(Un)Homely in Cape Town: Contested Space and the post-Apartheid Urban Narrative

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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.

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Abstract

Negotiation of urban space is particularly pertinent to South African history as a site of social and spatial conflict resulting from the legislative practices and social engineering of the apartheid government in the form of the Group Areas Act (1950). As a postcolonial and post-apartheid city, Cape Town has the distinction of evolving from pre-apartheid's least segregated city to apartheid's most segregated city, with many of the injustices of the past perpetuated in the post-apartheid era by its current neoliberal order. Yet, in *The Rediscovery of the Ordinary* (1991), South African writer Njabulo Ndebele asserts that Johannesburg has always been, the centre of South African resistance and "spectacle" – and the object of studies such as *Johannesburg: The Elusive Metropolis* (2008). Located at the intersection of urban and postcolonial studies, this study is grounded by the framework of 'critical urban theory' (Michel De Certeau, Henri Lefevre, Neil Brenner), which frames urban space as a "site, medium and outcome" of histories of social power. It therefore reads the post-apartheid narratives of *The Woman Next Door* (2016) by Yewande Omotoso, *Thirteen Cents* (2001) by Sello Duiker and *Living Coloured: Because Black and White Were Taken* (2019) by Yusuf Daniels, as representations of the city as "politically and ideologically mediated, socially contested and therefore malleable" space, by drawing on Sarah Nuttall's assumption of place – specifically the city – as a constitutive subject of certain narratives as well as Homi Bhabha's notion of the "unhomely". The concepts of home, unhoming and homelessness are therefore used to establish how history and space collide to create a palimpsestic reading of Cape Town. Thus, the study maps spatial contestation in central and peripheral locations of the city and raises questions of racialised and class-based (un)belonging as representative of the post-apartheid South African city.

Keywords: Cape Town; post-apartheid; Palimpsest; Unhomely; Spatial; Identity

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Introduction

> If ever there was a town that was about making a deal, it is Johannesburg. Cape Town is known for scenic beauty: the sea, the mountains, the everchanging sky hovering over its naked history. Pretoria has lyrical avenues of acacia trees framing its tidy business centre and austere, gray-brown miles of government buildings that speak of a dedication to mind-control and other forms of order. Durban, on the Indian Ocean to the south, has the enticingly seedy air of a tropical seaport with the accompanying sense of easygoing instant city disorder. Bloemfontein, the other great provincial capital, has yet to develop a describable identity. But it is Johannesburg, ugly, hectic Johannesburg, which draws the energies that make the rest of the country tick. (Matshikiza 222-23)

Considering John Matshikiza's comparison of major South African cities, it is perhaps not unjustified that much of South African literature and its accompanying analysis is centred around Johannesburg. Njabulo Ndebele, in his book of essays entitled *The Rediscovery of the Ordinary* (1991), asserts that it has always been after all, the centre of South African resistance and "spectacle" (31). At the time of writing, Ndebele characterised South African literature by its fast-paced stories which evoke the high drama of historical events, political oppression, and mass exploitation of Black people – mostly associated with the mining industry in Johannesburg. He describes an intensely urban form of literature attempting to transition from a focal point of protest and resistance against apartheid to a more magnified and localised telling of ordinary stories. What emerges however, is a highly focused reading of South African literature which centres the events and unique markers of Johannesburg as emblematic of the country as a whole. As a city whose narratives are subject to far less

scrutiny in comparison to the Johannesburg literary landscape, Cape Town should not be omitted from critique and analysis. Thus, while many books, journal articles, and dissertations are dedicated to Johannesburg as the central literary entity in the country, there is also much value in using similar approaches to examine the literary texts produced in and of Cape Town. Sources relating to and engaging with urban studies of other locations inform this analysis of the novels by tracing the ways in which it can be compared to other cities like Johannesburg, or how it differs in spatiality and identity formation.

In this exploration of Cape Town narratives and the urban landscape through the study of three texts: *The Woman Next Door* (2016) by Yewande Omotoso; *Living Coloured* (2019) by Yusuf Daniels; and *Thirteen Cents* (2000) by Sello Duiker, I will seek to answer various questions related to the city as a contested space within its context as a post-apartheid urban geography. This will be achieved by exploring how certain post-apartheid narratives grapple with Cape Town as an above-mentioned socially contested space. Urban areas are particularly pertinent to South African history as sites of social and spatial conflict resulting from the legislative practices and social engineering of the apartheid government in the form of the Group Areas Act, initially passed in 1950, which “created the legal framework for varying levels of government to establish particular neighbourhoods as 'group areas', where only people of a particular race were able to reside” ("Group Areas Act 1950"). This imposed an almost outright measure of control over urban segregation and the development of urban spaces based on racial division. In terms of urban apartheid, Cape Town was impacted severely due to its previously integrated landscape, relative to the rest of South Africa. Uniquely, Cape Town went from being “pre-Apartheid’s least segregated city…(to) Apartheid’s most segregated city” (Spinks 3).

Cape Town's urban dynamic has a long history of spatial manipulation. It encompasses a myriad of identities, the start of which is often marked by its establishment as a refuelling station by the Dutch East India Trading Company in 1652. It can thus be referred to as a post-colonial city as well as a post-apartheid city, with each of these labels connoting the scars of its past. Cape Town is haunted by its various historical identities, with many of the injustices of the past perpetuated by its current neoliberal order. These identifying markers often intersect, transcending a linear timeline and crossing over each other as the city battles with race, space, and power. This can be seen to be epitomised in the conflict and resistance from local action groups regarding the exhumation of remains in an unearthed burial site during the construction of a hotel in a rapidly gentrifying area of Cape Town. Prestwich Street - a space now lined with cafes, restaurants, and high-end apartment buildings - was discovered to have held the bones of slaves and labourers and was "the site of the gallows and a place of torture" (Shepherd 6). The conflict highlighted the inadequate ways we had of dealing with memory and the failure to reconcile historical injustice with modern commercial development.

These three texts, all set entirely in Cape Town, were chosen for their varied temporalities and generally marginal voices. Viewed together, they create a wide spectrum of the Cape Town imaginary within the broader context of the country. And while not exhaustive, each of the three works capture and portray different Capetonians negotiating vastly different realities within the city and its suburbs. These narratives are written in ways that are "more private, introspective, and confessional" as described by Shaun Irlam (698) as opposed to what may at times be described as the narrative chokehold of political, resistance literature. However, they are not divorced from the socio-political contexts that have birthed them and

can rather be said to have expanded beyond the traditional form of South African protest literature to encapsulate the vast spectrum of modernity. These modern, post-apartheid modes of writing are an important point of study in order for academia to remain abreast of literary trends in the country, especially in light of "new interest in the personal and the local…to the detriment of the strictly national" (Barnard 665). Michael Titlestad has referred to this literary development in the following terms:

> The simultaneous transformation of apartheid cities and their vestigial divisions have made these concatenations primary sites for literary engagements with the simultaneous utopian promise and crippling contradictions of contemporary South Africa. Perhaps for the first time in our history a complex and complicating literature of the urban has emerged. (Titlestad 678)

There are certainly numerous complexities which arise from analysis of the modern South African narrative. One of these complexities is the scope given to exploring lesser-known localities with intense historical entanglements like the suburb of Constantia in *The Woman Next Door* (Omatoso), the spaces of displacement like District Six and the Cape Flats in *Living Coloured* (Daniels), or the immensely urban and spatially contested streets of the Cape Town city centre in *Thirteen Cents* (Duiker). These are the three texts that will form the focus of this study, all of which will be explored through a lens of unhoming and spatial contestation.

Critical Urban Studies

Henri Lefebvre's *The Production of Space* (originally published in 1974) is a starting point for many research undertakings centred around the urban, and his theories are as applicable to Cape Town as a modern metropolis as it is to Paris, for example. However, while Lefebvre provides an apt framework with which to approach the fictional narratives of neoliberal

modern urban settings, there are several scholars who have dealt specifically with notions of space and the urban in post-apartheid narratives. Lefebvre's *Representations of Space* is frequently referenced by these scholars as a framework for reading the African metropolis (Nuttall *Entanglement* 37; Simone 69) along with the works of Michel de Certau and Walter Benjamin "as a way of trying to name neglected urban spatialities and to invent new ones" (Nuttall and Mbembe 198). It is my summation that these three European theorists form the trifecta of urban studies. Thus, while these theorists may form the cornerstone of literary analysis of the urban, their respective theories often maintain a certain distance from the arguments which they frame.

