examined the broader theories of identity, it is useful to examine Castells (2010) hypothesis of identity construction and politics because he takes the notion of identity construction further, emphasising the role of the social actor in the construction of mega or group identities. Although Castells does not dive into the individual's psyche, he argues that it is when the social actor individualises the identity which is put forward by dominate

⁹This postulation bears resemblance to Sandemose's novel.

institutions that identities become part of a larger collective identity (2010: 6-12). Castells proposes that there are three different types of identity in the process of identity construction: Legitimizing identity, Resistance identity, and Project Identity (2010: 8).

Legitimizing identity is constructed by “the dominant institutions of society” (Ibid). Legitimizing identity is the initial process, tied in with power enhancing nationalistic and ethnic identities. The concept is linked to what Said referred to as ‘othering’ and Anderson’s thesis on ‘imagined communities’. In the South African case, the state’s rhetoric on curbing immigration and unifying South African’s as one ‘rainbow nation’ is an active agent in legitimizing identities. Thus, this type of identity construction makes sense for South Africans, and not for migrants residing in South Africa. The combination of Project identity and Resistance identity, on the other hand, is what makes sense to African migrants.

Resistance Identities are defensive identities emerging as a result of misrepresentations. Often, resistance identities develop as a consequence of the misrepresentations communicated by the actors who lead and enforce Legitimizing identity. Resistance identities are a counter response to domination (Castells, 2010:8). African migrants and their mutable, unsettled and vagrant identities can be seen as resistance identities. In attempts to survive the hostile ‘legitimate’ South African identity and the misrepresentations of the *kwerekere*, or the new term that is being used - *ligweja*, African migrants rely on different parts of a newly formed identity.

Project identity can, in part, emerge out of the process as the aftermath of resistance identity. Project identities are constructed out of socio-cultural materials and or traditions applicable to its users. Project identities construct new identities that can survive and enhance the social position of its actors (Castells, 2010: 8). Mutable, vagrant and unsettled identities of African migrants falls under project identity. This is evident in how African migrants sometimes make use of the cultural materials available to them as tools to manoeuvre and enhance their status in South African society. The combination of Resistance identity and Project identity form the foundation of African migrants’ unsettled, mutable and vagrant identities.

The presence of strangers can entail social, cultural, political and economic change. In response to this apprehension of social change, practices of exclusion have developed. Gate keepers of nation-states and communities are lined up, a physical and or symbolic border is drawn. The people of the ‘imagined communities’ have signalled protection of spaces,

additionally resources are only available to its members while the 'other' is excluded from both spaces and resources. The intensified practices of 'othering' and exclusion reflect a shift towards 'new' forms of prejudice, racism, xenophobia and discrimination, since tension over physical and social spaces are part of friction and contestation, accentuating entitlement rights. Having outlined theories of identity as a unifying element for local communities, while at the same time acting as an vehicle of exclusion, I move on to discussing spatial inclusion and exclusion as the second element of 'othering' and divide.

Spatial conflicts- flexing muscles: national efforts of control, and local grassroots efforts of control

In order to better understand identity politics, unpacking theories of space is critical. Spatial entitlements have been identified as one of the active agents in the process of mutual, vagrant and unsettled migrant identity formation.

Societies, Bauman (2000) argues, are factories of shared meaning. For him, it is within these factories that national and group identities are constructed. Group identities are not just 'abstract' notions of belonging along the path of shared history, language and ethnicity. But group identities are also tied down to a physical space. When strangers arrive, their presence is perceived as a possible distortion of the factories of shared meaning. In tandem, the presence of the stranger also poses disruption of entitlements and rights based on belonging to that specific physical space. Further elaborating on urban spaces, Bauman (2007: 71) argues that the high concentration of people, interaction and communication in urban areas often provide an atmosphere conducive to fear and insecurity. It is this fear and insecurity that searches for a target;

[I]f distances are intended to be kept impassable so as to stave off the danger of leakage and the contamination of regional purity, a policy of zero tolerance comes in handy, together with the banishment of the homeless from the spaces in which they can make a living, but where they also make themselves obtrusively and disturbingly visible, to off-limits spaces where they can do neither. 'Prowlers', 'stalkers', 'loiterers', 'obtrusive beggars', 'travellers', and other kinds of trespassers have become the most sinister character in the nightmares of the elite. (Bauman, 2007: 73-74).

Bauman's statement above can be linked to Lal's (1986) theorising of racial prejudice and space. It is the presence of 'newcomers', the 'other', 'loiters' and 'beggars' that is the essence

of both theorists' argument. Writing on symbolic interaction theories in conjunction with race prejudice, Lal elaborates on emerging conflicts in urban setting between the locals and newcomers. Lal (1986:17) states:

[U]sing social interactionist analysis of the urban community as a spatial pattern and a moral order, we would expect race prejudice to be stimulated when previously absent ethnics decide to move into new neighbourhoods and refuse to honour boundaries that exclude them and that supports the monopolization of resources such as housing and styles of based on, for example, suburbanization. Urbanization, a money economy, and the mass media subvert both material and ideal institutional arrangements and hegemony in the sphere of culture. Race prejudice as well as race conflict are predictable features of city life.

Theorising on prejudice and race from a symbolic interactionist perspective, Lal (1985) unpacks collective action from the point of view of the actor¹⁰. Much like Lefebvre (1991a), Lal argues that social space or urban community is governed by specific spatial patterns together with moral order. Lefebvre's argues that space is socially produced, social space being the space of society (1991: 35). The reproduction of space is linked to social relations, and concurrently symbolic representation is used as a tool to guide the interaction of social space in order to maintain social relations (Ibid: 32). Thus, spatial entitlement and configuration goes hand in hand with power and guides the interaction between social classes. Exclusion of social space is a vital tool of dominance over others¹¹. Thus, social space and social interaction are inter-linked as social and physical distance are symbols of inclusion and exclusion over boundaries and group belonging. Lal (1985) argues that collective action determines and regulates access to physical space as well as opportunities that are available to those who either belong to that specific group, or do not¹².

Discussing the reconfiguration of state power in urban South Africa, Landau and Monson (2008) argue that entitlement to space (land) is tied to formal power, which is the specific kind of power that is present in migration and asylum discourse. In their examination of violence, ethnic clashes, xenophobia and migration in Kenya and South Africa, Landau and

¹⁰Castells' focus on the role of the social actor echoes similarities to that of Lal's focus.

¹¹ Similar to the way in which Castles (2008a) details the distinction between migration and mobility, 'unwanted' and 'wanted', Bauman (2000) discusses the issues surrounding social change, modernity, time, space and migration in *Liquid Modernity*. He argues that in modernity, power signifies 'resistance of space', since power has become "exterritorial" (10-11). In other words, the concept of space has changed. Previously, moving around was more complex as mobility was reserved for the rich. Now, the 'unwanted' - or to use Bauman's term, the 'underclass' - are also able to move. It is this migration of the 'stateless' which is problematic, because the movement of the 'underclass' is shaking the power hierarchy. The presence of the 'stateless' disturbs the territorialism, as their presence makes it harder for states to maintain full panoptical control (Ibid).

¹²Here the interaction of the four stressors is emerging; the confinement of spatial boundaries is executed on the basis of identity and belonging.

Misago (2009) argue that the politicisation of space is a historical example for both countries in terms of violence and segregation. Building on Lefebvre's theory of (social) space, the authors further argue that land has been constructed to symbolise politicised and socialised space. Henceforth, current structural issues (here specifically in South Africa) follow along the lines of apartheid violence and ethicised claims to space. The xenophobic violence and sentiments that are taking place in democratic South Africa are founded on spatial entitlements.

As stated earlier, spatial exclusion served as a tool of power for racial oppression and ethnic division during the apartheid era. Eighteen years after the demise of apartheid, the interaction between spatial configuration and social relations is intrinsically based on symbolic representations of social class. The redistribution of wealth for more equal access to service delivery has not emerged out of the democratisation of the South African state. Instead, the democratic South Africa has produced a new elite and a precarious underclass, as argued by von Holt et al. (2011). This class formation highlights the country's continued struggle with inclusion and exclusion¹³.

Spaces, be it the larger national territory, urban rural configuration, urban spatial boundaries or neighbourhood communities, are marked by social change, power conflicts and class friction. It is not only the distortion of the factories of shared meaning with the presence of the 'unwanted', but also within the disturbance of private and public spaces that intolerance is growing (Bauman, 2000: 94). The emerging conflicts and frictions resonate as Fraser (1998) terms it a shift from 'redistribution to recognition'. Fraser argues that class has become decentred, and therefore "identity-based claims" are taking over spaces of conflict. It is in these conflicts that African migrants are perceived as a threat, since their identity does not fit with the local group. The presence of the African migrant distrusts the community's dreams and aspirations. Bauman (2000: 92) colours this point eloquently, as he states, "Community is these days the last relic of the old-time utopias of the good society; it stands for whatever has been left of the dreams of a better life shared with better neighbours all following better rules of cohabitation." African migrants are perceived as burdens on the already scarce resources and services available to local communities. Labelled as such, African migrants attempt to be 'invisible' through negotiating unsettled, mutable and vagrant identities.

¹³von Holt et al.'s argument underpins the postulation that anti-immigrant sentiments and hostility are reflections of structural problems and frustration within South African society.

Applying Bauman and Fraser's concepts to the South African context, it becomes noteworthy that ethnicity, race and racism, 'negrophobia', 'afrophobia', protest culture, 'culture of violence' and 'poor service delivery protest' are not adequate explanations for the level of violence that is often directed at African migrants. Eighteen years into democracy, spatial configurations have not changed the racial nature of South African perspectives. The markers of the group areas act are still present in contemporary South Africa. Harris (2003) states that not only does South Africans still live in the past in terms of spatial configuration, but service delivery and access to resources are still shaped by racial markers, despite the criminalisation of racism. Despite references to 'previously white suburbs' spatial configuration follows the line of class and race.

Neocosmos (2008; 2010) argues that the migrant labour system during the apartheid era resulted in ethnic and national divisions, which are still visible in contemporary South African society. The Pass Law resulted in labour being confined to Bantustans, black African homelands, creating further ethnic divisions. The migrant labour system and the Pass Law constructed a non-citizen class which was characterised by the lack of rights and recognition. Neocosmos (ibid) emphasises the presence of this right-less class in present day South Africa. His emphasis provides a basis for understanding the underlying structural forces behind the spatial tensions observed in contemporary South Africa. The right-less class which Neocosmos refers to bears resemblance to Berger's (1975) above mentioned statement concerning the invisibility of underdevelopment. In similar fashion, the link between Neocosmos' argument and Dlamini's (von Holdt et al 2011) postulation on 'class antagonism' is evident.

Landau (2010), like Harris (2003), re-states that spatial configuration and racial categories are still along the same lines as during the apartheid era:

[T]he result is relatively and absolutely poor groups of 'blacks' concentrated in townships on the physical margins of more prosperous and lighter-skinned communities. This is an explosive configuration. Given South Africa's history of social violence, these divides could again become inflamed (Landau, 2010: 226-7).

Gibson's (2011: 184-186) observations follow along Harris (2003) and Landau's (2010) statements, namely that spatial planning in post-apartheid South Africa has centred on control, the result being a similar line of access to the city where poor people are excluded. Being excluded spatially (both in social and psychological terms) reflect social relationships within society.

Having elaborated on spatial concerns in relation to prejudice, discrimination and xenophobia in conjunction with identity (group or national), it becomes crucial to examine the third force in this externality has been identified as economic insecurity. Below, I will outline this third factor, before moving onto the final stressor - violence. Spatial entitlements are linked to economic power, or the lack thereof. The movement of people is resulting in a new division of global labour (Sassen, 2003). Consequently, changes within the labour market and the emergence of new working classes (Webster, Lambert & Bezuidenhout, 2008) is becoming more and more interconnected with notions of economic insecurity.

Economic insecurity: "Poverty is the new Black"¹⁴

Migration, anti-immigrant prejudice, discrimination, hostility and xenophobia are not uniquely South African issues. The presence of new-comers all over the world often brings about atmospheres of uneasiness, nervousness and anxiety (Appadurai, 2006). In the midst of unprecedented human mobility nations across the world has made a distinction between two groups of people, the 'wanted' and the 'unwanted' (Castles, 2008a). Similar to the connotations attached to terms like 'mobility' versus 'migration', the former group is made up of skilled professionals, a class of people who signify hope and affluence, while the latter group consists of unskilled and semi-skilled migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers. The unwanted are the lower classes that are images of burden, trouble and crime for receiving countries. Migration studies tend to focus on the latter, the 'unwanted' people, with a number of theories and hypotheses being put forward in order to answer the identity question.

Fraser (1998) and Sivanandan (2001) both distinguish between cultural inequality and economic inequality on the issues of racism, arguing that economic inequality is hidden in the discussion of racist and prejudiced policies. Sivanandan (2001) argues that as racism has been

¹⁴ Sivanandan, 2001.

a tool of oppression in the capitalist economic system, and as the systemic racist ideologies have been passed down from colonial conquest to present day. Today, states make use of “demonization and exclusion” in order to keep refugees, asylum seekers and the disposed out the nation, despite the colour of peoples skin.

The demonization of ‘the other’ is used to stress the burden on the nation’s wealth and resources. In the words of Sivanandan (2001: 2): “The rhetoric of demonisation, in other words, is racist, but the politics of exclusion is economic. Demonisation is a prelude to exclusion, social and therefore economic exclusion, to creating a peripatetic underclass, international Untermenschen.” Sivanandan continues, by noting that “It is racism in substance but xeno in form – a racism that is meted out to impoverished strangers even if they are white. It is xeno-racism” (ibid). Sivanandan’s concept of ‘xeno-racism’ is useful in the South African context, as prejudice and discrimination directed at migrants are often towards black African migrants, and not towards those who are perceived to be images of hope, such as skilled and or affluent migrants.

Steenkamp (2009) argues that democracy has not transformed living standards in South Africa, for the majority of the population living standards are still low. As a result the 'social scapegoat' has been constructed as a result of lack of employment, high crime rate, HIV/AIDS, poor living standards and poor access to service delivery. Competition over resources, employment and livelihoods are also high. In the struggle over resources in a world that is divided between the ‘haves’ and ‘have nots’, tension and insecurity are high. Webster et al. (2008) underpin the emergence of new working classes, worldwide, as a consequence of globalisation. It is the emergence of the new working classes that Sivanandan (2001) and Appadurai (2006) argue intensifies the manufacturing of insecurity. Thus the presence of the ‘other’ is perceived as a threat to local livelihoods, what Steenkamp (2009) discusses in the South African context. The combination of spatial entitlements parallel to economic uncertainty is an integral part of the lives of many South Africans. Consequently, the presence of African migrants in spaces defined by economic hardship, pose as a further threat to local livelihoods. Thus accentuating fear and dislike of the ‘other’, again ‘forcing’ African migrants to depend on mutable, vagrant and unsettled identities in an effort to survive and become ‘invisible’.