This thesis will be a discussion centred around the city of Cape Town and will utilise a basis of 'critical urban theory' as the applicable theoretical framework. Neil Brenner, as one of the foremost urban theorists explains the field most succinctly in the following:

> Critical urban theory emphasizes the politically and ideologically mediated, socially contested and therefore malleable character of urban space—that is, its continual (re)construction as a site, medium and outcome of historically specific relations of social power. (Brenner 198)

However, it must be noted that the word "urban" is not limited to the physical boundaries of the city. The notion of the urban is an evolving concept and not a static one which refers to a specific time or place. It was Henry Lefebvre, whose seminal text *The Production of Space,* was foundational in explicating on the relationship between the physical urban space and the social relations and capitalist exchanges which produce it. Thus, the definition of the city for the purposes of this thesis will be a loose one. I will operate on the following description of a 'city' (loosely applied) and relate it to Cape Town: "if there is a production of the city, and

social relations in the city, it is a production and reproduction of human beings by human beings, rather than a production of objects. The city has a history, it is the work of a history, that is, of clearly defined people and groups who accomplish this oeuvre, in historical conditions" (Lefebvre *Writings on Cities* 101). Lefebvre further distinguishes between the city and the urban, defining the urban as a "social reality made up of relations" whereas the city is an "immediate reality…and architectural fact" (Lefebvre *Writings on Cities* 103).

Neil Brenner, drawing on Henri Lefebvre, writes that the urban has become:

> a generalized, planetary condition in and through which the accumulation of capital, the regulation of political–economic life, the reproduction of everyday social relations and the contestation of the earth and humanity's possible futures are simultaneously organized and fought out. (Brenner 206)

These formations are predicated, particularly, on the specific historical events which play a significant role in urban formation. The idea that the specific urban conditions are in many ways contextual, with some social contestations taking precedence over others, also introduces notions of exclusion, belonging, and uneven development. This will form the foundation of my discussions with particular reference to South Africa's unique history and how the role that apartheid played in segregating the city can in many ways dictate the inhabitants' socio-economic standing today with regard to uneven development and injustice. It is this critique of existing social structures which upholds the "critical" element of critical urban theory.

Cape Town, as a South African city, cannot be studied in isolation from its historical context. Urban space in Cape Town was largely shaped by the design of Apartheid governance. As

alluded to above, apartheid spatial planning is a legacy which continues to wreak violence on a population still stratified by racial lines which intersect with economic standing. Thus, I will utilize an approach which analyses the bearing of history on the violence of space and architecture (Herscher and Iyer Siddiqi 271). While much of the literature on this topic is centralised on the city of Johannesburg, given its stature as an economic centre within both the country and the continent, there are certain postulations that can be applied to Cape Town given some shared cultural aspects of the two cities. Thus, works such as *Johannesburg: The Elusive Metropolis* (Nuttall and Mbembe) and *Changing Space, Changing City: Johannesburg After Apartheid* (Harrison et al.) are comprehensive texts dealing with spatial politics and urban theory in a South African context which offer insights and useful points of departure for my research undertaking. Both cities can be understood through the conceptual frameworks of "complexity" and "power" and are at the mercy of uneven development which can be attributed to globalization and capitalist hegemony (Pieterse *City Futures* 5). Pieterse's writing is essential to this thesis as he focuses on the notion that "the central problematic that must be addressed is urban inequality" (Pieterse *City Futures* 8) which is a key feature within the thematic representation of Cape Town in the texts. His "radical incrementalism" is particularly pertinent and refers to the "disposition and sensibility that believes in deliberate actions of social transformation but through a multiplicity of processes and imaginations, none of which assumes or asserts a primary significance over other struggles"(Pieterse *City Futures* 6).

Cape Town's Spatial Contestations

> This is a city that slaves built, a port city, a slave city, a colonial city, an apartheid city, and now, as a city being shaped by neoliberal economic-development practices, one of the premier tourist destinations in the world. (Grunebaum 211)

Cape Town is a city of transformation, a city where the period informs the literature, and the past informs the present. This thesis will explore this view and more by examining how these compounding factors in conjunction with the literary imaginary can also serve as a guide to its socio-spatial divisions. Stephen Watson, a veteran Capetonian and writer, compiled and edited a selection of essays about the city of Cape Town. In his introduction to the compilation, entitled *A City Imagined*, Watson wrote that:

> In the past it has been common to hear that Cape Town comprises a tale of two cities only. There is the city of the privileged, their rose and vanilla mansions hugging those contours of privilege close to the city's mountain chain, its forest slopes, and better beaches. On the other hand, there sprawls the immense city of the dispossessed and deprived, the apartheid dormitory towns and squatter camps…So staggering is the distance between the extremes of wealth and poverty in this city, so dramatic the abyss dug by these extremes, that one might be forgiven for believing this tale of two to be the only truth about the place. (Watson 3)

Watson goes on to illustrate that while staggering in its opposition, this is not an exhaustive definition of the city. Cape Town is comprised of many worlds, subcultures, and complexities, nuanced in its variation and vivid in its differences. Overarchingly however, many of these differences are underpinned and determined by the city's layers of social stratification and consequent inequality. It is also comprised of layers of history which has constructed the space. To analyse this, I have chosen three diverse texts published in the post-apartheid era

to act as beacons of space and place in the literary imaginary of vastly different parts of Cape Town shaped by varying identities and communities.

My aim is to study narratives of socio-spatial contest within Cape Town. The intersection of racial, economic, and urban dynamics in Cape Town is represented by several unique social factors and a demographic makeup which facilitates the study of social contest in the city. This is best summarised as follows:

> Cape Town's demographics are radically different to South Africa in not accommodating a Black majority (only 25% of Cape Town's population), but an almost coloured majority (48%), and relatively dominant white minority (21%). This demographic anomaly is a consequence of the Coloured Labour Preference Act (which artificially constrained Black urbanisation), and Cape Town's heritage as the birthplace of coloured people (descendants of mixed unions between Dutch settlers and Malay slaves). (Spinks 19)

An important consideration is thus to not misrepresent Cape Town as a homogenous entity, nor a smooth mesh of variegated elements and sectors. There exists conflict, tension, and - in some cases - resentment. While not much literature exists that can steer this discussion with the specificity required, there are many frameworks which can be adapted for use in a Capetonian context. The idea of the contested space is prominent in urban studies. Regarding Cape Town, any discussion on 'contestation' is loaded and multifaceted. It is imperative that one ask, "what is being contested" and "by whom"?

One of the characteristics of urban space is "the accelerated, extended, and intensified intersections of bodies, landscapes, objects, and technologies (that) defer calcification of

institutional ensembles or fixed territories of belonging" (Simone 69). Cape Town, as a site of contestation, is often embroiled in attempts to resist the formalization of functions and spaces and is subject to rapid development and transition, the damage of which is often masked and left unseen. It is through literary narratives that I will examine the commentary on the consequences of this and how it affects the social make up of Cape Town. I will question how one's location within the city informs identity or vice versa. Further, I will explore how these locations within the city serve as indicators as wealth, status, or poverty, using the characters within the narratives. Mapping urban (and suburban) space through fictional narratives has much precedent in the field of literary studies and embodies a holistic examination of the social, political, historical, and economic dynamics of a place. Essentially, these narratives are responsible for "exploring the interplay of urban environments and human behaviour"(McNamara 5).

Theorising the 'Unhomely'

Postcolonial critic Homi Bhabha – born in India in 1949 – wrote about how "histories and cultures constantly intrude on the present" (Huddart 1). Given that the approach of this thesis is from a post-apartheid focal point, and that the most tangible enactment of the apartheid project was through spatial engineering, Bhabha's conceptual frameworks are pertinent in discussing how history permeates the present in the spatial makeup of the city, leading to spatial contest in the context of a highly racialised city. Bhabha further elaborates on the intrusion of history on the present through his conceptualisation of the home as a place of anxiety and instability which he refers to as the 'unhomely' in particular reference to postcolonial subjectivity which he considers as unhomed by the ravages of the past.

> The recesses of the domestic space become sites for history's most intricate invasions. In that displacement, the borders between home and world become confused; and, uncannily, the private and the public become part of each other, forcing upon us a vision that is as divided as it is disorientating. (Bhabha *The Location of Culture* 9)

In my analysis I develop Bhabha's concept of unhoming to address the way that the post-apartheid subject is unhomed by the racialised spatial demarcations of the past that persist into the present and intersect with identity to constitute the social configurations of the city of Cape Town. One way I achieve this is by using notions of belonging within the spaces inhabited by various subjectivities and the construction of – and subsequent intrusion upon - racial enclaves within certain suburbs. The entanglement in South Africa between race and space is articulated in great depth by Sarah Nuttall whose analysis of the city provides key insights into bridging space and the narrative setting, and which provides a fundamental framework to the entirety of my thesis. Sarah Nuttall echoes Bhabha's theory of the past intruding on the present but develops it - with a specificity pertinent to my own study – "in relation to the post-apartheid present, in particular its literary and cultural formations" (Nuttall *Entanglement* 1) as quoted above. I further draw on Maurice Halbwachs's 'collective memory' and the impact of nostalgia -as associated with a specific place - on the construction of community identity and finally, I further develop the notions or home and belonging as it intersects with space through Bhabha's concept of liminality. I read the protagonist of my third text, Azure, through this lens of liminality, "providing a place from which to speak both of, and as, the minority, the exilic, the marginal and the emergent" (Bhabha *The Location of Culture* 149).

Literature Review

In this literature review I will outline the work of certain literary scholars who have focused predominantly on African and South African urban environments, with a specificity which cannot be found in 'continental' philosophy. These theorists often focus on Johannesburg as "one of Africa's most urbanized settings" (Simone 68) and its recognition within "international urban literature as an exemplar of urbanity in the global South" (Harrison et al. 3). In addition to Johannesburg's continent-wide reputation as a bustling metropolis, the reason for its singularity of focus - and the historical side-lining of Cape narratives – is the predominance of protest and resistance literature with a prominent theme being the depiction of "the history of spectacle" (Ndebele 143) such as the destruction of Sophiatown and the Soweto Uprising of 1976.

One such scholar is Sarah Nuttall, who has placed a lot of analytical focus on Johannesburg - but whose writings are by far the most relevant to my subject matter. Nuttall's works are thematically similar to each other and performs as a binding agent, intersecting the areas of the urban, spatiality, and materiality. With regard to the South African city, Nuttall pays due attention to the "cultural dimensions of city life and form" (Nuttall "City Forms" 740). In the text *Entanglement* (2009), Nuttall approaches the post-apartheid city not from a viewpoint of 'separateness', but from the various overlaps and entanglements which constitute the "post-apartheid present, in particular its literary and cultural formations" (1). Nuttall frequently makes reference to postcolonial theorist, Achille Mbembe's work on the subject, particularly his rejection of the non-linearity of African societies and the entanglement and overlap they represent (Nuttall *Entanglement* 4). Along with Abdoumaliq Simone in his chapter, *People as Infrastructure*, which explores the movements and practices of the inhabitants of

Johannesburg (depicted, however, in generalisable terms) as constituting the makeup and infrastructure of that city, these three authors can be said to dominate the discourse on post-apartheid urban spatiality.

However, this is not to say that the city of Cape Town is devoid of academic attention. In his article *Unravelling the Rainbow: The Remission of Nation in Post-Apartheid Literature* (2004), Shaun Irlam refers to the city as a "regulator of racial identity" (711). In his analysis of Sello Duiker's *The Quiet Violence of Dreams* however, he does not focus on the city space itself, and delves instead into the commodification of race in the subcultures of Cape Town and the protagonist's disillusionment with the gay community. Somewhat closer to my subject matter, Anthony Vital approaches Duiker's *Thirteen Cents* from an ecocritical perspective and the imbrication of the natural world (the ocean and the mountain) with the urban . While Vital acknowledges the negotiation of the urban as a fact of life, he proposes a reading of literature as one way to establish the "relation of city to nature" and that environmental impact should be considered in studying the city (Vital 228). Though important, this falls outside the ambit of this study. While texts such as Vital's may be helpful in engaging with the texts holistically, in that many facets of being (including nature and the environment) intersect with the negotiation of urban space, my own approach is more to do with how the texts I have chosen each "circulates within, rather than merely depicts the flows of consumption, transaction and exchange that the city offers" (Bethlehem 524).

One of the major pitfalls of excluding Cape Town from literary analysis of urban spaces is that Coloured identity is excluded from South African discourse as one of the fundamental forces shaping urbanity in Cape Town which, as suggested above, is similarly excluded from spatial

mapping of South Africa. In *Shame and identity: The Case of the Coloured in South* Africa as well as *You Can't Get Lost in Cape Town* (1987), Zoe Wicomb writes at length about Coloured identity in the context of miscegenation. The latter is a collection of stories spanning the decades of the 1960s to the 1980s apartheid era, depicting the life and intersectional identities of the protagonist, Frieda Shenton. Frieda is a Coloured woman from Namaqualand caught in the racial unbelonging of Coloured identity and the social pressures to adopt behaviours and veneers linked to 'whiteness'. In the title story, *"You Can't Get Lost in Cape Town",* Wicomb depicts the disjuncture of navigating the city as a Coloured woman who must identify as white to obtain an abortion, in contrast to that of her lover's, Michael, who is a white man. Nadia Sanger pertinently observes that, in Cape Town, "Michael's corporeal and cognitive experience of space is linked to historical ownership of place, and the accompanying freedom of movement" (Sanger 87). Frieda's dislocation reinforces a liminality that is imbricated with her Coloured identity. Space and her circumstances conflate and form a constant state of being untethered because she is literally lost and having to navigate the unfamiliar spaces of Cape Town. The "intersections between race and gender" - depicted through "the trauma of her pregnancy (which) is reinforced by the trauma of the racism she experiences"(Handlarski 52) - as a Coloured women is emblematic of the violence wrought on the Coloured body. Frieda's abortion and the accompanying trauma and difficulty of bearing a mixed-race child in apartheid South Africa ties into Wicomb's discourse of 'shame' in her non-fictional work, in the book chapter, "Shame and identity: The Case of the Coloured in South Africa" (Zoë Wicomb, D. Attridge, and R. Jolly 91-2), published in 1998. This instability of Coloured identity can be likened to the liminality and constant state of being 'in-between' in Daniels's *Living Coloured: Because Black and White Were Already Taken* .I will highlight the heterogeneity of Coloured identities (Zoë Wicomb, D. Attridge, and R. Jolly 98)

and also the harmful stereotypes leading to the erasure of Coloured materiality from urban discourse. Given its recent release, there has been comparatively little academic engagement with Daniels's book so far.

In a similar vein to this study, Meg Samuelson - in *(Un)Lawful Subjects of Company: Reading Cape Town from Tavern of the Seas to Corporate City* (2014*)* – frames the city as a palimpsest. Instead of adopting a chronological approach to mapping the city, Samuelson overlays the modern neoliberal structure of the post-apartheid city onto its historical identity as a colonial outpost. Thus, Samuelson parallels the historic and present socio-spatial delineations, overlaying the colonial 'tavern of the seas', with the "recent flush of crime fiction which casts Cape Town – and particularly the urban coastline – as a stage on which thrillers of transnational trafficking unfold" (Samuelson 811). Focusing on a temporal layering space, I argue that *The Woman Next Door* in Chapter One, cannot be divorced from the historical foundations which inform the spatial makeup of the suburb of Constantia in the novel. *The Woman Next Door* (Omotoso) has not been subject to much examination in an academic context. The suburban space, in the novel, is interwoven with the narrative and inseparable from the characterisation. It is thus evident that there is a certain amount of neglect in literary analysis when it comes to suburban narratives of Cape Town. It is my contention that this kind of specificity of literary analysis about the urban space of Cape Town is lacking with regard to the texts I am examining, further cemented by Bethlehem's assertion that "writing on South African cities has been so preoccupied with Johannesburg whose geology as well as social history makes it an exemplary site for such speculations" (Bethlehem 523) as have indicated above. One of the aims of this thesis is to fill this gap on spatial divisions of Cape

Town and the materialities which, within these narratives may inform a discussion on the various contestations implicit in these identity formations.

Chapter Summary

Each chapter of this thesis is underpinned by one central theme which questions how space and spatial contest destabilises notions of home and belonging within identity formation. The first chapter analyses the historical entanglement of the suburban space and its intersection with race in the construction of the racial enclave. *The Woman Next Door* is set in the suburb of Constantia and depicts the development of the relationship between two elderly women, Hortensia – who is Black - and Marion – who is white. The nature of conflict within the novel primarily revolves around space and how the space is impacted by the evolving racial dynamics of the post-apartheid period. This chapter will introduce the concept of the home and the theoretical underpinning of 'unhoming'. Chapter Two will see the conceptual unhoming further developed to encompass the notion of hybridity and Coloured identity through the short narratives of Yusuf Daniels in *Living Coloured: Because Black and White were Taken*. Though not a novel, these narratives depict short snippets (or vignettes) of the author's life traversing the interconnected spaces of District Six and the Cape Flats, which are permanently linked through apartheid spatial interventions and histories of the largescale destruction of Coloured neighbourhoods. I will explore the formation and reification of Coloured identity through displacement using the lenses of collective memory and nostalgia, largely in relation to post-apartheid marginality and discontent. I conclude my analysis with the most jarring depiction of Cape Town in Sello Duiker's *Thirteen Cents* in Chapter Three, which immediately confronts the reader with much distorted notions of childhood. This chapter will be dedicated to exploring the urban imaginary through the eyes of the precariat

and the violence wrought on them by the ordering of the city. Azure, the protagonist in the short novel is a child who lives on the streets but whose state of homelessness is complicated by racial unbelonging because he has blue eyes. The conceptual framework of unhoming is amplified by Azure's precarious negotiation of the streets which he observes but also forms part of. The two aspects of observation and participation will be read together as a type of flânerie which is complexified by the child voice and Azure's occupation of the street as a liminal space.