Von Holt and Webster (2005) postulate that global economic restructuring has had profound impacts on domestic economy. The consequence of global and domestic economic

restructuring is manifested in workplace restructuring. In understanding the changes of South African workplace restructuring in post-apartheid society, the two authors stress that we need to move beyond merely analysing work as either formal, informal or subsistence. Rather, the focus of analysis should be on “[...] – from *earning* a living (regular, paid employment) to what we call *making* a living (creating one’s own income- generating or subsistence activities) (2005: 4-5). Following this argument, those individuals who *earn* a living do not experience the same level of economic insecurity as people who have to *make* a living. When one’s social class is determined by *making* a living, being employed casually, having temporary and or short term work contracts, or being ‘forced’ to create one’s own livelihood, everyday life is marked by economic insecurity. Individuals whom occupy this precarious social class have little sense of certainty for their futures.

Similarly, von Holt et al. (2011) argue that post-apartheid, a new class formation has developed in South Africa. The emergence of new elite has simultaneously produced a new class of unemployed and precariously employed. Urban centres are characterised by economic opportunity, but they are also conflated and contested spaces. The pool of cheap available labour, competition and desperate workers together create volatile urban spaces. Klotz (2000) shows how the presence of newcomers (African migrants) reminds local South Africans about the global realities of economic conflict, insecurity and changes within the labour market. Subsequently, the level of tension between locals and African migrants increases with globalisation.

As Trimikliniotis, Gordon and Zondo (2008: 1331) point out, “Migrant workers are often preferred as cheap labour with limited, if any security and meagre pay. In other words, profits and other benefits for capital are the fruits of the exploitation of migrant workers”. Similarly, economic insecurity, Webster et al. (2008) argue, is linked to citizenship claims. When African migrants are deemed more desirable by companies, the South African working class experiences the pinch. It is this pinch that enhances economic and social insecurity. African migrants find themselves in a situation where meagre wages and exploitative work is their only option. In turn, it is this limited opportunity which makes African migrants noticeable in volatile spaces to local working classes. The presence and preference of the ‘other’ precariat in the pool of cheap labour pronounces the precariousness of the local working class.

Gibson (2001:191) also posits:

[T]he economic structure of South Africa has not been fundamentally changed and, conditioned by unemployment, landlessness, spatial exclusion, inferior education and violence, the life of the Black poor has remained the same. This economic situation and its glaring inequalities do not mask the racialised and spatialised human reality.

African migrants as a consequence of financial constraints occupy residential spaces in economically depressed areas on the outskirts of urban centres. In order to be able to survive in informal/townships, African migrants have to find ways of becoming 'invisible' within these spaces, or alternatively, justifying their presence (Landau & Freemantle, 2010).

The class antagonism that Dlamini (von Holdt et al, 2011) referred to, can be identified as the presence of African migrants in sectors of *making* a living. South Africans who occupy positions within new emerging working classes, or 'precarious classes', are not part of the socio-economic transition from apartheid. Their daily life is marked by uncertainty. And it is this uncertainty that creates the foundation for hostility towards African migrants. This hostility is manifested through everyday low level violence (in the form of xenophobia) and large scale level of violence (displayed as acts of xenocide). In the next section, I turn to briefly examining theories on violence, before tying in violence as the fourth component of my argument. The amalgamation of national identity, spatial inclusion and exclusion, is intensified through the practice of violence.

A 'culture of violence'

In exploring the history of violence in South Africa as an explanation for anti-immigrant attitudes, Landau (2009; 2010) argues that spatial and social exclusion is experienced disproportionately by disadvantaged South Africans and African migrants. The difference in the endurance of this type of exclusion is that foreign nationals are excluded through institutional and bureaucratic practise, on top of social and spatial exclusion. This is this type of exclusion and alienation that I have endeavoured to explore in this thesis. The presence of the 'visible invisible' (Fanon, 2008) seems to bring about feelings of uneasiness and anxiety

Landau (2010) critiques South African scholars as well as activists and the 'popular' explanations of xenophobia put forward. Landau argues the need to focus and address South Africa's history of state and societal violence, in terms of political and physical space (2010: 215-216). He argues that this 'demonic' violence has constructed two 'demons' which 'reside in South African society' and existing within structural social relationships. Landau (2010: 216) defines the two 'demons':

[T]he first is the enemy within: an amorphously delimited group of outsiders that is inherently threatening to the post-Apartheid renaissance yet remains largely indistinguishable and effectively impossible to exclude spatially. The second is the demon of violence living within a society prepared to turn on itself to exorcise those it sees as denying the promise of post-Apartheid power and prosperity.

Landau's argument is focused on spatial exclusion as the means of oppression and control, both from the state and from the South African population. Xenophobia, xenophobic violence and anti-immigrant sentiments in the South African context are explained through various social markers, with emphasis on one specific proxy; the phenomenon must be examined on the basis of spatial and social exclusion.

Landau (2010) argues that nationalism, as other studies have argued, is not sufficient to explain the violence that has occurred and is occurring in South Africa regarding xenophobia. In the same manner, neither is ethnicity and nationality/race a solely sufficient explanation. As Landau argues, foreign nationals are not subjected to violence as a result of phenotypes alone. Instead, their existence and movement within tense spaces is experienced as a threat to locals. This threat needs to be eliminated, and if the state is not going to do anything about excluding 'the alien', then the people in the urban spaces will need to do so. Outsiders who do not want to integrate and become part of society are self-excluding from society, yet Landau (2010: 230) notes how "This distance, however, is social and psychological, and not material."

South Africa is well known for its high crime rate and violence. According to Castles (2008b), feelings of discomfort are expressed through violence. Through the means of violence and exclusion, the powerful group(s) can exert and maintain oppression. Violence in post-Apartheid South Africa is not strictly explained or understood as political violence. Conflict is now understood as dimension of 'crime fighting'. Some theorists even argue that South Africa has a 'culture of violence' (Harris, 2003), which is a concept used by many theorists as a framework to explain xenophobia. Violence in South Africa has almost become

synonymous with race, or violence is understood along racial lines, where "the racialisation of space frequently dominates the ways in which violence is understood and interpreted" (Harris, 2003: 4). Harris' argument stresses that interpreting violence and race as synonymic is an inadequate explanation of 'black on black violence'. Her argument further signifies the need to examine a number of social forces underlying the low level and high level violence witnessed in South Africa.

Landau (2010) argues that the violence South Africa witnessed in 2008 is part of statecraft construction of violence and 'demons' as a result of institutional and discursive practices of physical and political space boundaries. In sum, Landau (2010: 218) postulates that the violence that we are observing in South Africa echoes "new forms of socio-political organisations and categories of belonging and exclusion." He argues that historically, the state has tried to monopolise the control of space, a state practise which is still present in democratic South Africa. The violence we are observing is the result of people resisting to the state's control over spatial configuration.

Violence can be interpreted as an outcry of wanting to be part of boundary making (Landau, 2010). Discussing space, xenophobia and violence Gibson (2011: 190), relying on Sharp, posits that the xenophobic violence had little to do with the 'stranger' and her/his unfamiliarity's. Instead, it is easier to channel frustration over lack of service delivery on the 'vulnerable' than to direct it at the powerful. Von Holt et al. (2011) correspondingly conclude from their findings that violence is used by the 'precarious underclass' to maintain order and social hierarchy where the state fails to interfere.

Thus, violence can be understood in the light of the growing gap between the 'haves' and the 'have nots', and as von Holt et al. (2011) argue, the growing gap between the rich and poor member of South Africa's black community is starting to embody this. The "precarious classes" are excluded economically and socially, as well as from service delivery and resources. As the new elite show their status through various symbols of power, the precarious classes flex counter symbols in order to emphasis their dissatisfactions with the status quo. Von Holt et al. conclude that violence is part of insurgent citizenship in South Africa, during the apartheid era as well as today. Violence is a familiar language used to communicate frustration and anger. This tactic also serves as a symbol of warning. In consequence in the process of contesting spaces violence emerges.

In wrapping up theories of the four stressors (the construction and enforcement of identity, demarcation of spaces of belonging leading to spatial conflict, economic insecurity and a ‘culture of violence’), triggering the xenophobic phenomenon we are observing in South Africa currently, the work of Manuel Castells is significant. In theorising on the meaning of identities in the current global world in conjunction with local identities and territories Castells posits that three stressors have been and are evident in tension in urban settings. In ending this section, and ending in the words of Castells as he eloquently summarises sites of conflict ripe with feelings of identity, class tensions and economic insecurity. Castells words resonate to that of Sandemose and Berger:

[T]here was a production of meaning and identity: my neighbourhood, my community, my chapel, my peace, my environment. But it was a defensive identity, an identity of retrenchment of the known against the unpredictability of unknown and uncontrollable. Suddenly defenceless against a global whirlwind, people stuck to themselves: whatever they had, and whatever they were, became their identity. (Castells, 2010:61).

Having stressed the significance of an analysis founded on intersectionality of the four social components in understanding xenophobia, as a critique of South African xenophobia studies, I move on to outlining theories of everyday life in order to further stress the central argument of this thesis. If low level violence, prejudice and discrimination directed at African migrants is not explored and understood, the origins and the manifestations of large scale xenophobia and ‘xenocide’ cannot be adequately understood. The gap in the current xenophobia literature is evident in its absence of subjective experiences of those whom the violence is directed at. Prejudice, discrimination, xenophobia, and anti-immigrant attitudes cannot fully be understood through macro analysis. Micro components and interactions that direct everyday communication need to be uncovered.

“Every day I’m hustling, hustling” – theories of everyday life

Having outlined the four social stressors as active agents in the formation of mutable, vagrant and unsettled identity, it is time to move towards theories of everyday life, and their applicability in explaining and understanding the lived experiences and the manifestations of everyday prejudice and discrimination. It is the display of subjective experiences that has

informed the way in which African migrants through tactics of mutability, unsettledness and vagrancy formed an identity that can enhance efforts of integration into South African society.

de Certeau as cited in Seigworth & Gardiner (2004) argued that the notion of everyday life and its practices are unconscious and repetitive. We do not take note of how we do things and what it is that we are doing. Subsequently we do not take note of the consequences of our practises, and in turn the consequences of our practises. Attitudes and the manifestation of our attitudes follow along the same line as every day practises, as the two are often linked. In her study on everyday experiences of racism, Essed (1991:3) contends that:

[T]he notion of "everyday" is often used to refer to a familiar world, a world of practical interest, a world of practices we are socialized with in order to manage in the system. In our everyday lives sociological distinction between "institutional" and "interactional", between ideology and discourse, and between "private and "public" spheres of life merge and form a complex of social relations and situations.

Essed states that it is pivotal to make the lived Black experiences of racism visible, in order to understand everyday racism from their point of view. Similarly, understanding the lived experiences of African migrants with regards to everyday discrimination and prejudice is important. It is critical to unpack everyday experiences that are taken for granted, since they are part of an unconscious everyday repertoire of local South Africans and for African migrants.

It is important to note that studies of the everyday are sometimes contradictory in that they seeks to debunk generalisations and universalization of everyday rituals and experiences (Seigworth & Gardiner, 2004), yet everyday studies are also important “[...] in order to better understand the realm of lived, immediate experiences” (Gardiner, 2004: 231). Importantly, as de Certeau pointed out along the line of Foucault’s theory of power, power is not centred on state power, but rather, the way in which power operates everywhere, on day to existence and at every level, which is what deems the study of everyday life critical (Gardiner, 1995). de Certeau distinguishes between ‘tactics’ and ‘strategies’ in everyday power relations, in that ‘strategies’ are used to maintain power and as a tool deployed for domination, and ‘tactics’ are used by the ‘colonised’, the ‘other’ as a response to the strategies imposed by the ‘colonizers’. Tactics are used by those who appear weak to seem stronger. Tactics are used in order to challenge the status quo (Gardiner, 1995: 111-114). Thus, in examining the lived everyday experiences of African migrants, we are able to explore sites of power structures and relations. By making everyday life visible the ‘visible invisible’ are heard. Everyday analysis

breaks the patterns of Jante Law's invisible hand, shining light on the processes of alienation that Berger documented. The subjective experiences within the objective economic system become visible.

Arguing that, African migrants in attempts to cope and fare in an atmosphere constructed by identity enforcement, spatial inclusion and exclusion, economic insecurity and a 'culture of violence' in South Africa, African migrants perform an identity consisting of mutability, unsettledness and vagrancy. In supporting my findings and my analysis, I will rely on a number of theorists mentioned in this section. More specifically, with respect to my commentary on identity formation and insecurity I will rely on Bauman's (1998), Appadurai's (2006), Castells' (2010) and Castles' (2008) theories. With regards to spatial demarcation the work of Bauman (2000; 2007), Lefebvre (1991), de Certeau (1998), Landau (2010), Gibson (2011), and von Holt et al. (2011) provide useful platforms of analysis. Likewise, the work of von Holt et al. (2005), Webster et al. (2008), Everatt (2011) and, to some extent, Sivanandan (2000) and Fraser (1998), are used to inform my arguments on economic insecurity. The work of Harris (2003) and Landau (2009) form the base of understanding for notions surrounding the 'culture of violence' in South Africa. Lastly Essed's (1991) postulation of everyday racism in conjunction with Lefebvre (1991) and de Certeau's (1998) thesis of 'the everyday'¹⁵ are built upon in compiling the argument on everyday hustling with regards to African migrant identities.

Having examined a vast array of literature in order to unpack and explore various explanations of xenophobia, I will now move to discuss the methodological approach that was chosen in the examination of 'newly' formed migrant identities.

¹⁵ See Gardiner (1995), Seigworth & Gardiner (2004), Gardiner (2004).

Chapter 3

Methodology

The central argument of this thesis debunks explanations of xenophobia in South Africa solely based on race and racial discrimination. I have borrowed some of Essed's methodological work as her analysis of everyday experiences of racism is of immense help in determining the typology and analysis for understanding the evaluations of subjective experiences, the implications of racist practices, overt and covert, and their manifestations on the people whom experience racism on a daily basis. Essed's emphasis on understanding lived experiences of racism as pivotal platform to comprehend structural conflicts as mirrors of power struggles in societies have been helpful in analysing narrative accounts of prejudice and discrimination. In short, Essed's conceptualisation of overt and covert experiences has been borrowed to unpack experiences of everyday prejudice and discrimination.