Limits of the Study

I have limited this study to the three texts mentioned above, though there are many other narrative works and novels which offer insight into the city as a contested space in the post-apartheid era. Lauren Beukes's *Moxyland* (2008*)* offers a dystopian take on the Cape Town city-space and urban conflict in the context of rampant corporate domination and would make for an insightful discussion on urban futurity and neoliberal cityspaces. *Confessions of a Gambler* (2003) by Rayda Jacobs is a novel that was initially included in this thesis, evoking questions around religious and cultural identity in the Cape Town Muslim community, but which I later chose to exclude to narrow the scope and focus of this study. Authors like Zoe Wicomb and J.M. Coetzee have also written fiction set in Cape Town though I have chosen to focus on texts which centred the urban (and suburban) space to a greater degree.

Chapter 1

Geographic Identities and the Home: Mapping Race within Suburban Boundaries in *The Woman Next Door*

The construction of the apartheid city - which Edgar Pieterse describes as "the ultimate paradigm for urban division and exclusion"(Pieterse "Post-Apartheid Geographies" 1) could be characterised by the creation of white suburban enclaves. Historically, this can be said to have been catalysed by a migration out of the 'Old City' as far back as the 1830s, before the more intentional urban engineering of apartheid, allowing the English upper classes to escape the heterogenous mix of the city, deigned as both racially and socially inferior (Coetzer 24). In *The Production of the City as a White Space* (2004*)*, NR Coetzer describes the urban landscape subsequent to this migration as follows:

> Those that remained in what was called Old Cape Town, were the freed-slave and Muslim communities located predominantly in District Two (the area known as the Bo-Kaap), the recently urbanised black labour force and urban poor located predominantly in District One (near the original harbour), and the recently immigrant and working class in District Six (the residential area developed largely in the nineteenth century through laissez-faire mechanisms). (Coetzer 24)

Prior to apartheid, a certain aloof separation was already desirable to the city's white denizens, setting the historical foundations for the creation of the white suburb, rendering the suburb subject to the constant interplay of a dynamic of exclusion and intrusion.

In this chapter I will focus on Yewande Omotoso's *The Woman Next Door* (2016), which can primarily be categorised as a suburban narrative. As a starting point I must clarify that I will not be operating on a literal definition of the word "mapping" as it generally applies to topography, but as a way of imagining the spatial boundaries and divides which operate across the city. Rita Barnard describes this kind of 'mapping' as "a mode of politically enabling interpretation" (Barnard 46). This is particularly relevant to the geographies featured in the novel*, The Woman Next Door*.

Yewande Omotoso's novel is particularly resonant with the post-apartheid context as it tackles race-relations through the lens of two elderly women named Hortensia - who is Black - and Marion – who is white - posited as spectators to various transitory social dynamics. *The Woman Next Door* (2016) is Omotoso's second novel, preceded by *Bom Boy* (2011), which won Omotoso critical acclaim. Both books are set in Cape Town, where Omotoso lived and practiced as an architect. Omotoso also incorporates her own Barbadian roots into the story since Hortensia's family immigrate from Barbados to London, and much of Hortensia's Barbadian heritage is interlaced with experiences of racism in Britain and contributes to her own disdain towards the ingrained racism she experiences in South Africa. However, she is able to maintain a level of privilege by virtue of her education and proximity to whiteness. Many of the attitudes imagined in the novel, where the white suburban space plays a crucial role, are predicated on notions of separateness created behind walls latticed by wealth and racial disparity, conditions which facilitate a high quality of life for expats and international retirees like Hortensia and Peter (her husband) in the novel but are not readily available to many Black South Africans. Omotoso makes this cognisance evident in the following: "South Africa with its new democracy, its long summers and famed medical facilities would ensure

the best conditions as Peter got sicker" (5). Conditions like high quality medical care, modern infrastructure, and a favourable exchange rate for Western foreigners are major selling points for the City of Cape Town but can only exist because of the spatial boundaries which prevent equitable wealth distribution and access to the same.

In Sarah Nuttall's exploration of the 'literary city' she explores "texts which take the city as one of their constitutive subjects rather than as a backdrop to their narratives" (Nuttall *Entanglement* 33) in relation to Johannesburg. In *The Woman Next Door*, the notion of place is vital to the narrative - the suburb of Constantia, located in Cape Town's Southern Suburbs, acts as a constitutive subject and adequately sets up a binary between Hortensia's and Marion's respective racial categories. The historical context of the large suburb of Constantia - a "sought after valuable suburban area with low density" (Donaldson et al. "Urban Land Restitution in Cape Town" 113) - is particularly pertinent to both the contestation and entanglement of race and space.

Some of Constantia's historical context can be understood through the site located in the area known as 'Groot Constantia', South Africa's oldest wine estate. A paragon of Cape Dutch architecture, it was the first national monument in South Africa and the homestead of the first Governor of the Cape, Simon van Der Stel (1679-99), to whom (along with his son Willem Adriaan van der Stel) the establishment of the wine industry of the Cape is attributed - largely through the appropriation of arable land, slave labour, and graft (Thompson 4). Despite this, prior to apartheid, the area was fairly integrated with much farmland owned and leased by families of varying racial and religious categories. In the decades subsequent to the implementation of the Group Areas Act however, Constantia was spatially and racially altered

- evident in ongoing restitution and land claims post-1994 in which “the majority of the landowners are white and the land claimants (who) are demanding for land in the area are mostly Coloured” (Donaldson et al. "Urban Land Restitution in Cape Town" 113). In remaking the area into an upper-class white space however, numerous complexities and racial entanglements unfold. Predominant among these is that the production of the suburb as a functioning social enclave necessitates a Black presence in the form of labour. In *The Woman Next Door*, this takes the form of domestic workers, retail workers, gardeners, and construction workers.

The notion of ‘intrusion’, and conversely, the idea of ‘the enclave’ will feature prominently in this chapter as a way of designating space, and the boundaries implicit in the spatial constructions within the narrative. The suburb is one of the crucial pillars both in the creation of the ‘apartheid city’ and subsequent attempts to dismantle it and the suburb, in this case acting as a racial enclave, remains an insurmountable barrier to the formation and development of a truly integrated city. Much of this can be attributed to “residential integration…essentially left to market forces” (Christopher 454) and given the intimate connection between wealth disparity and race, transformation within the suburbs has been painstakingly slow. Here, the suburb of Constantia is employed in the literary imaginary as the quintessential blueprint of the ‘*white* suburb’ where racial and economic diversity within the population is exceptional and uncommon. The narrative thus depicts white residents attempting to resist the destabilising intrusions in the form of upwardly mobile Black residents and state-assisted land claims, both of which are inextricable from the racial factors driving it forward to characterise the suburb, the racial enclave, and the place of white anchorage, as a contested space.

A prominent theme within the novel is the home, as one of the fundamental building blocks which structure the suburb. In this chapter I will use Derrida's language relating to the archive as an analogy for the home,

> It is thus, in this domiciliation, in this house arrest, that archives take place. The dwelling, this place where they dwell permanently, marks this institutional passage from the private to the public, which does not always mean from the secret to the nonsecret. (Derrida 10)

In what was originally a lecture and later adapted into the book*, Archive Fever* (1995), Jacques Derrida starts by utilising the etymology of the word 'archive', tracing its origins to the Greek description of a house, a domicile, or a place where records commence and are kept. He further goes on to state, "there is no archive without a place of consignation, without a technique of repetition, and without a certain exteriority" (Derrida 14). Within this discussion I draw on the comparison between the archive and literary notions of the home as setting, symbol, or device.

Contested Homes: No. 10 Katterijn Avenue

In *The Woman Next Door*, number 10 Katterijn Avenue is central to the narrative as the site of conflict between the two women - Marion and Hortensia. In the sense that a home belongs to the individual and those who share the home, this six-bedroomed house is archival for both Hortensia, to whom the house belongs, as well as Marion, who contests this by coveting the house and expressing entitlement to it as her first architectural design. For Marion, "she went through periods of ignoring No. 10. And at other times the house consumed her" (30). The house, as contested space and source of conflict becomes representational of a wider, racial tension in the sense that Marion, a white woman, feels

entitled to something owned by her Black neighbour. It is Marion's surprise and disdain for Hortensia as the owner of her house which places the novel firmly in the context of what can be described as the post-apartheid tensions of race and class given the signals of Black intrusion into what is perceived by Marion as white space.