As pointed out above, Essed (1991) points out that, studies of racism are seldom founded on understanding racism from the point of view of those who experience it. Through a micro-study of understanding everyday manifestations of racism Essed applies an interdisciplinary method. Essed argues that from a sociological perspective, there has been a lack of emphasis on the structural formations of prejudice and discrimination. Many studies that attempt to explain racism are largely macro studies that ignore the micro factors that form part of the construction of racism. She states that "the phenomenological dimensions of racism, the interactional perspective have all been ignored" (1991: 22), concurrently the 'ordinary' element has also been ignored in studies on racism. Thus, Essed's concept of 'everyday racism' is the link between "structural forces of racism with routine situations in everyday life" (1991: 2)¹⁶.

¹⁶Erasmus and de Wet (2003) in 'Not naming 'race': Some medical students' experiences of and perceptions of 'race' and racism at Uct's Health Science faculty' have applied Essed's framework in exploring the experiences of medical students. Likewise Castles (2008b) in his case study on Germany and in unpacking new form of racism and nationalism have relied on Essed's definition of everyday racism (163-4). Trimikliniotis examining 'race' and ethnicity in an era of global insecurity, makes use of Essed's work in stressing the importance of everyday manifestations of discrimination and racism (2008:11)

Xenophobia, anti-immigrant sentiments, 'afrophobia' and 'negrophobia' are terms used to define the violence directed at African migrants in South Africa. In arguing that this particular violence is a reflection of deep structural conflicts, and in order to explore this argument, I have followed a similar methodological approach as that of Essed (1991) in order to unpack everyday prejudice and discrimination. By inviting ten African migrants to tell me their stories, the simplicity and complexity of the fluid identities that the 'visible invisible' are faced with on a daily basis have emerged through their narratives. Narratives in turn have linguistic structures. The linguistic elements have thus required examination and application of linguistic approaches to the study of narratives.

Examining the work of de Certeau on everyday life, Gardiner (2004) stresses that developing a methodology of everyday life in itself is problematic as such a methodology clashes with the fundamental idea of everyday life. Nonetheless "in order to better understand the realm of lived, immediate experiences" knowledge of everyday life is pivotal (Gardiner, 2004: 231). Defining and explaining everyday life is challenging, as everyday life is fluid and difficult to pin down in terms of 'scientific' classification, categorisation and as a tangible concept (Gardiner, 2004). Thus, qualitative research methods and narratives analysis were employed in the exploration of the lived experiences of everyday life and alienation of African migrants. Subjective meaning and experiences is therefore the centre of this study. Although the focus of this study is subjective experiences the aim has not been to understand the psychological impacts of everyday prejudice and discrimination. Borrowing Essed's phrase, "[...] My concern is practices and their implication, not the psyche of these individuals" (1991: viii).

Qualitative research seeks to balance the documentation of action in natural settings with insight into the meaning to those involved. Emphasis is placed on seeing things from the perspective of those studied before stepping back to make a more detached assessment (Fielding, 2006). Fielding further states that qualitative approach holds that an adequate knowledge of social behaviour requires understanding of the symbolic world in which people are situated and the meanings developed through patterns of behaviour, which are in some ways distinctive (Fielding, 2006).

A linguistic approach to the study of narratives is of immense use in an exploration of understanding the lived experiences of African migrants (in the context of Cape Town). The study of narratives is directed at understanding the narrator's psychological point of view the narrator's experiences, mental processes, material processes and relational processes

(Simpson, 1993a; Simpson, 1993b; Simpson, 2004). Understanding meaning is a key point in narratives analysis. Looking at meaning and exploring psychological point of view in narrative allows for the speaker's voice to be heard. By 'breaking' up sentences/ clauses utterances and meanings emerge, that might have otherwise been overlooked. I have not applied 'nitty-gritty' linguistic tools in depth; the narrative analysis is not an in-depth stylistic analysis of the use of modal verbs and transitive verbs, as the respondents are second language English speakers. Whether their usages of transitive verbs and modal verbs are conscious choices or the result of second language speech has no meaning in this research. However, a more fluid usage of modality and transitivity is used, as these concepts aid in distinguishing how the narrator perceives and represents themselves¹⁷.

Design

In line with the qualitative nature of the study, the method of data gathering was qualitative in-depth interviews. Interviews were semi-structured, although most interviews started with one question that induced the participants' life stories. The nature of the interviews were characterised as informal conversations, even with the presence of the voice recorder.

The Qualitative Interview:

After the interviews were conducted, there were four major themes that stood out, discussed in the literature above. Importantly, many of the themes and issues that emerged from the three key informant interviews, before the participant interviews were conducted, were evident in the narratives of the participants. The insights generated from key informant interviews and participant interviews underpin the importance of everyday experiences as well as the precarious nature of migrant lives.

The terms 'Interviews' and 'narratives' are referred to interchangeably in this study. In this study qualitative in-depth interviews and oral narratives are perceived to be similar if not the same. A number of linguistic theorists highlight that narratives are co-constructed by participants and interviewers (Portelli, 1991; Ochs, 1997; Bruner, 2001; Bruner, 2002). Correspondingly, qualitative researchers stress that interviews and the data gathered are co-

¹⁷ I would like to point out that there is a distinction between written and oral narratives with regards to modality, transitivity and narrative analysis in general. When we speak, we do not tend to 'watch' the form of our language. Our utterances tend to be more informal than if we were to write personal narrative accounts. There is a higher degree of formalisation in written narratives, as people tend to perform more, than in oral narratives. This is another reason why this study is not preoccupied with detailed linguistic analysis.

constructed forms of knowledge (Kvale, 1996). Rubin and Rubin (in Babbie & Mouton, 2007) posit that the qualitative interview is regarded as a flexible, iterative and continuous process. As the interviewer, I asked questions in each interview building on knowledge from previous interviews. By introducing themes and issues that participants were not discussing, I, in turn, shaped parts of the interview through being an active agent in the co-construction of the participants' narratives.

The direction and questions of the interviews were shaped by the knowledge gathered from the three key informant interviews. In addition, subsequent interviews were shaped by the information collected from the earlier ones. Silence in many of the interviews provided as a valuable elicitation 'tool' particularly around sensitive issues. Kvale (1996) stresses the importance of silence in interviews. In many instances, moments of silence worked as acknowledgment, from my side as the researcher, of the gravity of the narrators' experiences. Moments of silence also allowed time for both me and the narrators to compose ourselves. In these moments, I could also often hear what other narrators had shared with me, and this provided me with the opportunity to phrase new questions or link their experiences with others.

Participants

The participants of this study were all African migrants living in Cape Town. Participants' country of origin, number of years residing in South Africa, occupation and marital status all differed. Thus, countries of origin, gender, as well as occupation were not set criteria in determining participant participation. Participants were approached on the basis of their non-South African origin as well as occupations that could be classified as working-class professions. The only two set criteria determining participant 'desirability' can be identified as working class occupation and African nationality.

Selecting a Sample:

Participants were approached on the basis of the fact that they were related to the research question and, as stated above, on the basis of their country of origin and occupation. Willingness to participate was also a necessary criterion for inclusion.

I was able to approach the first two participants with the help of one of the key informants, Thierry¹⁸. Thierry, who is originally from Congo, works as a migrants' rights advocate. He approached a number of African migrants and passed on the names of those who had expressed willingness to participate in the project. Other participants were approached on an ad hoc basis from my own network. I approached people who had indicated willingness to participate and from there on scheduled meetings with them. The sample population of this study can be identified as a non-probability sample. When the study was designed I had aimed at snow-ball sampling to shape the sample population. This however did not turn out to be the case. From my understanding and interaction with the participants, those who participated were not 'willing' to ask spouses, friends or family to take part in interviews. One participant responded to my question of referring me to others by saying that he did not think so, as I was asking people to open up and dwell on very difficult issues.

Process of Data Gathering

All in all three key informant interviews were conducted, as well as eleven interviews. Nine single interview and two interviews with the same person.

The three key informant interviews were conducted from March 2011 until September 2011. The first key informant interview was conducted with Barry Wugale, head of the Ogoni Solidarity Forum in Cape Town. Barry Wugale, a Nigerian asylum seeker himself, works as a migrants' rights activist. Barry Wugale has been in charge of organising a number of workshops for African migrant workers. Barry's knowledge around migrant worker's issues is extensive. The interview with Barry Wugale was of tremendous help in shaping the research questions for this project.

Through Barry Wugale, I was introduced to Mike Louw, of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU). This introduction brought about the possibility of a second key informant interview with Mike Louw, providing me with further knowledge around challenges faced by African migrants in various employment sectors. The interview with Mike Louw (April 2011) was very helpful in understanding interactions and frictions between South African workers and migrant workers.

¹⁸Thierry is not the Key Informant's actual name. As Thierry preferred anonymity his name has been changed.

The third key informant interview was with Thierry. I was introduced to Thierry through another Masters student in the Sociology Department at the University. The interview with Thierry (September, 2011) not only resulted in an introduction to the first two interviewees, but Thierry's own experiences as a migrant in South Africa provided further insight into the everyday experiences of African migrants, occupying working class as well as middle class occupations.

The knowledge gathered from the key informant interviews were extremely helpful in strengthening this study's initial assumption around every-day experiences of prejudice and discrimination that goes on under the radar, the so-called 'covert' forms of prejudice and discrimination. Essed defines covert and overt forms of racism; "overt racism refers to acts that openly express negative intentions towards [black people]" while with covert racist practises "negative intentions cannot be inferred from the acts themselves" (Essed, 1991, as cited in Erasmus & de Wet, 2003: 8).

The key informant interviews also underpinned the fact that, although anti-immigrant sentiments and xenophobia is present in all strata in South African society, the magnitude of everyday low level violence is further accentuated by the precarious nature of working class occupations and lived spaces.

The ten African migrants were interviewed from September 2011 until February 2012. The interviews ran from forty-five minutes to nearly two hours. Some interviews took place at the participants' work places. Interviews would therefore from time to time be interrupted by customers or colleagues. The public space of most interview places contributed to the vulnerability of the participant's, as well as laid certain barriers of the extent the participants were willing to open up and share very personal experiences. Only one participant was interviewed twice. Three interviews were conducted in the Company Gardens in the Cape Town city centre. And one interview close to the Central Library in the Cape Town city centre. The interviews that were conducted in the park and in town square were interviews with migrants who are currently unemployed and working as informal vendors.

In the initial study design I had aimed at interviewing each participant twice. This proved to be almost impossible. It was only with one respondent that I was able to conduct a follow up interview. The rest of the respondents did indicate a willingness to be contacted a second time around, however, when I called for a second interview many told me they would get back to me, and never did. Others were simply not interested. The reason for this is in most likelihood

the amount of time interviews took from the participants' livelihoods. When workers from the working class make themselves available, their time often means a loss of wages.

The narratives elicited from the first two interviews were in some ways very different, but so where the participants, Lodi and Habimana¹⁹. Nonetheless, it was from the two initial narratives that I was able to elicit further narratives. Thematic areas were discussed with the participants. During the interviews I would probe around themes that the key informants had discussed, as well as general xenophobia perceptions and experiences discussed in academic literature and media reports. When a participant would share that he or she has never experienced any forms of discrimination, I would try to bring about examples of the experiences of others in order to see if it was possible to stretch their answer further. It was in these instances that all experiences of everyday prejudice and discrimination emerged.

Another likely reason for not being able to do a second interview is the depth of intensity and sensitivity of sharing personal, often painful experiences; "Narrating memories is often distressing" (Field & Swanson, 2008: 26). A few participants at times were struggling to keep a 'straight' face. Eyes would go teary, heads would be shaken, and a response of 'ah what can we do?' would be said before a big sigh and then laughter was present in many interviews.

Method of Data Analysis

A log was kept after the interviews. I would de-brief in a journal, plotting down the themes and statements that stayed with me from the interview(s). As more and more interviews were conducted, the de-briefings would become more detailed as thematic topics or themes emerged. In conjunction with the literature and the narratives, specific experiences stood out. For example, half way through the interview process, space emerged as a major theme. Once I started re-visiting audios from the interviews, over and over again, open codes started emerging (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996). Coding is the process where the qualitative data is assigned main themes and patterns. Key themes and patterns are based on theoretical concepts vital to the study (ibid). The codes mirrored themes and categories that were identified from the key informant interviews. As the interviews went on, space emerged as a 'new' code. This

¹⁹All participant names are pseudo names in order to insure anonymity. As Kvale (1996) argues, in qualitative interviews it is nearly impossible to assure confidentiality, as confidentiality would entail with holding all data gathered.

initial phase of coding is known as open coding (Moghaddam, 2006). In this process I coded everything that echoed feelings of discrimination, feelings of exclusion, experiences of prejudice, experiences of violence, and experiences of covert hostility.

From open coding I moved on to axial coding, where open codes are related to each other under a fitting thematic umbrella. Here, I started categorising the open codes according to major themes; where does discrimination take place, and how is discrimination experienced – covertly and overtly. The end process of axial coding leads to selective coding, where main themes are identified (Moghaddam, 2006). It was in this process of identifying core themes that later interviews could further probe into the ‘established’ core themes, in order to explore whether others had similar experiences relating to the main themes. Key themes in this process were identified as: workplace challenges, institutional prejudice and discrimination, and social prejudice and discrimination. The end result of the selective coding process in conjunction with the literature lead to the four stressors that have been identified in the literature review chapter: the enforcement of identity, spatial entitlement, experiences of economic insecurity and a ‘culture of violence’.

During the interviews, as well as in the de-briefing notes, I would listen for and later note, the presence or absence of what Schiffrin (1996), building on Bruner, identifies as *epistemic self* and *agentive self*. The epistemic self is presented in oral narratives when people state their opinions, beliefs, feelings and wants (Schiffrin, 1996: 194), and the agentive self is “[...] revealed when we report actions directed towards goals, including actions that have an effect on others” (Ibid). Reports of agentive and epistemic self in oral narratives are vital sources for understanding the narrator’s evaluation of situations. In this regard examining the portrayal of the participants’ self provides insight into their responses to situations, their coping mechanisms as well as their evaluation of their past and present encounters (Ochs, 1997). This evaluation lays the ground for future hopes and aspirations. As Schiffrin states “As in most analyses of oral narrative, I found that speakers convey their attitudes, feelings, and beliefs – the very stuff of epistemic self and of narrative evaluation- in a variety of ways” (1996: 195). This was the case in many of the interviews I conducted.