Where previously, legislative grounds would have existed to bar Hortensia from owning a house in a predominantly white suburb – where Hortensia discovered herself to be the only Black resident (5) – in the post-apartheid setting these exclusionary measures are replaced by a host of microaggressions and racist attitudes which are maintained under the guise of exclusivity and elitist tendencies, which may not be acceptable but are not illegal. As Rita Barnard puts it, "old divisions are now articulated and justified in new terms" (Barnard 67). Omotoso captures this particular dynamic in the following where Marion attempts to belittle Hortensia in an authoritative manner at a Katterijn Committee meeting – which is described as "a show of significance that did not exist" (8) or, can be read as the attempt to regain a lost political power at a grassroots level: "We dress for our meetings, Mrs James. We follow rigorous decorum" (7). Hortensia is unhomed by her neighbours who overtly express sentiments that Black people have no belonging in white enclaves beyond positions as labourers or employees. Marion's dismay at a Black woman inhabiting the house she feels entitled to, cements that the house was not designed by Marion for a Black person but with the intent that it would be continually resided in by white people. This is further evocative of the sense of contestation between the two women in which Marion feels it is within her prerogative to extend her belonging to Hortensia's house. Omotoso uses the voice of Marion to narrate her feelings as a character laced with racist attitudes fuelled by resentment, evident in the following,

> It was an insult, a Black woman suddenly in a house Marion had dreamed for decades of possessing; no, a house that was rightfully hers, which other people kept taking…Hortensia James was a thief. (34-5)

This temporal intersection of past injustices and present attitudes is further suggestive of Homi Bhabha's concept of 'the unhomely' which he describes as "the shock of recognition of the world-in-the home, the home-in-the-world" (Bhabha "The World and the Home" 141). Hortensia is unhomed not only by her neighbours but by her awareness of the past and the social context which overlaps with her physical abode. There is a distinctive disjoint that permeates Hortensia's sense of home as well as her sense of self, two elements which ultimately intersect. She describes this unhomeliness thus:

> She'd felt disgust for her surroundings, for the protected white gentry around her and, in her private dark moments, she felt disgust for herself as well…Despite its beauty, Katterijn turned out to be ugly and, to begin with, Hortensia was unable to fathom why. (5)

Omotoso hereby demonstrates "the relationship between literary texts and traumatic histories of place and reading…(and) reading fictional narratives against the grain of material spaces points to how the archive continues into the present" (Tayob 203). Omotoso merges the historical racialised spatial practices which structured the suburb of Constantia with the characterisation of Hortensia to highlight its persistence into the post-apartheid era and how this unhomes Hortensia as a Black person who is cognisant of the history of dispossession, exclusion, and slavery. Omotoso uses Hortensia's life history to provide insight into her character, with occasional interludes of scenes from her past. However, a more prominent device used to construct her character is that of Marion, who acts as a mirror to Hortensia. They bear multiple similarities to each other, each having attained success in related career

paths, Hortensia as a designer and Marion as an architect. In addition, both women are wronged by their late husbands through infidelity and deceit, yet the author creates a fiercely oppositional relationship between them, that includes - and extends beyond - their respective racial categories and Marion's racism.

Despite the glaring differences in race and background between Hortensia and Marion, referenced often in the narrative but pointed out most overtly in the lines occurring at the beginning of the second chapter, "over the years the two women had argued about many things, each new encounter tense with enmity. In truth, they couldn't have been more opposite. Hortensia, black and small-boned, Marion, white, large" (19) , as mentioned above, character mirroring emerges as one of the most prominent devices utilised in the narrative. One way of examining the device within this particular narrative is through Freud's discussion on 'The Uncanny', in which he elucidates extensively on the 'the double' within a narrative that may vacillate between mirroring the character or acting as it's opposite for purposes of development and introspection (Freud 70). The question then is whether this adequately describes the relationship between Marion and Hortensia, who I have already quoted above as being 'opposites'. Much like the relationship between a character and it's double, similarly the dynamic between Marion and Hortensia develops and fluctuates, oscillating between hostility and familiarity throughout. Initially, the source of this doubling is founded upon a contestation of space and place, as with Hortensia's house that Marion covets, which later becomes a base for their personal lives and circumstances. Both women had been betrayed by their husbands with Marion having been misled and left penniless, while Hortensia was forced to reckon with her husband's adultery and a daughter she had not known about until

after his death. Mirroring the characters in this way complicates what would otherwise be a somewhat simplistic binary based on race.

Despite Hortensia being Black, her protestations at her white neighbours' racism are overtly performative, with self-awareness of her own privilege - granted by her education, wealth, and expatriate status – somewhat lacking. This also reinforces the relationship between Marion and Hortensia, by highlighting their shared class status which appears to override Hortensia's racial solidarity. Hortensia's double standards become evident in dialogue transpiring within a committee meeting. A land claim is broached and met with fervent opposition by the residents of Katterijn who, for decades, have profited off the fertile land and seen the value increase exponentially since the original inhabitants were dispossessed,

> 'I am not in agreement with you to push back on the Samsodien claim. Let those who are justly claiming their rights to the land – land owned by hoodlums, I might add – let them claim it.'
>
> 'And the Gierdien woman?' Marion managed to let out in a squeak.
>
> 'This,' Hortensia indicated the pile of papers in front of her, 'is sentimental claptrap and I won't be taking any notice of it at all. That you thought to waste precious committee-meeting time on something so trivial is, indeed, a puzzle to me." (18)

This opposition between Marion and Hortensia highlights their conflict but also complicates Hortensia's character and obstinacy as she positions herself as arbiter on what constitutes a valid claim to the land. After a construction accident which leaves Marion's house damaged and forces her to move into a guesthouse, Hortensia begrudgingly extends an offer to Marion to live with her after Hortensia's doctor expresses concern about her living alone (134). Their spatialities collide as the walls between the two characters are eradicated. This marks a

turning point in the novel where the two women eventually confront their own shortcomings through a forced close proximity and having to directly confront the racialised other. As their relationship progresses, the self and the other become obfuscated and, at times, reversed. In a mirror of the initial exchange, Marion's persona is complexified in the following:

> 'Why would you say "no", Hortensia?'
>
> 'Because it's my land and I can decide what I want to do with it. If Beulah Gierdien has a legitimate claim on it, not some sentimental nonsense, then she should call my lawyer.'…
>
> 'For Heaven's sake, Marion.'
>
> 'I'm sorry,' she snivelled, pulled a tissue from a nearby box. 'I wanted you to say "yes".'
>
> "Hortensia ground her teeth, shook her head. 'Why does it matter so much?'
>
> 'I needed you to be … better.'
>
> 'I don't know what you mean.'
>
> 'See, I'd have said "no" too. If it was my land they wanted. I'd have told them no, go away.' (239)

Marion's adjuration of Hortensia entwines her hopes for herself with her hopes for Hortensia. Marion has expectations of how Hortensia should behave as a Black person which diverge from her own as a white person. However, in this regard Hortensia race and class dynamics are complexified through a threat to her own privilege, in which she opts for class allegiances instead of racial ones. She responds to the situation much like her white counterparts would, which Marion highlights in her capacity as Hortensia's mirror. Chapter 16 of the novel is one in which Marion reckons with her own racist past by reflecting on her life history, which she attempts to articulate in spatial terms starting with her birth in District 6 and her family's social mobility which steers them deeper into predominantly white

neighbourhoods as they accumulated wealth. Marion's realisation of her inaction during apartheid culminates with her attempting to live vicariously through Hortensia, who has the ability to provide some element of reparation to a dispossessed family through allowing a burial on her property. Two important elements emerge from the above, firstly that apartheid history is a spatial history. And secondly, any reparation without action relating to the spatial is difficult and unlikely.

Boundaries of Race and Space

Sarah Nuttall complicates the binary oppositional relationship generally implicit in discussions on Black and white race relations in the following:

> The more dispossession occurred the more blacks and whites depended on each other. There was an intricate entanglement on the earliest colonial frontiers: accompanying whites' search for land was the process of acquiring labour and, in this process, whites became dependent on blacks, and blacks on whites. Precisely as this dependency grew, so whites tried to preserve their difference through ideology – racism. (Nuttall *Entanglement* 2)

With the elimination of legislatively institutionalised racism, the post-apartheid context makes visible a plethora of ways in which the above-mentioned preservation of 'difference' is enacted. The literary imaginary within *The Woman Next Door* articulates these attempts in various, seemingly innocuous, exchanges. The dialogue below between Marion and Agnes, the domestic worker employed by Marion, is one such example.