Limitations and advantages of the research method

The major limit of this research was time constraint. Due to limited amount of time, it was not possible to include data from more than three key informant interviews, and ten (eleven counting the two interviews conducted with one respondent) in-depth interviews. Nonetheless, the in-depth interviews were generous and saturated with knowledge reflecting back to themes raised in the literature review.

Qualitative research and its produced outcomes do not provide information or knowledge that can be applied and generalised to large groups. In this case, the everyday experiences of the ten migrants in this study cannot be said to be the case for all African migrants residing in Cape Town. Universal statements and claims are not the aim of qualitative research; as stated above this study is founded upon the subjective meaning of ten African migrants' experiences. Their subjective lived experiences provide a platform into understanding and inquiring further into the structural issues that emerged from their narratives.

My subjective interpretation of the data further shapes the outcome of the research process and the end product. Seibold (2002: 9) illustrates the researcher's subjectivity and the unconscious and conscious thoughts and emotions that shape the research process and end report. My perception and worldview, as the researcher, has formed the research conception, data interpretation as well as the interpretive understanding of the end result.

Another limitation that stemmed from the time constraint is the absence of any linguistic analysis in this thesis. As linguistic analysis is highly detailed, I have not been able to examine and analyse each and every interview thoroughly. This is the main reason that I stated above that detailed linguistic tools and analysis will not be employed. Rather, I have chosen to borrow useful linguistic theoretical tools in order to further enhance my interpretation of the narratives.

Nonetheless, certain places in the narratives the modal and transitive markers are indicators of the degree of agency possessed by the narrators. Modal and transitive markers are interpersonal uses of language that bear individual experiences, and the way in which language is used to indicate who we are and how we chose to expresses our attitudes and feelings (Simpson, 1993a; Simpson, 1993b, Simpson 2004). Secondly, as this project is not designed to be an exercise in linguistics, strict linguistic analysis has not been applied.

However, the analytical process has been informed by certain linguistic theories and tools, in order to strengthen the data analysis, and in order to avoid further victimising African nationals and their overall experiences in South Africa.

Orality

The importance of oral narratives and the emphasis on the lived experiences of ten African migrants is important. Their stories and voices show that the presence of African migrants and the violence directed at them is not a thing that is taking place, but rather that the violence is directed at people (Portelli, 1991: 46). Orality, oral sources and oral narratives tend to be dismissed within academic research. Portelli (1991) argues that the credibility of oral sources is often questioned. He further states that orality provides insight “[...] about illiterate people or social groups whose written history is missing or distorted” (1991:47). Therefore, questioning the credibility of oral sources is tied to power structures within academia and society. Credibility seems to be tied up with descriptive event reports as opposed to meaning that emerges from orality. Oral sources inform us about the meaning of certain events. The meaning of events to the “nonhegemonic classes” (Ibid: 50).

As stated above none of the participants’ first language is English, nor is it the researcher’s. Certain elements of meaning might have been misplaced and or lost in the interviews. Respondents might have not been able to express themselves as freely and easily as they would have in their first language. As the interviews were conducted face-to-face meaning that might have been lost due to language barriers, could at times be absorbed through gestures, or as Goffman put it: speech becomes “situational” (1964: 134).

One of the main advantages of qualitative research with an emphasis on orality and subjective experiences is that a methodology of this nature provides people, whom are often unheard, to tell their stories from their point of view and express their concerns. My keen interest and curiosity of subjective experiences of African migrants, as reflections of underlying social and structural forces, has enabled me to explore the sensitive issues around alienation, prejudice and discrimination.

Ethics

The power dynamic between the participants and me as the researcher might have shaped the information that was exchanged. This was also shaped by the manner in which it was exchanged. Although my own background as a refugee and migrant aided many of the interviews, in building rapport with the respondents, it has also been biased to some extent. My gender, age, and social class played a role in the power dynamics during the interviews. This is why earlier the co-constructed character of the narratives was stressed (Portelli, 1991; Kvale, 1996; Ochs, 1997). Secondly, my background has also placed a stronger bias on interpreting the data, understanding and emphasising with the narrators experiences. I have tried to be as self-reflexive as possible, examining difficulties arising throughout the process.

Oral narratives and qualitative interviews are co-constructed by the participant and the researcher. The probes and questions that formed the later interviews were built on previous interviews, as well as information gathered from previous studies and media reports. When I as the researcher introduced themes, topics and questions I was actively taking part in shaping the narrative. Respondents and the researcher's body language further shaped the interview process.

When this study was being planned, I, as the researcher, stressed that this would not be another study that further victimises African migrants and their precarious existence in South African society. Yet, the aim of the study was and is to create a 'platform' where the voices of the 'voiceless' can be heard. Building of theories of everyday life (Lefebvre, 1991b, de Certeau, Giard & Mayol, 1998) as well as the focus on oral narratives was chosen as the tools to enhance the voice of the voiceless. As Seibold (2002) highlights despite the researcher's non-exploitative intentions during interviews and the research project at large, there are a number of difficulties that one embarks on in this process. As I mentioned earlier, the power relations between the participants and me were present at times, be it consciously or subconsciously.

Using the term 'voiceless' already signals the trap referred to in the introduction of this section, what de Certeau as well as Lefebvre stress, that the task of everyday life is not to

universalise or develop concepts and categories, and yet we fall into that trap²⁰. During some of the interviews, the respondents' reflections and replies signalled that I was falling into that trap. However, the insight that the narratives have shed light on structural spatial tensions taking place in various spaces in Cape Town could not have been seen had the lived experiences of the ten African migrants not been heard. In the words of Ochs:

[W]hen that narrative concerns a lived experience, co-authors impact the understanding of that experience. It is not only a narrative but a life or a history that is collaboratively constructed. Narrative is a sense-making activity; it is also a primary vehicle for retaining experiences in memory. Entitlement to co-tell a narrative is then a powerful right, encompassing the past, present, future as well as imagined worlds (Ochs, 1997: 201).

²⁰ The paradox is the same for orality. In line with the two above theorists Sitas (2004) argues that the popular notion that one 'marginalised' voice is universal to all marginalised voices and peoples is a trap which we do not tend to see as oral historians and qualitative researchers are busy constructing, deconstructing and performing what the academics perceive as the 'politics of identity' of the 'non-hegemonic classes'. From time to time during the interviewing process I would fall into this trap.

Chapter 4

Setting the Scene

The City

Swimming pools, gardens and big houses dominate the one side of the Mother City. The other side, is characterised by shacks, piles of garbage and violence. Cape Town is a city marked by stark inequality amongst a very diverse population. Spatial configuration and physical distance between the ‘haves’ and the ‘have nots’ is largely a result of apartheid policies, which still control the city’s land and physical space. Field and Swanson (2007) argue that the imprints of colonialism on Cape Town the city are still visible through architecture, and historical sites. The imprints of apartheid are stronger and more visible as a consequence of the Group Areas Act of 1950. This act drew spatial boundaries along racial lines, controlling space accordingly. These past markers are evident today in terms of exclusion, be it physical or imagined exclusion. In the words of Field and Swanson (2007:4): “As a result of these legacies, contemporary Cape Town remains ambiguously a culturally diverse and divided city.”

Spatial boundaries drawn along racial lines are not solely reflected in racial terms; spatial configuration correspondingly mirrors the socio-economic divide in Cape Town. The ethnicised claims to space from apartheid era and its structural issues are still present today (Landau & Misago, 2009). Leibbrandt, Wegner and Finn (2011) posit that since 1993, inequality has increased, and so has intra-racial inequality. However, they also note that overall poverty has decreased. Unlike the new character of inequality that is inter-racial, poverty is still marked along apartheid racial lines, whereby Black Africans make up ninety per cent of the poor and Coloureds make up ten per cent. In this regard, Leibbrandt et al. (2011) identify the main accelerator of inequality to be the labour market. Furthermore, in line with von Holt et al. (2011) Leibbrandt et al. argue that a new class of “working class poor” has emerged. von Holt et al. (2011) refer to this new emerging class as the “precarious underclass”.

On the surface, it appears that a lot has changed since apartheid. To the tourists who are visiting The Mother City, Cape Town appears to be a diverse, colourful and a vibrant place. There is an exotic rhythm to the pace of everyday life. Although the stark inequalities might be evident when landing at Cape Town airport, inside the city the new forms of tension and social inequality is not immediately apparent to the tourist. Contestation over resources and spaces appear invisible. The 'wanted' and 'desired' group of people do not encounter what African migrants encounter. African migrants occupying the 'unwanted' group, discussed in the previous chapters, find themselves hustling and negotiating their existence in uncertain spaces.

[T]o be underdeveloped is not merely to be robbed or exploited: it is to be held in the grip of an artificial stasis. Underdeveloped not only kills: its essential stagnation denies life and resembles death. The migrant wants to live. It is not poverty alone that forces him to emigrate. Through his own individual effort he tries to achieve the dynamism that is lacking in the situation into which he was born (Berger & Mohr, 1975: 32).

The 'Other'

In an attempt to situate themselves within volatile spaces, African migrants experience physical and social exclusion, as their presence triggers fears amongst the local 'new working poor', who are leery of the potential for exacerbated social and economic insecurity..

[S]outh Africa is already hard for South Africans. When you are a foreigner it becomes a little harder. When you go to a township if you speak the language, you are a local you are okay. It is much better than when you are not a local. Then you become a target. I mean the level of services as well. You don't want to be in a place where you have to fight to get into a train, I mean that is why townships are more dangerous. I mean I can't take a taxi to go walk in Khayelitsha. No, no I would never do that. It's like I really want to kill myself. It is not that I hate. There's one thing I really miss to be in a township. I wish to wake up here, and take a taxi to Gugulethu to visit my friends there, just for a beer, go drink and dance. I wish to do that. I got good friends, my best friends who live in townships. I wish I could have the strength to go there, live there and walk. But I have seen how dangerous it is. It means I must go there and never come back. So I will stay on my side, and we will meet when we can. It is not because I hate it, its because that's how it is. (Respondent, Oscar from the Democratic Republic of Congo).

Being confined to as 'unwanted' and being labelled as a refugee brings with it a number of issues. If one is categorised as 'unwanted', this means they have been forced to leave their

country of origin, or once home, due to either political, economic and or social conflicts or insecurity. Being labelled as a refugee or asylum seeker often bears negative connotations:

[I] don't like to be referred to as a refugee. Why must I be called a refugee? I don't see myself as a refugee. It limits my options. Do you see yourself as a refugee? Would you like to be referred to as a refugee in Norway? (Respondent, Oscar)²¹.

The decision to leave 'home' often is not a choice of luxury, as opposed to those who are deemed as 'desirable':

[W]hen you are running, you just run.....No no, it was for a specific reason (Respondent, Lodi from DRC explaining why he and his wife chose to flee to South Africa).

[I]t was a matter of frustration at home. I had my job in Harare, I was an insurance clerk. Basically it was like the pay we were not getting, it was not like matching up with your day to day things, like food, school fees. Ya. Then I just decided to cross over here. I came on the bus. I did not swim with the crocodiles [laughter] (Respondent, Leo, from Zimbabwe, explaining why he decided to move to South Africa).

The routes or the journeys to South Africa for African migrants²², immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers is determined by the underlying reason to leave home for a safer place.

[S]o in 1999 I could no longer bear it. So I fled again. I fled through Tanzania, Tanzania, Kenya, Kenya, then passed through Malawi, Mozambique then South Africa. I thought that South Africa from 1994 it became a democratic country, first election, democratic election.....then I thought it was a country that, an African country that could maybe manifest the kind of democracy, that was number one. Number two, I had to go as far as possible from the execution of the regime of my country, because it is a regime that follows people, even from far away, where ever they are. Maybe you are not aware, but even here people are being perused, being attempted to be killed.... So I had to go far away. As far away as possible and I had also to be in a country where democracy would be there. Because many African countries democracy is not visible (Respondent, Habimana from Rwanda).

Those who arrive in South Africa, who have family members, friends or acquaintances, have the advantage of arriving to some form of security. On the other hand, those who arrive without knowing anyone based in South Africa, have to rely on the goodwill of strangers or institutions and organisations (such as churches, non-governmental organisations or shelters).

²¹Oscar's question directed to me was very powerful. In that moment I realized that I had fallen into the trap that Sitas (2004) have stressed.

²²In this study those who are labelled 'unwanted' are referred to as African migrants. For the purpose of 'clarity' a broad name is given, in order to avoid confusion.

[W]hen I first came here to South Africa, I was very tired, and this one family gave me lodge.... It is a Christian family, and they say I am a girl and I look innocent, they said. Even my friend, they say I look innocent. They helping me too much (Respondent, Rika from Burundi).

The initial encounter in South Africa either paves the way or hinders the possibilities for integration and peaceful co-existence within the local community. It is through the early experiences with local South Africans that African migrants learn to zigzag within neighbourhoods, on public transport, in public places, at the workplace and at schools. Within these spaces, the boundaries of physical and social exclusion are quickly drawn.

The ‘Other’s’ visibility and invisibility in the city – Contested spaces

Occasionally, on the side column of newspapers there are reports of attacks on Somali shop owners, or other forms of vigilante justice in economically depressed urban areas. Despite these critical circumstances, little attention is paid to the growth of hostility experienced by African migrants who are situated in townships and or informal settlements. Exacerbating this, there appears to be high tension over spaces and resources, as Leibbrandt et al. (2011) confirm that there has been an increase in urban inequality.

As a result of physical and social exclusion, along with a sense of living on the margins, African migrants sometimes merge together, developing social and economic networks. Grouping together is a way of preserving ‘home’ identities, while simultaneously becoming a mechanism for dealing with discrimination and exclusion²³. Migrant niching is thus a survival strategy and coping mechanism with the discrimination and prejudice that these people are faced with in urban settings. Living on the outskirts of urban centres, in townships and informal settlements, or in surrounding suburban areas (in the Cape Town context, in the Southern and Northern suburbs), African migrants have to move out of their residential areas in order to find employment. It appears, from the data, that in order to earn wages, find employment and be part of economic migrant groups – the city bowl and other close surrounding areas are identified as spaces of indispensable income:

²³Petkou’s (2005) argument here can be linked to de Certeau and Mayol’s theories (respectively) how the recreations of neighbourhoods and memoires serve as representations of home and what is familiar.

[W]e come to town, where you can get work, where you can get a connection. You can't just come and say 'Hi I'm looking for a job', and drop you CV. And people don't know you, and nobody is going to call you. Because they don't trust you, they don't know where you come from. But maybe you know someone like this guy²⁴, and they are like 'how is he?', 'no he is fine'. And then the connection can speak to the manager or the GM, and then okay its your friend, bring his CV (Respondent, Lucien from DRC).

[T]his is where the cash money is made. There are a whole lot of rich people who live here and I know I will make cash (Katiyo, from Zimbabwe. 'Intersection used as a market', 2012: front page)²⁵.

Spaces occupied by affluent people are spaces of economic opportunity. Browsing through local Cape Town newspapers, one occasionally finds stories relating to tensions between African migrant workers and local South African employees. For example, the local weekly newspaper, *People's Post Claremont-Rondebosch*, has covered topics relating to friction between local unemployed casual workers and African migrant workers competing for the jobs. In October 2011 *People's Post* reported of a case whereby African migrant job seekers were intimidated by prospective South African employees with faeces covered on the wooden fences where African job seekers wait to be picked up for casual work, in Salt River. The space divided by the main road is demarcated, the one side is reserved of South African job seekers, and the other side for immigrant job seekers. In attempts to intimidate non-South African job seekers, local South Africans marked the 'other's' territory with human faeces (Fischer, 2011: 3). A month later, the same newspaper, in response to their previous article, reported gross exploitation of foreign workers in Salt River. Foreign workers were not paid, were forced to live in a lodge provided by the employer and were threatened and forced to resign when refusing to stay in the 'provided' lodge (where rent was deducted from the meagre wages) (Fischer, 2011: front-page).

Recently, another article in *People's Post* addressed issues around informal trading taking place at intersections in Newlands, in the Southern Suburbs (Amos, 2012: front-page). The presence of informal traders in Newlands is interestingly not contested by local workers, but by the residents. The point being that spaces are contested and outsiders are not wanted in the economically depressed areas nor are they welcomed in the more affluent areas. The presence

²⁴Referring to his friend who was walking past and stopped to say hello.

²⁵The quote is taken from an article in *People's Post Claremont/Rondebosch*. Katiyo is not one of the participants in this study.

of the 'other' represents fears of crime, economic competition as well as shifts within local 'factories of meaning' (Bauman, 2000).

It is within these contested spaces that African migrants must manoeuvre in different spaces: spaces of wages, income and employment, spaces of residence, spaces of socialisation and spaces of networking. The newspaper reports indicate discontent and insecurity present in everyday life. The alienation, exclusion and exploitation that the local newspaper reported of, go unnoticed under the radar of those in economically secure social positions. In the following chapter, I will outline the 'covert' experiences of the 'visible invisible' that emerged from the data. From there, on I will proceed to the analytical discussion.

University of Cape Town

Chapter 5

Position of Data

In this chapter, I will elaborate on the narratives and the narrators' life stories. The narratives in this project provide the basis of common experiences and themes. Three key themes have been identified: (1) work place challenges, (2) institutional prejudice and discrimination and (3) social prejudice and discrimination.

The narrators and their stories

As stated in the methodology chapter, ten migrants from various African countries were interviewed. Their reasons for coming to South Africa varied from economic necessity to political persecution. Likewise, their journey to South Africa also differed.

| Name | Gender | Marital Status | Country of Origin | Arrival in South Africa | Current Occupation |
|-------------|---------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Jose | Male | Married (Maria) | Democratic Republic of Congo | 1994 | Stall owner – Green market square |
| Maria | Female | Married (Jose) | Democratic Republic of Congo | 1995 | Stall owner – Green market square |
| Lodi | Male | Married | Democratic Republic of Congo | 2000 | Casual electrician |
| Habimana | Male | Married | Rwanda | 2001 | Medical health practitioner |
| Tawanda | Male | Married | Zimbabwe | 2004 | Bead craft vendor |

| | | | | | |
|--------|--------|---------|------------------------------|------|---|
| Lucien | Male | Single | Democratic Republic of Congo | 2005 | Volunteer at various NGOs. Currently unemployed |
| Oscar | Male | Single | Democratic Republic of Congo | 2006 | Manager |
| Leo | Male | Married | Zimbabwe | 2008 | Taxi driver |
| Rika | Female | Single | Burundi | 2009 | Part time secretary at a medical office, and volunteer at various organisations |
| Abu | Male | Single | Tanzania | 2009 | Informal vendor |

Jose and Maria

Jose and Maria, a Congolese couple, have resided in Cape Town, South Africa for nearly seventeen years. In 1994, Jose came to Cape Town in search of economic opportunity, as the political and economic situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) was volatile. Having lost family members back home in civil conflict, Jose (holding a Bachelor of Commerce degree), in collaboration with other Congolese refugees in Cape Town started networking and establishing themselves as vendors in the Central Business District, later moving more permanently to Greenmarket Square. A year after Jose had been in Cape Town, Maria and their children moved down. The couple has since been running their stall together, every day. The family established themselves in a flat in Salt River, later moving closer to town.

For the past ten years, the family has been living in the Northern Suburbs. Jose and Maria do not recall any violent acts as a result of prejudice or xenophobia, but they did acknowledge that name calling took place. However, the felt that name calling is just another integral part of life. Jose and Maria perceive their neighbours, who are White South Africans, to be very

friendly and non-xenophobic. Maria and Jose both indicated that they find Black South Africans to be the more hostile population. In particular, Jose stressed that: “*Black South Africans are often jealous of African migrants, as Black South Africans are lazy and not interested in findings of livelihood*”. Overall, Jose and Maria stressed that they are very happy in South Africa. Their children, some of whom were born in DRC, others in South Africa, have not had any negative experiences in school or in their neighbourhood.

Lodi

Lodi escaped persecution in the DRC. Lodi and his wife fled the country via ferry to Zambia, ultimately ending up in Cape Town, South Africa. During their escape Lodi and his wife became separated from their two children, whom they were later united with in Cape Town. Since their arrival in South Africa, Lodi and his wife have lived in separate shelters, until they were able to rent a place in Samora Machel, in the township of Philippi, on the Cape Flats. Having occupied a number of jobs, including construction work and security, today Lodi works as a casual electrician in the Cape Town city centre. Unfortunately, there has been no demand for Lodi’s labour since October 2011, and consequently Lodi and his family have suffered major economic setback.

For the past three years, Lodi and his family have been living in Kuils River. Life in this residential area has been relatively peaceful, which has been a welcomed change for them from life in Samora Machel. Having been unemployed for months, the loss of casual wages has forced the family to relocate back to Philippi, in the first month of 2012. The relocation back to Samora Machel has been marked by anticipation and fear, as previous experiences from the area were mainly heavily negative for Lodi and his family. Lodi, his wife, and children have all been victims of violence, ranging from shootings, stabbings, stoning, knifepoint robberies, house robberies/attacks, name calling, threats, and verbal abuse in the workplace.

Habimana

Habimana, having escaped political persecution in Rwanda, moved back there in 1999 hoping that the political climate would be peaceful after the horrific genocide and ethnic cleansing in

1994. Unfortunately, Habimana did not find the peace he was hoping for. Still exposed to death threats and persecution, Habimana and his wife decided to flee the country again. Habimana chose to seek refuge in South Africa, due to the country's democratic regime. Habimana and his wife settled in Cape Town by seeking refuge in separate hostels one for refugee women and one for refugee men. Habimana's wife went to stay at a house in Philippi, while Habimana went to rent a room with three other Rwandese refugees.

It was through this interaction with other refugees, who had been in Cape Town for a while, that Habimana was introduced to work as a car guard. After a few years as a car guard, Habimana saved some money and went to an auction. At the auction, he bought second-hand furniture and soon he opened up a second hand store in Woodstock/Salt River. From the store's earnings, Habimana managed to put himself through university, perusing studies in natural medicine at the University of Western Cape. Today, Habimana works as a natural health practitioner. He stated that business is slow, since not many South Africans trust the practice of natural medicine. Additionally, many are prejudiced towards him as a foreign national. As a result, most of Habimana's clients are other foreign African nationals.

Tawanda

Tawanda came to Cape Town in 2004 as the telecommunication company that he worked for in Zimbabwe had laid off two thirds of their staff. He left his country: "*to look for greener pastures*" (Tawanda). A few of Tawanda's family members were already in Cape Town, making his arrival somewhat smoother, as he already had lodging and a social network. A few years after his arrival, Tawanda sent for his wife and two sons, who were still in Zimbabwe. Today, Tawanda and his brothers live with their families in Cape Town. The first place Tawanda and his brother stayed in was Gugulethu. However, due to the high crime rate in Gugulethu, Tawanda and his brother relocate to Grassy Park. After a few years in Grassy Park, they relocated once again to Athlone which is their current residential area.

Due to challenges with work permits and the Department of Home Affairs, Tawanda was unable to find employment based on his previous work experience. Consequently, Tawanda, and other Zimbabweans, came together to start their own business. Initially Tawanda and his business partners began selling beadwork as street vendors in the Claremont area. Later, Tawanda and his brother established themselves in the suburb of Rondebosch. Currently,

Tawanda and one of his brothers are looking into starting another business, as there has been a drastic economic decline as bead vendors.

Lucien

Lucien arrived in Johannesburg, in 2005, after three years in various refugee camps in neighbouring countries of DRC. Living in the Eastern part of DRC, and busy with his medical degree, Lucien started getting anxious about the country's political climate around 2002. Unable to complete his medical degree, Lucien joined the army. After a short period of time, after struggling to become part of the military, Lucien returned home, beginning the process of moving to a neighbouring country. Eventually, Lucien ended up in South Africa. In Johannesburg, he enquired about fellow Congolese migrants, soon finding an opportunity to begin work at a barbershop. Regrettably, the shop was situated at a corner marked by high levels of violence and crime. Lucien was robbed a number of times, in various places. After having been robbed for all his clothing and having to walk in his underwear to his home 40km away, Lucien decided to move to Cape Town.

In Cape Town, Lucien again established a barbershop in Westlake. Here, too, he experienced a number of robberies and violent hostility. As the people in the area got to know Lucien, things have since calmed down. Lucien passed his barbershop to his cousin, and started working at various restaurants and enrolled at a college, for a course on tool-making. Lucien stated that many of the restaurant managers were abusive towards Black employees. In particular, he noted that Afrikaans managers were highly hostile, while White Zimbabwean managers were usually friendlier towards the Black waiters. Since then, Lucien has occupied a number of short-term contract jobs that have paid well. During periods where employment has been scarce, Lucien has volunteered, and continues to do so, in order to stay busy and network. Having lived in various areas in Cape Town, Lucien currently resides in Brooklyn.

Oscar

The unstable situation in DRC, in particular the Eastern part where Oscar is from, eventually became unbearable for him. Oscar decided to move to Tanzania looking for place of refuge

and opportunity to carry on with his tertiary education. From Tanzania, Oscar moved around to various neighbouring countries, eventually ending up in Durban, South Africa. Oscar's older brother had left DRC a few years before, but his brothers were not in touch. It is only when Oscar arrived to Durban that he managed to get hold of his brother in Cape Town. He was unable to settle down in Durban so he decided to move to Cape Town.

Through his brother's contacts, Oscar found a place to stay in Maitland, and shortly after was offered employment as a security guard. At the time, Oscar did not speak English, and he soon lost his job as a result. Since having learned basic English, Oscar soon found employment through his network, in the Winelands outside Cape Town. After a few years in the Winelands, Oscar moved to the Northern Suburbs of Cape Town, where he held simultaneously different job positions in a variety of sectors which enabled him to resume his tertiary education at a South African University. Today, Oscar works as a manager and resides in the Southern Suburbs.

Leo

Leo left Zimbabwe in search of survival and employment as his salary as an insurance clerk no longer covered the family's living expenses. Leo had an uncle in Pretoria, who showed him the ropes once Leo moved there. Soon after, Leo was working as a waiter in a restaurant in Johannesburg. As Leo could no longer bear the discrimination and alienation in the Johannesburg/Pretoria area he moved to Cape Town in hopes of calmer times. Another of Leo's uncles was working at the University of Cape Town (UCT). Leo moved in with his uncle in the Southern Suburbs of Cape Town, whilst working as a waiter in Camps Bay. One year later, when Leo had found schools for his children, Leo sent for his wife and two sons.

In order to avoid living in the townships, Leo works fourteen to sixteen hours a day as a taxi driver. This allows him to be able to afford rent in the Southern Suburbs, ensuring his family's safety and security. Although Leo and his family are able to avoid township crime and violence, the way in which local South Africans interact with Leo and the African community is still largely based on alienation and feelings of not belonging. Leo's son is verbally abused at school from time to time.

Rika

Rika, a Burundian lady in her early thirties, had to flee her home country as some of her family members had been killed and others had fled. Rika was the only one left in Burundi, and she was being watched and targeted. Before being able to complete her degree in psychology, Rika had to flee. Through making friends with others who were escaping, Rika got a lift to Tanzania. From Tanzania, she continued to flee until she arrived in Cape Town. As a Christian, Rika decided to spend her first night outside a church in hope of an act of Christian charity. The next day, a member of the church provided her with lodging until a Muslim lady assisted Rika in accessing workshops. From there, Rika found employment and her own room to rent. Today, Rika works as a part-time doctors/surgical assistance. The days Rika is not working, she spends volunteering at a non-governmental organisation (NGO) at a hospital, and another NGO that reintegrates ex-inmates into their former communities. Rika chooses to volunteer as the job provides the opportunity to work within her field of study, as she cannot practice or work in psychology related fields as a result of being unable to complete her studies.

Abu

Abu, a young man from Tanzania, decided to move to South Africa in search of economic opportunity, and to provide and support his family in Tanzania by sending remittances. When Abu arrived in Johannesburg, he enquired around about other Tanzanians in Johannesburg. He was also waiting for a Tanzanian friend who lived in Swaziland, to come up to Johannesburg. Once his friend arrived, through his networks Abu found accommodation and received financial assistance so that he could start off as an informal street vendor. Constantly being targeted by metro police and having to re-establish his lost goods and capital, Abu eventually decided to seek opportunity in Cape Town.

Feeling that Cape Town was more diverse and mixed, with less violence and crime, Abu decided to stay. Through a refugee NGO, Abu was given the opportunity to do a course in hospitality. Despite Abu's training, he struggled to find employment in the restaurant sector. He experienced heavy discrimination in the places where he worked as a busboy, finding them

to be quite environments. In between jobs, Abu worked as flier distributor in town. Today, Abu is working as an informal vendor in the Cape Town City Centre, whilst living at a hostel in Salt River. Whenever Abu experienced hostility and alienation, he would quit his job and work as an informal street vendor again, in order to avoid these conflicts. These negative experiences lead Abu to believe that he had failed.