> 'Why are you keeping your toilet rolls in my pantry, Agnes? When the shopping comes in, when you unload the bags, take your things and keep them at the granny-flat.'

> ‘No, Ma’am.’
>
> ‘What?’ Agnes seldom had cause to use the word ‘no’ when speaking with Marion. In fact Marion couldn’t remember a time she’d ever heard her use it.
>
> ‘This is not my toilet roll, Ma’am. I buy my own.’
>
> ‘Why do you buy your own?’ Marion asked. Whatever could have changed? She’d been working there for decades and understood the rules.
>
> Agnes, wiping down the speckled marble kitchen counter, shrugged. ‘I needed something better, Ma’am.’
>
> One day, soon after this conversation, when Agnes was distracted with laundry, Marion stole into the granny-flat to inspect the bathroom. There was the offending toilet paper. Three-ply. It turned her cheeks crimson and (never to be outdone), on her next trip to Woolworths, Marion selected a large supply of white three-ply toilet roll for herself. (138-139)

The exchange above highlights the blurring of boundaries and varying perceptions of the nature of the relationship respectively held by the two characters. The entanglement described by Nuttall is thus complexified and emphasised by Marion’s expectations of Agnes’s role in relation to her’s, a role - which in Marion’s view - transcends that of an employee and enacts a mode of behaviour which reflects Agnes’s “station in life” (138). It is a social entanglement beyond the employer/employee dynamic with expectations of subordination that trespass into the private aspects of Agnes’s life, in this case her use of toilet paper. Marion’s infantilisation of Agnes emerges in the dialogue as well as Marion’s shock at the word “no”. In response, she behaves much like a parent dealing with a defiant child. Marion attempts to maintain a certain status quo of racial, as well as a concomitant economic subordination by exercising control and maintaining separateness that extends to even the most mundane parts of daily life. Agnes, in turn, by the simple use of the definitive

phrase “No, Ma’am” resists Marion’s attempt to dictate the nature of their relationship and establishes her own boundaries. By purchasing her own supplies according to her preference, Agnes serves to remind Marion that their relationship is a matter of labour exchange, as opposed to a subordinate one marked by blurred boundaries and one-sided familiarity on the part of Marion. This is paralleled by an earlier conversation in the novel where Hortensia remarks to Marion – regarding Agnes - that “she is not like part of your family, she is employed by you. If she were part of your family, she wouldn’t have to clean up every time she visits (23). It is Derrida’s connection between the archive and notions of history or memory which further cements this analogy and hearkens back to Nadine Gordimer’s search for “the link between people and the place that has bred them”(Barnard 43). This part of the exchange signals a complex and familiar dynamic endemic to South African identity. As expressed by Ena Jansen:

> Black people became landless and extremely poor which led to even greater mutual involvement and interdependence…the relationship between black domestic workers and white families over generations has inevitably led to patterns of decorum and behaviour which convey much of the historically-grown entanglement between black and white. (Jansen 3)

The above is also reminiscent of the tension that exists between the different kinds of Black presence in the traditionally white, affluent suburb, in which Black labourers are looked on as necessity and regarded with a kind of ‘benign’ racism while Black residents are further subcategorised into owners or renters. Hortensia is treated as an intruder in the neighbourhood and the other white residents are distinctly unwelcoming and overtly racist towards another Black family, who are renting (8).

Much to the inconvenience of those aligned to a strict separation of races - for example, Marion is horrified at the idea of her children interacting with Agnes's Black child (32) - the maintenance of the wealth and property garnered by white South Africans require/d upkeep and thus workers, often Black.

Destabilising the Boundaries of the Racial Enclave

One of the major ironies that emerges from the narrative is the juxtaposition between two forms of spatial contest within the plot of the novel. As I highlighted initially, Marion covets Hortensia's home and is engulfed by a wholly irrational sense of entitlement which consumes her for decades of her life. Marion designed the house with elements of her own belonging but realised too late that facets of her identity which she inserted into the design would have to be given up. Despite this tenuous claim on the house, she still believes the house should belong to her. Marion's condition in this regard is reflected in the wider contestation in which she opposes the land claim process by the dispossessed families – who previously inhabited the land – and vows to contest their claim. This also signals one of the complications of the post-apartheid context, involving the complexity of racial interaction and the promise of redress, given the perceived intrusion into established white enclaves by people of colour, which is essentially a contestation of the land itself.

As mentioned above, the suburb of Constantia specifically, is a site of dispossession with the example of a land claim in the novel reflective of the real-life resistance by Constantia's residents – in the form of the Constantia Ratepayers and Residents Association (CRRA) which mirrors the Katterijn Committee of the novel- to land restitution and restorative justice. In the novel, the residents contend with a land claim by a large family, the Samsodiens (11),

who had been dispossessed in the 1960s - likely due to the Group Areas Act (1950) which divided residential areas according to racial groupings ("Group Areas Act 1950"). In the narrative, the reaction to this is an automatic opposition:

> The Samsodiens are claiming land. The Vineyard basically. I'm surprised the Von Struikers aren't here, I'll make a call and request they attend the next meeting. It might be their land, but something like this will affect us all. Don't even get me started on what it'll do for property prices. (13)

Marion immediately invokes the belief that property prices might suffer upon a successful land claim, reflective of the unspoken conception of the white area as one of wealth and Black or 'Coloured' people signifying poverty and crime, and thus any such intrusion would result in a depreciation in the value attached to the property, in another sense Marion is expressing the sentiment often encapsulated in the phrase 'there goes the neighbourhood'. Despite the property in question not belonging to Marion but to the absent Von Struikers, the land claim rallies the residents into a unified mode of defence, they are not only seeking to protect the physical land, but also the boundaries of the suburban enclave and their 'home' and way of life attached to it. Despite the legitimacy of the claim in the narrative, "Ludmilla had wanted her to sniff around, find some reason why the Samsodiens shouldn't be granted land in Katterijn" (168), depicting both the destabilising effect of potential restitution as well as the latent desire to maintain some of the injustices of apartheid.

Similarly, in a process that lasted approximately 20 years, The Hadjie Abdullah Solomon Family Trust - upon restitution of the land to the family who were forcibly removed during apartheid - faced resistance from the CRRA and residents who felt that the proposed development of the land was "not in keeping with their living standards" (Dentlinger). Despite

the land having remained vacant and used as a dumpsite, the threat of destabilisation spurred a strong resistance by economically advantaged residents, not unlike the committee in the novel, who were able to utilise the court system to oppose land development. In a very overt manner, the novel reflects the reality of the land as a site of contest and highlights the perpetuation of racialised spaces that, without government intervention, would likely remain divided along racial and economic lines. But despite limited government policies aimed at deracialising spaces, overarchingly, the "reason for ongoing racial segregation in Cape Town is the impact of neoliberalism…(which) has perpetuated and exacerbated the racialized character of the city"(McDonald 284).

In a brief interview with the author regarding the similarity between Samsodiens in the novel and the Solomons in real life, in an interview in the year 2020 Omotoso states that "the family is invented but yes I researched various stories (including interviewing people whose families had gone through similar) and the Solomon story was one of the pieces I researched"(Omotoso). Given the insight provided by the author herself, it may be a fair summation that the long-winded and arduous process imagined in the novel is reflective of the struggles faced by South African land claimants in a somewhat general sense. Though as previously discussed, Hortensia is certainly unhomed by the unwelcoming and hostile environment created for Black people in Katterijn, the spatial history of the land and the forcibly removed previous residents lends to a broader sense of unhoming as well. Beyond eviction and dispossession, the 'unhoming' of the dispossessed families removed to unfamiliar spaces and separated from their neighbours, is evident in that the land itself was also imbricated with an all-encompassing way of life which included economic activity, religious practices (prayers mentioned in below quote), and cultural heritage. Taken from the

website established for the real-life land claimants it is stated, in relation to Islamic prayers ('salaah'),

> Instead of letting western cultures dictate the order of their day, the family worked around their salaah times, beginning after Fajr and finishing before Asr. Islam was an important part of the family life and they were content with life in Constantia.
> ("About - Hajji Ismael Solomon Family Trust")

Land ownership in this way thus provided agency and autonomy to the families who lived there through economic and religious freedom. Dispossession not only stripped these families of their wealth and self-determination but also of their sense of identity anchored by the land that they owned, worked, and lived on. *The Woman Next Door* reflects the additional perspective – not easily confronted – that, in many cases, true restitution is simply not possible and restorative justice is not easily defined or standardised. It also highlights the sentimental attachment to the land, which may at times be unfathomable to its possessors, beyond the economic ramifications of dispossession.