Making sense of the data

As these brief biographies indicate, people's reasons for coming to South Africa differ. Some are here as asylum seekers due to political unrest in their home countries while others are economic refugees as politico-economic situation in their own countries are unstable or unfavourable. Some have experiences physical traumas, such as visible scars on their bodies, while others feel emotional trauma from perceived ghosts in their luggage. Further, others have a deep longing for a sense of belonging and the familiarities of home.

Despite their different backgrounds and their current situations, the generous people who shared their life stories with me have something in common; they have all been alienated and discriminated against because they are the 'other', the 'unwanted' group of people. Their everyday experiences of fear, tension, insecurity, exclusion and discrimination provide an intimate example of what is regularly occurring in the invisible spaces in Cape Town. Their different and similar experiences reflect negotiations between insiders and outsiders in spaces characterised by fear and loathing. As I have stated previously, the sample of this project should not be seen as representative of all the experiences of African migrants living in South Africa. Yet, their stories have brought forward the way in which some African migrants, in both simple and complex ways, negotiate and perform unsettled, vagrant and mutable identities.

It is important to state that not all participants in this project had negative experiences to report of. Some of the narrators - Jose, Maria, Oscar and Rika - expressed that they had never had any negative experiences, but throughout the conversations there was evidence of covert experiences of discrimination, prejudice, fear and intimidation. However, as such experiences are silent and ingrained in everyday life, it is entirely possible that the respondents in this study might not have taken conscious note of these everyday experiences. There were two

participants, Maria and Rika, who did not have any negative experiences to report of, not even 'covert' types of prejudice and discrimination. Gender might be a factor that helps to explain why the two female participants did not report negative experiences. Moreover, it is important to note that some of the data collected in this project reveal that 'othering' also occurs amongst local South Africans, as well. Some conversations were characterised to some extent by transitive and modal markers indicating opinions of the narrator as a victim (Simpson, 1993a; Simpson, 1993b, 2004), constantly subjected to harassment.

As I stated in the methodology chapter, I will not make extensive use of low-level linguistic tools to analyse the degree of modality and transitivity in the narratives. The rationale behind this decision is largely based on the fact that the respondents are second language English speakers, and thus, the use of transitive and modal verbs are not always a correct indication of their point of view and discourse (referring to the narrators' world view and opinions). Additionally, time constraints were factored into the decision not to pursue thorough linguistic analysis.

Chapter 6

Analytical Discussion

In this chapter, I will discuss the data in conjunction with the literature. Excerpts from the narratives will be presented in order to emphasise the narrators' voices and their subjective experiences, linking the subjective world within a broader discourse of empirical evidence and theory.

Combining the subjective with the objective will provide a body of support of my contention that we cannot fully understand the 'xenophobic' phenomenon in South Africa solely on the basis of the imposition of a national identity and or as a consequence of hostile immigration policies and negative state rhetoric. Hostility, prejudice and violence directed at African migrants must be understood in this broader context. The 'tactics' and 'strategies'²⁶ used by African migrants and local South Africans - more specifically the working classes or the precarious classes (von Holt & Webster, 2005; Webster et al., 2008; von Holt et al., 2011; Leibbrandt et al., 2011) - are responses to failed promises of the democratic South Africa, and responses to marginalisation of both groups. By framing subjective data within more concrete traditions of migration theory and evidence, it can effectively be argued that African migrants respond and cope with the socio-economical marginalisation by constructing identities that are mutable, vagrant and unsettled as means of survival in contested spaces.

African nationals and their South African encounters

[S]ince we arrived in South Africa our lives have been very difficult because of the discrimination. The xenophobic things (Lodi).

The testimonies of the narrators bear certain similar resemblances. Four main themes can be identified: i) although state officials and the media claim that violence directed at African nationals is no longer evident in South Africa, the narrators' experiences reflect otherwise; ii)

²⁶The terms 'tactics' and 'strategies' are applied in line with de Certeau's postulation of everyday tactics and resistance (Gardiner, 2004).

from the narratives it is evident that low level violence and name calling are present in places of residence (on the way to public transport, in the domestic private sphere, and the neighbourhood), the workplace, and through interactions with the general public²⁷; iii) immigration policies, bureaucratic red tape and other institutional challenges make it difficult for African nationals to integrate in South African society, extremely challenging to acquire employment in sectors that matches with qualifications obtained from their country of origin; iiiii) as a result of the various challenges mentioned, African nationals have developed self-exclusionary tactics in order to a) stay away from tense spaces and avoid conflict – as a coping strategy, and b) the ‘other’ also ‘others’, African nationals also hold anti-South African sentiments and attitudes.

Similarly Petkou (2005: 2-3) identifies three main issues that African nationals²⁸ experience: i) “structural issues” of place of residence, employment and identity politics; ii) anti-immigrant sentiments held by South Africans; iii) African nationals encounter with the South African state and its institutions such as the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) and the South African Police Services (SAPS).

The conversations with the participants have bolstered the notion that there is no homogeneity of African working class experiences, yet there are certain experiences that are similar and reoccurring amongst certain collections of narratives. This is also evident in the general experiences that Barry Wugale (2011) and Mike Louw (2011) reported. Concurrently, Dodson (2010:14) explores the general experiences of African immigrants in Cape Town, concluding that a thematic repetition of discrimination, exclusion and violence was present in the narratives of the participants in her study.

Alienation, social exclusion and politics of belonging

““Dirty nigger!” or simply “Look! A Negro!”

I came into this world anxious to uncover the meaning of things, my soul desirous to be at the origin of the world,
and here I am an object among objects.

²⁷The Scalabrini Centre conducted a survey in 2010 in order to map out where xenophobic threats and warnings occur (van der Linden 2010). Their findings and the narrators’ experiences in this study, point to the same directions.

²⁸more specifically West Africans in Johannesburg

Locked in this suffocating reification, I appealed to the Other so that his liberating gaze, gliding over my body suddenly smoothed of rough edges, would give me back the lightness of being I thought I had lost, and taking me out of the world put me back in the world. But just as I get the other slope I stumble, and the Other fixes me with his gaze, his gestures and attitude, the same way you fix a preparation with a dye. I lose my temper, demand an explanation... Nothing doing. I explode. Here are the fragments put together by another me.

As long as the black man remains on his home territory, except for petty internal quarrels, he will not have to experiences his being for others” (Fanon, 2008: 89).

Alienation and feelings of not belonging were evident in much of this study’s response data. Feelings of alienation are, in most instances, a consequence of social exclusion, derogatory name calling and hostility at the work place. Workplace challenges, being forced into a new economic social class as a result of one’s foreignness is heavily intermingled in everyday life and structural elements. The covert (Essed, 1991) practices in which experiences of alienation emerge is an integral part of everyday life for African migrants. The ‘gaze’ that Fanon (2008) refers to, is part of the heavy weight of alienation. In order to demonstrate experiences of alienation, I will incorporate a few selections from the narratives below, before elaborating further on the expressions of social exclusion and its effect on other components of everyday life and interaction.

[I] started working in a restaurant. It was difficult for me, like I did not like the job. That was basically, and it made it very very difficult for me. Until later I realised that’s all man, it is what it is, you have to try and make ends meet. And then when I came here, there in Pretoria we were working with the Tswanas and the Zulus there, up there. And the thing was it was the same there, you could see that the xenophobic element they are there. Because it was like my first time to work in a restaurant, you should be starting to read the menu, and you won’t even know, it was like a new thing. But they were expecting you to do the way they did, but they were experienced in that. But the way they would say to you, you would feel so belittled. So so belittled and would be emotional and all that (Leo).

A little bit later in the interview, Leo continued elaborating on the practices of South African taxi drivers in Cape Town, and how they in subtle ways clearly communicate their dislike of African migrants:

[T]hen I started driving taxi. And then there was another challenge, I was now again entering into a new thing, cabs. While I was working there [indicating to the taxi-company in Salt River], you get different treatment from different people. The treatment you get from a Xhosa is different than the treatment you get from a coloured guy, and white guys are few who drive taxies. Like a coloured guy who is

driving like here, they feel like we are stabbing them. Or we are not supposed to be doing the same jobs which they are doing, or like, I donno know, I don't know how they feel like. One can be, say like where we are parked here, there are two cars here, one of these guys can just come and park here, random here. And then just to say 'hey man can you park properly so that someone, so that I can fit there'. Maybe he will just look at you and just frown. [Laughs]. Ya yay ya. And the Xhosa guys, sometimes they just feel like..they are quick to say 'you kwerekwere, you are amakwerekwere you are all speaking the language I don't understand'. They are being insulting, or they are being told something wrong we can just feel it, and we can pick one or two things, one or two words. But you are still jolly whether you are treated different. You still have to gel in. And sometimes you are provoked. If I am provoked, one: I don't resist too much, two: I still know I am a foreigner. Ya, I can't run away to say I'm a foreigner. I am a foreigner. And I know I don't have to do, say go fifty-fifty, no I will try by all means to make it flow. [Laughs]. Ya just make it flow, something just like that (Leo).

Leo's testimony is saturated with socio-economic conflicts and tension that exist between African migrants and local South Africans. Narratives, which reflect people's everyday experiences - are indications of socio-economic change (Schiffrin, 1996). As Essed (1991) argues by analysing everyday experiences (in her thesis racism) discrimination and prejudice is key to understanding manifestations of such practices and behaviours. Not only do we gain insight into individual experiences, but also to the experience of others through stories and rumours. Many of the issues that Leo's extract point towards - push-pull factors of entering new job markets, change of social class, feelings of alienation and being 'othered', everyday experiences of discrimination and prejudice, and coping mechanisms - are adopted as survival strategies (Petkou, 2005). These reflect experiences and challenges that many African nationals residing in Cape Town often face.

Similarly, Oscar elaborates:

[E]ven if you want to become a proud South African, a citizen, you will still be called makwerekwere. You will still be considered as a foreigner. And that time I know I am not from here. I am so limited in what I can become, in what I can do... I've tried. But even when you wear South African colours, and you want to be South African, you are not. Because people see you as a foreigner. I've tried. I've tried.

In the same vein, Abu said:

[W]orking with different people, mixing with people, it's tough, it's tough. You have to be you and stuff... Ah some they can be like, we can talk something,

somebody can reject you because you are not coming from here. Ya, some can do anything. Sometimes you are at work, just to be happy, you have to keep on pushing. And sometimes you can feel like ah these people don't want to take me because I'm not coming from here. The bosses, I found good bosses. But like the colleagues, the people we are working together, ya sometimes there are happening things like, I get cross. I think like I can fight. Then I say no I just want to quit. So I find myself I'm quitting. Because I don't want to fight to nobody. And other people they can try to make you fight, you see. And I told myself, that I'm, I'm different guy. I came here, like I'm ambassador, so anything I'm doing it's my country getting this picture, you see? Ya, so I find myself quitting because when I get cross I quit. I don't want to fight. I quit, I quit. I go back to my business, vendor, street vendor.

When Abu here refers to his business as street vendor, it is important to recall that he operates this informally. The gravity of alienation and 'othering' is so severe, that Abu chooses to further place himself in a more economically insecure livelihood, such as being a busboy or waiter. In this position, he may not even receive his tips if the local South Africans cut him out at the end of the night.

The evidence from Leo, Oscar and Abu's testimonies stresses the invisibility of 'covert' discriminatory practices. Additionally, the feelings of alienation that Fanon (2008) refers to are encapsulated in the testimonies above. Thus, the main strategy for coping with the ongoing alienation, discrimination and intimidation is the tactic of keeping to oneself, or removing oneself from the spaces of volatility. The tactic of removing oneself, often termed 'self-exclusion', is part of identity work; by taking the power to move and change ones social position in response to agitated and troubled milieu, African migrants rely on the vagrant and unsettled part of their identity formation.

Below, I will discuss institutional and work place challenges, as these structural challenges further accentuate experiences of alienation through discriminatory policies and legislations.

Finding employment – institutional and work place challenges

[H]ow we start our lives, starting small business. Because on that time, in the 90s it was very difficult to have a job as a foreigner, it was not easy. They didn't accept our degree, cos I'm BCOM²⁹. I'm BCOM, and they didn't on that accept it, to give

²⁹Bachelor of Commerce

us a job as comfortable. Everywhere you go they say 'we can't afford to pay the salary' and then and so on. So to survive here it was also difficult, because of that we start our own business. On that time I can send money in Congo, she [referring to his wife Maria] can send me stuff like this, so I can start to sell, and with that money I can send back. For transport, and to survive in the Congo and for food, and for me to also survive, until she join me, we start the life. Our main problem was, at the time we left Congo, there were big [inaudible] with Mobutu. Mobutu took a long time in power, and then it was difficult for you to, to have a future. It was, we were worried about the future, what are we going to do tomorrow? What about our children? And that is how things started to take a decision to stay here forever (Jose).

The issue of employment, highlighted by Jose, is twofold: institutional barriers and socio-economic tensions. We often hear of qualified and tertiary educated African nationals who work in semiskilled and unskilled employment sectors. Barry Wugale (2011) expressed that many African migrants are forced to work in unfamiliar employment sectors as the procedure of getting qualification documents recognised is difficult and sometimes almost impossible. State policies and institutional barriers prevent African nationals from accessing appropriate jobs, which then exposes them to a whole new set of exploitation and discrimination spaces.

The participants in this project have entered new employment sectors than where they previously had worked in before. Others had to end their tertiary education when they fled to South Africa, and thus have been unable to continue their studies in South Africa. Those who have had to enter new employment sectors can be further divided in two groups as the main push factor differs; one group of people find themselves in unfamiliar surroundings as a consequence of bureaucratic and institutional challenges, such as the South African Qualification Authorities (SAQA) and the Department of Home Affairs (DHA), and the second group merge into new forms of labour as their situation is pressing and desperate.

The first challenge, of not being able to access jobs matching ones qualifications, leads to 'entering' employment sectors that already have immense competition and a large available pool of labourers. As a consequence of institutional and policy challenges, African migrants enter spaces that are perceived to be reserved for local South Africans only (also internal local conflict, migrants from the Eastern Cape also add pressure and weight, not welcomed, but not as excluded as the foreign outsider). Tawanda, after encountering difficulties with the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) and the South African Qualification Authorities (SAQA) decided to spend the money he had entered South Africa with, to purchase materials to start

beaded craft work:

[I] tried getting a work permit, but it was too expensive and difficult. You have to give your stuff to the agent, and then the agent will go apply for you. So I thought what can I do that will get me going right away... And back home I had seen people do bead work. So I started. You take a string (a wire) and then you think of something... So now I have a business permit. And I am thinking of what to do next. Business is not so good these days. Back then business was good! Now, I have to plan for tomorrow.

Several of the narrators also brought up issues with DHA and SAQA as the main reason for being employed or self-employed in new areas of work. Lucien, unable to complete his medical studies in the DRC, enrolled at a college in Cape Town, getting a certificate in tool making. Before Lucien qualified as a tool maker, he created his own means of livelihood:

[I] had my own barbershop in Westlake. But it was a little bit hard in the beginning because they used to break in most of the time. There was a lot of crime whatever there. But then the people started to know me step by step and then it was okay. I left the shop to my cousin, and I went to do restaurant work, so I could go to college. Two years back I got a good job in Constantia. It was really good, the pay was very good. But it was only a nine month contract. Since then I've been looking for work. So I went back to volunteering.

In a slightly different manner, Rika, who already has a diploma in psychology from Burundi, is struggling to get her qualification accepted in hope to embark on her degree in psychology in South Africa:

[I] can't get a job here. Because there is a rule, for diploma or degree. It is a kind of an organisation. Because they did inform how you can find the psychology. But the SAQA they say I have to do some psychology something with the organisation. But I didn't have anyone to connect with them to follow their training. So I decided to get, to find a job. And then one day I will study to finish. I hope [laughs].

Instead, Rika has worked as a teacher's assistant and various secretarial jobs. Passionate about her field of study, Rika volunteers at two different NGOs where her skills can be applied.

Habimana had similar experiences, whereby his years of medical education were not

recognised in South Africa, and he was therefore unable to continue studying medicine in this country. But before attempting to get his years of education recognised, Habimana started working as a car guard, shortly after he arrived to Cape Town. Recall that it was a network of other French-speaking Africans who introduced him to car guarding. When Habimana started working, he did not speak English; he learnt the language as he worked. After sometime, Habimana started searching for something different.

Mike Louw (2011) and Barry Wugale (2011) acknowledged the DHA and SAQA as obstacles for many non-South African nationals in finding employment in the county. This not to say that the DHA and SAQA bluntly refuse assistance, but the way in which policies are constructed, combined with the manner in which DHA and SAQA officials treat and interact with African nationals, indicate hostility and an unwillingness to be helpful. For instance, Petkou (2005: 6) notes how “In the DHA[...] immigrants are treated unfairly; suffer from derogatory remarks, and other xenophobic reactions”. African nationals who cannot find employment in their line of work and are forced to work as semi-skilled workers and or in the informal economy, are often most-at-risk for exploitation.

Many scholars (Petcou, 2005; Everatt, 2010; Klotz, 2000; Murray, 2003; Crush & Ramachandran, 2010; Steenkamp, 2009; Crush, 1999) have highlighted the difficulties which African nationals experience when dealing with the various South African state institutions. Institutional barriers are measures employed by the state in order to control the movement of migrants. Secondly, by delaying and denying African nationals residential permits and work permits, the South African state is indirectly reinforcing illegal status on African migrants. Bureaucratic barriers such as these also signal the official discourse and opinion on migration from African countries. Thirdly, by ensuring that African nationals are challenged in integrating in South African society, the state is defining boundaries of belonging as well as signalling loyalty to its citizens. Institutional restrictions are a means of state control.

From the narratives, we can see that sometimes institutional exclusion and bureaucratic red tape work to further alienate migrants. Frequently, immigrants give up the process of ‘legalising’ qualification documents and or legal identity documents after one attempt with South African state institutions. Perhaps the most pressing reason behind this choice are long tedious hours of spending time at for example the DHA and similar institutions, often having to leave unsuccessful having to return the following day to stand the same long queues. It is not the process of waiting in line which is alienating. The long hours spent in an effort to

acquire appropriate documentation, is time lost earning a living, and going home with a loaf of bread. It is the time spent away from wage employment opportunities which leads African nationals to seek other means of survival, 'illegally'. The, often, unsuccessful periods of time spent dealing with governments institutions furthers the precariousness of hustling means of livelihoods. For example, Tawanda found out that in order to apply for a work permit you need to pay an agent, and pay large sums of money and wait a long time before your work permit is either approved or declined. In light of this, he decided to invest his money in buying materials for craft work in order to start right away. In most cases, people do not have the luxury of disposable income, or the time, to wait for documents. The precarious nature of African nationals' situation forces them to do whatever is available. As Leo stated:

[W]hen I firsts started working in Pretoria, you know most of us Zimbabweans when we came here you did not know what type of a job you were going to do. And someone they crossed the border they had no money, like there is someone in Cape Town or there. Then they just come to find somewhere to sleep and to start looking whatever to do. So like when I arrived in Pretoria I was told that you can go and find a job in the restaurant. And I was told that at the restaurant you are not paid, but you get tips. And for me it sounded so awkward like [laughs], sounded so awkward like. And I could not imagine myself running with a tray in a restaurant. And ya, but most of the Zimbabweans, some of them got good qualifications like, but you have to do what is available at that time. Otherwise you will go straight to the bin to look for food. So you have to deal with what's available at the time. So I started to work in a restaurant. It was difficult for me.

Recall that Lodi, having completed his security training, but not received his security identification, was unable to find a job. In desperation, Lodi copied another man's security identification in order to find employment. Lodi's employer was aware of this circumstance, and was therefore in a position to further exploit Lodi with long hours and little pay. The testimonies and experiences that the narrators shared, along with the general experiences that Barry Wugale (2011) speaks to, tie in with Landau's (2010) argument and observations that exclusion in South Africa is experienced by disadvantaged locals and by foreign nationals in accessing facilities, institutions and rights that people with citizen status enjoy. The difference between non-South Africans and disadvantaged South Africans is an institutional and bureaucratic exclusion that is deemed socially legitimate by the state (Landau, 2010). Discriminatory practices that are accepted as legitimate resonate with Castells' (2010) notion of 'legitimized identity' as a construction of state institutions in efforts to uphold power and domination.

Landau's (2010) argument link with Barry's (2011) reflections that issues of work, exploitation and precarious nature is the same for workers, despite origin, but that working class African nationals are easily exploitable as a consequence of institutional practices and policies. In correlation to the precarious nature of work and economic insecurity and new forms of inequality, spaces marked by low income and gross poverty are heating up. It is within these tension-filled spaces that violence is sometimes used to demarcate spaces of belonging and entitlement.

Everyday life in volatile spaces

The interviews conducted in this study all work to communicate a unifying message; there is a very high level of tension in spaces characterised by economic hardship and high human pressure. In line with Everatt (2011) and Landau (2010a; 2010b; 2010c), I will argue that the levels of violence, discrimination and prejudice experienced by African migrants, in Cape Town, is not solely a consequence of nationalist discourse, and or xenophobia or negrophobia. The violence and anti-immigrant attitudes we are observing are manifestations of spatial conflict and class friction. As Dlamini (von Holdt et al, 2011) argues, the ethnic violence directed at foreigners is a reflection of both xenophobia and class friction, which he refers to as 'class antagonism'. This type of violence needs to be understood as a sign from the working class - the 'precarious class', as a sign of protest against unemployment, dire economic uncertainty, and lack of material conditions that are necessary to live a decent and dignified human life.

Speaking about experiences of derogatory name-calling and emotions around verbal abuse, Tawanda evaluated his negative experiences by trying to make sense of why local South Africans only verbally attack African nationals and not white European nationals. His evaluation of past experiences ties in with economic insecurity and spatial conflict:

Tawanda: [T]hose things are there. Cos people they call you kwerekwere and all that stuff you know. It depends where are you now at that time.

Sepideh: "Can you tell me where it happen the most?"

Tawanda: "Townships, they will call you kwerekwere. They will be trying to say foreigner, foreigner. I don't understand. And sometimes, sometime we were not selling here [indicating the spot where he currently sells beaded craft work, in the southern suburbs], we were selling in Pinelands, when we came here it was bad. Cos some of the people would be 'why are you selling your stuff? We want to work'. You see some of those things.

'You are taking our places away'. And now, [laughs], because you end up getting used to it you see, and I don't even think about it.'

S: *"So does it happen at home where you stay as well?" [Referring to Athlone]*

T: *"Ah no, where I stay its quiet".*

S: *"How did you feel when people would call you names?"*

T: *"I was thinking of going back. I was thinking of going back".*

S: *"How did you cope or deal with those feelings? Would you speak to your brother about it?"*

T: *"Why talk to him about it? Because he also is experiencing that. In the beginning I used to ask myself why don't they call the white foreigners for kwerekwere ? And then I realised it is cos they white people are not in the same jobs as them. You see? Its poverty that drives people to say these things, you see. It's their disadvantaged situation that make them say these things to us. Because the white people have the jobs that are 'out of reach'. So it's not a problem".*

Tawanda's reflections bear the hallmarks of Dlamini's (von Holdt et al, 2011) argument that xenophobic violence must not be understood as simple protest for service delivery. Violence in South Africa should be regarded as a consequence of multiple causes, such as deep-seated power struggles between the 'haves' and 'have nots'. African migrants who find themselves in precarious situations are also situated between the internal conflicts between the citizens (perhaps more those who feel treated as second class citizens) and the state, together with its new elite. Spatial dominance and control over boundaries are part of human conflict. Landau (2010) argues that the restriction of movement is inherited from apartheid. The restrictions that were placed on Black South Africans, is now 'wanted' to be placed, instead, on African migrants. The restriction of movement entails exclusion over space reserved for locals only, jobs. Landau's argument links with Tawanda's reflections, that white foreigners are not called *amakwerekwere*, because they are not entering volatile spaces.

Bauman (1999) argues the construction of borders and ownership of land and urban planning are means of cultural capital. National, regional and local power is maintained through exclusion and inclusion of who belongs where, accessibility and quality of land. Cities, as he argues, are designed and restricted on the quality of land and resources. Wealthy classes control, and have access to, the best parts of town, whereby poorer classes are excluded spatially from participating and accessing the spaces that are reserved for the privileged.

[W]hat we experience on the street, the way people are saying to us. It's not really them. They have learned it from somewhere. It is those people in Parliament who actually think

like this, who says foreigners are bad (Lodi).

Lodi's reflections on the 'origins' of discrimination and anti-immigrant sentiments that are integral parts of African nationals' day-to-day life, fit in with Everatt's (2011) argument about the scapegoating hypothesis of blaming the 'other' for a number of social ills. That said, scapegoating is not an adequate argument for the low-level violence that we are observing in Cape Town. Something else, another proxy, contributes and maintains these negative attitudes. Everatt (2011: 16) provides support for this notion by highlighting how "There is undoubtedly truth to the argument that hostility to African migrants emerges from 'competition of scarce resources' – but those attitudes also have a social base of hostile attitudes which breeds and fosters them." State policies during apartheid, as well as in post-apartheid South Africa, has been marked by hostile attitudes and practices directed towards the migration of foreign African nationals to South Africa.

de Certeau and Giard (1998) posit that spatial configuration and its required uniformity are developed along nationalist legitimisation. In maintaining a 'national heritage', conservative nationalistic ideologies are relied upon in order to ensure the separateness of groups. The divide between groups has been maintained through symbolic meanings, attitudes and behaviours. As Bauman (1998) stated, the way in which language, behaviour within the community, as well as attitudes towards the law developed, was largely an act of resistance in the ghettos. Out of this, a similar argument can be made of Cape Town. In economically depressed areas, such as townships and informal settlements, social and spatial exclusion directed at African migrants can be interpreted as overt and covert laws of resistance to the presence of African migrants.

Belonging and entitlement to specific places are articulated through dress style, the representation of the 'self' and group relations. The same way in which a distinction is drawn between rural and urban dwellers along physical human/individual presentation, lines are drawn between groups of people residing in the townships, informal settlements, and those living in the suburbs and other areas affiliated with affluence (de Certeau & Giard, 1998). The same tactics employed by affluent classes to intimidate and exclude those from economically depressed classes, are used by local South Africans to intimidate and exclude foreign nationals, in particular working class foreigners. Those who are categorised as stateless, disposed and 'unwanted', are disturbing the power relations in the new South Africa. The nervousness and anxiety which is perceived to be brought about with the presence of the

'unwanted' is transformed into conflicts over resources and services (Appadurai, 2006; Bauman, 2007).

Those participants, who have lived elsewhere in South Africa, evaluated their experiences and reasons for moving to Cape Town, on the basis of crime and violence. The violence and crime that Leo, Oscar, Lucien and Abu experienced was predominantly in the workplace. This was noted specifically in terms of bullying and threats from managers and colleagues, along with further exacerbation of economic insecurity, on freedom of movement and personal safety.

As Abu explained:

[I]n Jozi, I was a street vendor, informal vendor. Metro-police would come and take my stuff. I had to go back to the shop and buy other stuff, and then start. It's like I'm moving forward and somebody is pushing me back.

Similarly, Lucien said:

[T]here was too much crime. People used to shoot each other. Kill. Especially people from Zimbabwe. And some Zulus. And then I couldn't manage. I used to work at a barbershop, it was at a busy busy corner. With anything used to happen around. People used to shoot everybody. And at the end of the month, all weekend. And then from being around there working at the barber, all the burglars they knew us, 'he is a barber you don't need to touch him'. But as you move away people started following you. You must be careful when you walk. You must look to the right and then left. I was never stabbed or shot. But ones, I was lost. Then I was robbed, for everything. I had to walk in my underwear. Since I've been in Cape Town it's been good. There are some such areas.

Like Lucien, Abu stated that he finds Cape Town to be better, more diverse, and relatively more inhabited by foreigners, like himself.

In the excerpt below, Leo evaluates (Labov, 1979) past experiences in Pretoria and in Cape Town as a waiter. Leo also evaluates experiences of entering into two different job markets he has never been familiar with before. The process of evaluation, as Essed (1991) points out in line with Labov (1979), is part of reconstructing experiences of discrimination. Evaluation of experiences is the process of situating oneself within societal context and situational power. Leo's evaluation provides significant details about power structures in various employment sectors, as well as the way in which hostility is experienced differently spatially. For example higher degrees of volatility in Johannesburg as supposed to Cape Town.