Many of the Muslim families, like the fictional Samsodiens and the real-life Solomon family who – prior to the Group Areas Act – formed integral parts of the farming communities of suburbs like Constantia, relocated into clusters within the Cape Flats which will be discussed in the next chapter as one of the settings of *Living Coloured: Because Black and White were Already Taken* (2019). Thus, the text in Chapter Two becomes a mirror to *The Woman Next Door* in terms of positionality. This is achieved through the differing class status of the subjectivities discussed and the change of narrator to the displaced - in contrast to Chapter One – in an unmediated fashion. The unhomely thus develops a tangibility which culminates in Chapter Three in its most extreme form.

Chapter 2

From District Six to the Cape Flats: Hybrid Identity as Interspatial and Unhomed in *Living Coloured*

> The Coloured South African subject represents a hybridity, a difference 'within', a subject that inhabits the rim of an 'in-between' reality. And the inscription of this borderline existence inhabits a stillness of time and a strangeness of framing that creates the discursive 'image' at the crossroads of history and literature, bridging the home and the world. (Bhabha *The Location of Culture* 13)

Three significant aspects emerge from the extract quoted above and form the three central subsections of this chapter. This consists of hybridity; memory and nostalgia; and the (un)home. This chapter contends that in the current context, these three aspects are rooted in a specific spatial configuration within the city and are inextricably entwined with two specific places consisting of District Six and the Cape Flats. In this chapter I will seek to examine space as a major determinant within the reification and self-perception of Cape Coloured identity through the autobiographical micronarratives of Yusuf Daniels in his book, *Living Coloured: Because Black and White were Taken (2019)*. The book consists of 21 micronarratives, each between four to six pages long. Given their brevity, the stories are seemingly targeted towards an audience with similar histories of displacement and are anchored in space and place. Drawing from Joseph Frank's notion of 'spatial form', Graham Riach describes this as "a way of organizing texts that abandons sequential narrative in favour of a totality formed through an aggregate of parts" (Riach 23). Thus, the short narratives feed

into a broader historical narrative. The short, disjunctive stories set in Cape Town are aptly reflective of the city's apartheid histories of broken space and fractured communities, reflecting the overall theme of spatial memory which is foregrounded by the autobiographical text.

Daniels' text largely engages with a nostalgia inherently tied to spatial memory, in line with a post-apartheid literary tendency which Annie Gagiano describes as extending the local imaginary by " engaging with communities and sub-strata of our society whose variety and vitality were to a large extent hidden by the predominantly racial-political colouring that apartheid writing inevitably reflected"(Gagiano 71). Daniels narrativizes life in a community characterised by dispossession, unhoming and a lack of belonging which persists into the post-apartheid era - with specific reference to the location of memory at District Six and its bond to the 'Cape Flats' where "people classified 'Coloured' were taken from all over the Cape Peninsula and lumped together"(Adhikari 55) under apartheid. Given this close association between various Coloured communities and the Cape Flats, which homes about 60% of the city's residents (Samara 44) and often consists of areas famously marred by violence and conflict, it is unsurprising that these social conditions would dominate post-apartheid discourse on Coloured identity, and also form an integral part of the socio-spatial makeup of the city. Nostalgia will form a key framework of the analysis within this chapter, largely in reference to the location of District Six and its legacy of yearning and spatial contestation. However, the micronarratives also contend with a nostalgia which locates itself in the Cape Flats. This form of contentious nostalgia can be compared to readings and analysis of Jacob Dlamini's *Native Nostalgia* (2009) which grapples with the ethics of the question, "what could be affectionately recollected of apartheid?" (Coullie 198). Dlamini was

criticised for recalling life under apartheid with nostalgia and his critics saw this as a reductive approach to Black suffering. It is this criticism which raises questions on how to recall 'ordinary' life under apartheid without disregard for the wholesale oppression of Black people.

Embodied 'Hybridity' and Coloured Spatiality

In *Living Coloured: Because Black and White were Already Taken,* the author identifies as both 'Coloured' – "we were three really white Coloured kids" (59) and Muslim – "this was the first time in my life that I forgot I was a Muslim" (20). Racial 'hybridity' - which is evident to a very literal extent in the title - "can be seen as the alternative to racist narratives of miscegenation" (Adhikari 93) often associated with Colouredness in South Africa. As Gabeba Baderoon writes,

> In the racial hierarchy of apartheid, "Colouredness" formed the interstitial zone between "native" and "white". A site of acute anxiety… defined solely through negatives, "Colouredness" was imbued with ambiguity. (Baderoon 18)

In the language of apartheid classification, the label of 'Coloured' was applied to those who were in-between, of neither Black or white race but *also* of both Black and white race. This was further complexified through religious and cultural identity, which is evoked in the text through reference to cultural aspects of Coloured identity like the 'Malay Choir' (16) and the Kaapse Klopse (14). Here, "the term 'Malay' was not simply a reference to the geographical origins of slave descendants. From the mid-nineteenth century it was used as a synonym for 'Coloured' Muslims of whatever geographical origin"(Bickford-Smith 24). Thus, the instability of the term "Coloured" inherently undermined the apartheid project of ascribing fixed racial categories through its complexity and fluidity.

In *Outcast Cape Town* (1981), the author, John Western, expresses "the complex and inextricable link between a person's identity and his or her place" (Western 4) and argues that social relations are a primary factor in the structuring of space. He uses Cape Town as a case study to observe this dialectic. I will adopt a similar viewpoint in this chapter by using Daniels's vignettes of the Cape Coloured community as a lens through which to view the dialectics of identity and spatial formation and the way in which spatial organisation of the city plays a key role in the unhoming of Coloured identity. The Cape Coloured community is one formed through place, restriction, and exclusion but also through dominant attitudes, self-identification and a constant fight for agency and recognition. This is particularly apt in relation to the collection of stories in *Living Coloured: Because Black and White were Taken* - referred to as *"Living Coloured"* forthwith. The text compromises a series of autobiographic micronarratives which started out as a Facebook post written by the author and which the author describes in an interview as his story of "random snippets of my life growing up, written the way I speak (Daniels "Living Coloured: Accidental Author's Road from the Cape Flats to Bestsellers List"). In *Living Coloured,* Daniels draws on memory to construct his experience of "growing up on the Cape Flats"(2) in a conversational tone, achieving relatability and a sort of one-sided dialogue with his audience. The book is compiled of vignettes which mimic actual memory by jumping around in time with a diverse array of characters who do not appear consistently through the text. However, the narratives are bound together by fixed geographies and specific localities. In this regard, "place connects stories that do not rely on novelistic conventions of temporality and characterisation" (Smith 39).

In his introduction Daniels addresses the reader directly in the following, “I ask of you, the reader, to see these memories through the eyes of a child who mostly did not know better at the time” (3). The narrative strategy which emerges from the choice of a youthful narrator in the bulk of the short stories could be read as a distancing method to avoid historical inaccuracy or oversight given the highly contentious period of which he writes. However, it also imbues the narrative with a nostalgia reflective of “memory that forgets the socially diverse and difficult aspects”(Faulkner 129) of the past. The author reflects on an ‘inadequate present’ overtly, in reference to widely shared anxieties about safety and crime in the post-apartheid condition which is further elaborated upon below. The narrative strategy of drawing on childhood and memory, and the consequent evocation of presumed childhood innocence, thus effectively divorces the author from some of the suffering endemic to the apartheid period. As Halbwachs describes “the most painful aspects of yesterday's society are forgotten because constraints are felt only so long as they operate and because, by definition, a past constraint has ceased to be operative”(51) .