[B]ut when I came to Cape Town I worked in (name) Camps Bay there. I think

that most of the waiters there were white, and a few, two I think Xhosa girls and one Congolese. But I felt comfortable with the environment at (name). Because they would just allow you to do your duties freely, and the guys from the kitchen they were not so rude like that. Like when you mess up with the menu, they would understand. You know like in a restaurant, like when you write your order from the costumers, sometimes you have been in a hurry or just write, but there are some things which you would need to go to tell the chef to say 'this one, this one said no tomato' or 'this one said don't put cheese or whatever'. Then there [Pretoria] the kitchen was, had local black people, then they would say 'NO go punch in the computer there, we are busy here'. But these other guys here, it was a busy restaurant, an upper class restaurant, they would special you to say 'No what did you say?' so that the order would go being the right order to the costumer. Because all of us would be dealing with the costumer, but these other guys (referring to co-workers in Pretoria), would be like trying to, I felt like they were trying to fix, to make it difficult for us. Of which some other people would make it difficult and would do just leave it, because they would just prepare the wrong order for the costumer. And if you do that the manager would just give you a warning. And if they would pull another order for your order again, you are fired. You are gone. And whilst you are working, there are also a lot of Zimbabweans coming to the door asking for the same job you are doing. [Laughs]. Ya, so it is always difficult, always difficult. Then I started driving taxis. I was just coming from Camps Bay there, and I was just asking them questions, these other guys here. I ask them, 'how do I do what you guys are doing, I am working in a restaurant'. And these other guys told me to say you must have an official driver's licence, and some other few South African papers you are supposed to get. And I just did that. And then I worked in a company there in Salt River there. And I got my taxi. You still remember that small taxi?

Leo's experiences ties in with Everatt's (2011: 32) argument that the 'democratisation of the economy' has not yet taken place in democratic South Africa, and consequently tension is highly visible in spaces where the pressure is heaviest. When Leo evaluates working with Tswana and Zulu people, he stated that there was more tension than when he used to work as a waiter in Cape Town. This may be related to the fact that Johannesburg and Pretoria are two of the most unequal urban centres in the world (Everatt, 2011; Landau, 2010a). As Leo rightfully pointed out, not many white people drive taxis. Unfortunately, inequality and disadvantage in contemporary South Africa follow along the lines of apartheid racial categories. Harris (2003) and Landau (2010) have stressed this issue as well.

According to Appadurai (2006), fear and insecurity is growing all over the world as a consequence of globalisation and intensified mobility. He further argues that due to gross economic uncertainty and insecure livelihood prospects, those minorities (ethnic and otherwise) who pose as a threat to local security and livelihood are classified as the group of 'unwanted'. 'Unwanted' people are, in turn, identified as the root of all social ills by the local

population of a society. For Appadurai (2006: 7, 42-43), minorities are the classical scapegoat, always subjected to prejudice and discrimination.

Throughout all the interviews, the one of the similar themes, or threads which emerged was 'keeping to myself', also described as self-exclusion. Landau and Freemantle (2010) argue that self-exclusion is a tactic used by African immigrants in Johannesburg as a result of societal exclusion. This strategy is employed to preserve one's own safety. In order to avoid living in areas where fear and violence is used as a tool of spatial exclusion, many of the narrators in this project purposely reside in residential areas where their existence is not perceived as a daily threat to the rest of the neighbourhood and community. The neighbourhoods they reside in fall under lower-middle to middle class economic strata. Petkou (2005) argues that West Africans in Johannesburg use exclusion as a consequence of discrimination as a survival strategy.

With regards to the relationship between everyday practices and perceptions of representations, space is a social product that affects spatial configurations, practices and perceptions. Lefebvre's (1991) notion of space and everyday practices and representation of perceptions tie in with experience expressed by almost all the narrators on topics of places of residence, fear and feelings of alienation. Lodi and his family are the one family out of all the respondents who have resided, for long periods of time in Philippi, one of Cape Town's townships. Lodi and his family have been subject to gross physical acts of violence since their arrival in Cape Town:

[S]ince we have been in South Africa already our lives have been so difficult. Very very difficult. Because of the discrimination, the xenophobic things. After two years of being in South Africa, it was in 2002 I think if I don't forget.... Myself I had been staying by the shelter for the Muslims, because I am a Muslim. And my wife she is a Catholic. I had been staying, they came and attack us, just because we are a foreigner. And the time we had been attacked, we told the manager of the camp of that place, but he could not take any action against us. I moved the shelter. When I moved the shelter, my wife, me and my wife we get a room somewhere in Philippi, a place called Samora. And when our kids arrived there, we have been staying there. But one day when I was on my way to work I meet one of those people with (who) attacked us in the shelter. And they want to kill me with the knife. Luckily because the road it was very busy, I escaped them from there, this road. And I run away up the police station. When I arrived to the police station, the police they told me that they could not help me.... He say that we must try and understand for ourselves now. Even themselves the police are normally scared of those people because they may be killed also as..Ya.they must always try to avoid to be to close to those people...But we told them, how are we going to try to be close to avoid them because you won't know that this is a person that wants to kill me, or that this person wants to do anything... But since that time I arrived in South Africa I have not had peace really. Never ever.... The job is something else, but the peace is something else. You see, attacks, I was being attacked not even once, more than hundred times. Always. Sometimes even in

in your house. They come and they attack in the house, just to call you makwerekwere, whatever, they name funny names. One day it was in 2003. My wife she was coming from, it was 2003 in December 24th. Because you are supposed to celebrate Christmas, as she is a Christian. Now, when she was coming from the shop to buy a chicken so that we can celebrate and stuff tomorrow. When she was just walking, because it was near the railway, the peoples that were in the train, because it is easy for them to identify, as they say kwerekwere or foreigner or something, then they just see her and take a stone and they throw that onto her. All this pieces (signalling to his forehead) are cut off. I'm telling you.

What Lodi shared here is one of the many violent incidents that he and his family have experienced as foreign African nationals living in a township in Cape Town. His two sons have been physically attacked on the way to school, as well as in the school. The other narrators do not have similar first hand experiences of physical violence due to their nationality. What is interesting is that throughout the conversations when I asked the participants whether they had experienced any overt violent experiences of discrimination, as someone whom I had spoken to (Lodi) has had such experiences, they all asked where does this person stay? As soon as I would respond 'He stays in Philippi', they all explained that it is due to the place of residence that Lodi had been subjected to so many acts of violence and attacks. Leo said that he consciously did not want to move to the 'location' in order to avoid conflict and attacks. Instead, Leo chooses to work as many hours as he can in order to be able to afford a place in the Southern-Suburbs of Cape Town as to ensure the safety of his wife and children.

A number of previous xenophobia studies in South Africa have attempted to explain discriminatory and violent behaviour as 'the fear of strangers' (xenophobia), and or 'negrophobia'. But is the violence we have seen really xenophobia or 'negrophobia'? Landau (2010) critiques studies that base their arguments on 'negrophobia' as people from Swaziland and Lesotho often are not subjected to violence, but South Asians and Chinese nationals have been. Tawanda's reflections of name calling and everyday discrimination (discussed above) advances the argument that 'negrophobia' is not an adequate explanation of what is going on. This, however, does not mean that the concept of race and its implications on the issue of anti-immigrant hostility can be fully ignored. For instance, "Racism, in sum, is conditioned by economic imperatives, but negotiated through cultural agency: religion, literature, art, science, media and so on" (Sivanandan, 2001: 1). Sivanandan's statement links to Castles' (2008b) hypothesis on the growth of anti-immigrant violence and racism in Germany, when the West

and East were consolidated. Additionally, in the words of Essed (1991: 94): “Racism is almost completely coincided with class exploitation.”

The way in which we construct our domestic space is the same way we draw the line of national and community space and boundaries. These constructions are based on preference and exclusion. The repetition of daily activities inside the home is the same daily activities we perform outside the home (de Certeau, 1998). In similar fashion, Goffman (1978) argues that structures of society are upheld by rituals both in the private and public sphere. The construction of the self is determined by the interaction and the way in which the other person perceives us. Therefore, it is important to look at the context in which talk and utterances are expressed (*ibid*).

Mills (1997: 75) argues that silence is an indicator that the subject matter is not important and thus ignored. Specifically, Mills speaks of race in his book *the Racial Contract*. In the South African context, with regards to anti-immigrant attitudes, the lack of focus and attention on everyday prejudice and discrimination is an indicator that the experiences of African nationals are not important. Similarly, as Everatt (2011) and Landau (2010) argue, the media no longer covers the low level types of violence that is directed at African migrants. Since the violent xenophobic attacks in 2008, physical and non-physical violence only receives minor side columns in the newspapers. Mills (1997) underpins that for those who are privileged (read: white people) do not see race. Issues of race are invisible as the society is structured around the privileged. In the same manner, low-level violence directed at African nationals is invisible to many of us who are not part of spaces where competition around resources are high.

In this chapter, through the use of narrative extracts in concurrence with the theories, I have provided answers to the questions posed in the introduction;

- What are the everyday experiences of African migrants in working class positions (working class in South Africa, not necessarily in country of origin) of everyday prejudice and discrimination?
- How does every day prejudice and discrimination manifest in the lives of the respondents?
- What effect does every day prejudice and discrimination have on their lives? And lastly,
- What are their responses to everyday prejudice and discrimination?

The subjective experiences of Jose, Maria, Lodi, Habimana, Tawanda, Lucien, Oscar, Leo, Rika and Abu have accentuated that in order to understand the magnitude of anti-immigrant sentiments and the continuous reinforcements of xenophobia four stressors need to be considered, scrutinised and analysed in order to more comprehensible understand the ways in which African migrants respond to daily incidents of prejudice and discrimination. From the narratives it is evident that African migrants living on the margins of South African society rely on ‘newly’ formed identity consisting of mutability, unsettledness and vagrancy in reaction to alienation, ‘othering’, belittling, and the ‘gaze’ in order to negotiate their presence within volatile urban spaces.

The four stressors identified - the enforcement of identity, spatial inclusion and exclusion on the basis of belonging, the experience of economic insecurity, and lastly a ‘culture of violence’ – combine in the South African context to work as a lethal marker of unity. This lethal unity is present in everyday practices, in everyday rituals, in everyday interactions, symbols and use of language. The repetitive practices and experiences go unnoticed under the disguise of derogatory name calling and covert signs that signal ‘you do not belong here’. Put slightly differently, “*covert racism* [...] Racism is experienced as “intangible” and seems “very difficult to prove” (Essed, 1991: 107). When the manifestation of *kwerekwere* becomes a part of unnoticed everyday disregarded display of discrimination, when African migrants stop to consciously ask ‘*What did I do to be so black and blue*’³⁰, then the marginalised³¹ are indeed forgotten. The burden of their existence is truly ‘visible invisible’.

³⁰Louis Armstrong’s song title.

³¹See Essed 1991 page 121.

Chapter 7

Conclusion

Having reviewed a vast amount of literature in conjunction with analysis of ten narrative accounts and three key informant interviews, the three forms of migrant identities; mutable, vagrant and unsettled, have emerged out of the findings and review of scholarly work.

The lived experiences of Jose, Maria, Lodi, Habimana, Tawanda, Lucien, Oscar, Leo, Rika and Abu indeed highlight that xenophobia in South Africa is so overt that it has taken a covert disguise. Spaces characterised by tension and contestation are ignored as it is the 'poor' who occupy those spaces, and the 'poor' have a 'culture of violence'. Instead of examining various structural and social components as explanations for xenophobia and 'xenocide' in South Africa, academic literature has become preoccupied with explanations relying on one or two insufficient theories of conflict and tension.

Collective anxiety, obsession with historical roots and national and or ethnic origin determines the boundary between inclusion and exclusion (Murray, 2003) in many societies. This 'struggle' together with an atmosphere of nervousness and anxiety in reaction to the unprecedented movement of people produces hostile spaces. This has also been referred to as the flood of people whose existence is marked by "wasted lives"³² (Dodson, 2010).

Forming an understanding of fear and loathing of the 'other' on the basis of the construction and imposition of a national or group identity does not serve as an adequate explanation for the low-level violence and hostility that migrants are subjected to on a daily basis in South Africa. Explanations of this nature can, in fact, aggravate deeper hostility. When relying on explanations that only rely on one or two stressors (such as national chauvinism and citizenship claims), those who are identified as the perpetrators of prejudice and xenophobic acts of violence also feel grossly alienated. Their response to this power struggle and ignorance of the failures of structural promises post-apartheid reinforces xenophobia, prejudice, dislike, fear and loathing. This power struggle Dlamini (von Holdt et al, 2011) has referred to as class antagonism.

³² Bauman's term.

In the short period of time that this thesis has produced, three types of migrant identity have been identified as responses to everyday prejudice, discrimination and xenophobia. African migrants rely on mutable, vagrant and unsettled identities in efforts to negotiate their existence within contested spaces. The energy that African migrants put in to be 'invisible' in volatile spaces is an indication of friction within South African society. This indication thus accentuates the lack of adequate explanations of xenophobia in South Africa.

The subjective experiences of the participants of this study point to the direction that anti-immigrant attitudes, prejudice, discrimination, and xenophobia are results of active processes that develop into four key stressors: the enforcement of identity, the demarcation of spaces of belonging, the experiences of economic instability, and a 'culture of violence', which continue to reinforce xenophobic attitudes and practices. The continuous perpetuation of discriminatory behaviours indicates deep seated social and structural conflicts. It is conflicts of this nature which tend to be overlooked when xenophobia, prejudice and discrimination in South Africa are explained as the backdrop of 'negrophobia', 'afrophobia', black on black violence', or 'poor on poor violence'.

I hope that despite my subjective interpretations and biases that I have managed to present the stories of ten African migrants together with the literature without destructive bias on the produced outcome. The narratives of the participant often echoed back to Sandemose's Jante Law. The mutable, vagrant and unsettled identities that African migrants rely on as survival tactics in contested spaces, would have not been possible to identified had their subjective everyday experiences not been listened to and emphasised. The covert social norms which Sandemose delineated in his fictional story about the small town boy in Jante, are ever so present in the Mother city. As Sandemose argued; the locals cannot comprehend its (referring to Jante Law) killing effect of the 'other' and the possibilities present or absent as a result of covert social norms.

In order to fully map and understand the scope and nature of fear and loathing, violence and alienation, future studies should look into exploring the subjective experiences of the South African working classes, the 'precarious classes', in unification and comparison to the subjective experiences of African migrants. There are always two sides to any story. Here, I have only presented the side explained and experienced by African migrants and their sense of alienation. It would be a useful endeavour to explore – equally and oppositely – the

sentiments of local South Africans who execute actions and sentiments of xenophobic violence.

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