As previously mentioned, the author ascribes his racial ‘in-betweenness’ on the subtitle of the novel, but it is also depicted within the narratives and is expressed through a certain fluidity inscribed in Coloured identity. This reflects Gabeba Baderoon’s description of the hybridity and creolisation denoted by the label ‘Coloured’:

> The term’s blurred edges created the possibility of “reclassification”, or the movement from one racial identity to another. In effect, “Colouredness” was the fluid middle of the racial hierarchy in South Africa that revealed the permeability of whiteness and blackness. (Baderoon 18)

Daniels's self-identification – and the way he perceives his family members - is intimately connected to Baderoon's description of racial permeability and the instability in assigning racial categories. In a story entitled 'St James Beach Eviction' (59), Daniels narrates a beach trip with his family in which they transgressed on a whites-only space and were subsequently evicted from the space by policemen. Daniels writes,

> I have family who are fair in complexion, and I have other family members who are darker…It is early on a Sunday morning in Portland, Mitchell's Plain. We are going to St James Beach, next to Muizenburg, for the day… You would think we were three white children. We were three really white Coloured kids… Three police vans pull up and about seven policemen jump out of their vans, heading straight for us…Some of them had that Hansie Cronje look. You're not sure if they were white or Coloured. (59-60)

The child 'voice' is particularly effective in the above because it emphasises the government's overly complicated and absurd attempts to police space, which even a child can perceive as ridiculous. Daniels successfully highlights the contradiction and futility in apartheid racial classification and also the fluidity of Coloured identity, which is not fixed in physiology and which the apartheid government tried to counter by proclaiming in 1959 that "the Coloured category be further subdivided into "Cape Coloured, Cape Malay, Griqua, Indian, Chinese, 'other Asiatic', and 'Other Coloured" (Reddy 75). These categories only served to exacerbate the fluidity of Coloured identity. As Daniels relates, "I would dress up in my Labarang outfit on Christmas and move around with my Christian friends. I was soema Joseph that day" (54) – here 'Labarang' refers to the Muslim celebration of Eid. Examining the two narratives in conjunction with each other, depicts how 'Coloured' space becomes imbued with the hybridity of 'Coloured' identity. This narrative depicts the fluidity of identity within the

heterogenous 'Coloured' spaces and the ability to move freely across boundaries of religious identification.

By his own admission Daniels chose to place emphasis on the positive memories associated with his community, though it is difficult to divorce his narrative from the racialised suffering of the era on which he writes. In an address to the reader, the author clarifies,

> It is a collection of my most vivid memories, which carries with it a range of emotions, lovable characters and a glance at a community that found ways of coping with the horrors of apartheid. Sometimes it may seem as if my recollections are stripped of the harrowing oppression, the poor living conditions, the legalised segregation and the systemic racism. But I ask of you, the reader, to see these memories through the eyes of a child who mostly did not know better at the time. (2-3)

This can be read in relation to Dlamini's *Native Nostalgia* where he mourns the post-apartheid era of "an absence of mutual regard, social order, neighbourliness, (and) solidarity" within the Black township (Coullie 202). The nostalgia offered up by this kind of reminiscing complicates a homogenous view of an apartheid experience which is often devoid of elements other than the overt suffering and oppression endemic to the era. Daniels's accounts depict varied experiences of ordinary life while still acknowledging the harsh conditions which structured it. He adds to Dlamini's challenge of a 'master narrative' of suffering, which casts Black South Africans as having "experienced apartheid the same way, suffered the same way and fought the same way against apartheid" (Dlamini 18). Similarly, Daniels speaks to an ongoing persistence of erasure of the Coloured community by a 'master

narrative' of Black struggle, in which the unique struggles - of a 'hybrid' or creolised identity - are often ignored and marginalised.

District Six: Nostalgia and the Imaginary of Home

The importance of space in this regard is inscribed in the very setting of the stories, many of which occur between District Six and the 'Cape Flats,' and which locates the narrative spatially and historically. It also signals a thematic shadow of dispossession and spatial restrictions, setting up a temporal contestation between the two spaces, the former existing solely in the past and the latter persisting into the present. To the reader, the book may function both as an insight-providing reconstruction of what it may have been like to be 'Living Coloured', or, as an intentionally generic source of relatability and nostalgia to a community who are underrepresented in the South African literary landscape. The popular response to Daniels's memories and short narratives reinforces the fundamental importance of nostalgia in the construction of a shared Coloured identity, especially as a community characterised by displacement and unbelonging in the scheme of post-apartheid nation-building and national identity - as evidenced in the subtitle, "because Black and White were already taken". He uses the titles of his short stories such as 'Childhood Games' (23) and 'Heyday Treats' (39) to evoke memory and nostalgia. It is as Kathleen Stewart writes, "in a world of loss and unreality, nostalgia rises to importance as 'the phantasmal, parodic rehabilitation of all lost frames of reference'"(Stewart 228). The area of District Six, as a place entwined with Coloured identity, is widely depicted as a site of memory and dispossession, but which is also subject to romanticisation and "nostalgia that sentimentalized the loss" (Wicomb et al. 95).

The author effectively utilises the matrix of nostalgia to constitute his narrative building and literary subjectivity. He does this by firstly, creating layered temporalities which locate his narratives within specific places and times with the rupture of forced removal acting as a demarcation between the narrative settings; secondly, by drawing on his childhood and reconstructing memories using the child-voice; and lastly, what Hutcheons describes as the "doubling-up of two different times, an inadequate present and an idealized past" (Hutcheon 198). Most of the short narratives in the text oscillate between the two respective spaces of District Six, and some of the suburbs collectively known as the Cape Flats, such as the story 'District Six Kaapse Klopse and the Malay Choir' (13) which encompasses both spaces. Daniels establishes the link between the two spaces by describing the transition, "in the 1970s, we were forcefully removed from our homes in District Six, and we had to move to unfamiliar spaces and start afresh" (16). Through this quote Daniels both links the two spaces, with the presence of the words "move" and "remove" - within the same sentence - being particularly poignant in this regard and secondly, he establishes kinship and anchorage within shared experiences of the Coloured community, given that Daniels himself did not actually live in District Six (5) but had family ties to the area and intimates that his time spent there was formative in his upbringing (16). The following paragraph is particularly resonant with the entwined history of Cape Town and what has come to be the Coloured community in relation to the interconnected spaces of District Six and the Cape Flats. It reads as follows:

> District Six and the associated bleak landscape of destruction provides the space of the story of the city as a narrative of nostalgia, of government brutality, or of resistance against domination.
>
> This is primarily a spatial story. But it is also a racial story, a "Coloured" story if you like, and one which inscribes spatial practice in the city around "Coloured" as victim

> and/or resister…the city, almost implicitly, becomes seen as a particular "Coloured city" defined around the spatial practice of forced removals and Group Areas. (Bank and Minkley 8-9)

The above highlights several pertinent factors which are crucial in the context of spatiality and the Coloured community which include the destruction of District Six, the prevalence of nostalgia as a defining trait of the community, and the entangled history of the Cape and Coloured identity. District Six is one of two inner city areas associated with Coloured identity in Cape Town. The other, known as Bo-Kaap, is a "historical centre of Cape Malay culture and one of the few South African Coloured neighbourhoods to have survived the destruction of apartheid spatial planning intact" (Donaldson et al. "An Uneasy Match" 176). In the text, nostalgia within the Coloured community is signified by the rupture of dispossession. It is also often attached to a specific idealised space, where the relocation from District Six to the various townships of the Cape Flats have become the oppositional but linked binary symbols of this rupture in the timeline. In his stories, Daniels associates the area of District Six with feelings of community, freedom, and safety (16) which tracks with Adhikari's description of feelings of nostalgia for a time and space which cannot be returned to (Adhikari 62). Regarding this rupture and the consequent perception of the loss of a value-system which occurred concomitantly with dispossession and removal, Daniels writes

> The days in District Six were the good old days. We ran about freely; we played with everyone; we were safe there…My other grandfather also lived in the area and we would run between his Bloemhof flat and Mamma's frequently because it was safe to do so. (16)

Notably, Daniels himself was not born in District Six and did not live there but identifies with the space as a source of identity formation. The forced removal of Coloured people from the

area thus serves as a binding factor in the unhoming related to the construction of the Cape Flats as a new site of identity and belonging. Despite later being able to return, “we were mos the first Coloureds to move back there” (90), the space which represents the source of nostalgia no longer exists, except as a construction of memory. In an interview with Daniels, the existence of District Six within memory alone is referenced by the author where he voices his scepticism about being invited back to the area as part of post-apartheid redevelopment efforts, “the company that built in District Six…approached my parents to buy the first unit, but it was just a front for them to show that they were concerned that the Coloured people were getting back into District Six… The rest were all white. It was just a marketing ploy” (Daniels "Yusuf Daniels: Author of Living Coloured"). This also gestures toward ongoing contestation of the space as a site marked by indecision and ineffective attempts at restorative justice, leading to discontent and dissatisfaction.

Though the physical space remains and can be demarcated, the social and historical dimensions, and the memories and perceptions attached to it, do not exist on the physical plane but remain inevitably and inextricably attached to the space itself. It is, in essence, a physical place where history and memory collide to create a palimpsest, only visible and perceived under certain conditions of knowledge by those who possess a perceived historical claim to the space, validated and based on the group construction of this memory. Daniels mentions colourful characters like “my uncle, Boeta Manie, used to keep an eye on me during the parade”(15), and specific streets and markers like “Athlone Stadium”(15) and “refers to specific places with the kind of brevity that assumes familiarity”(Smith 40). In this way the palimpsest emerges through Daniels’s vignettes upon which he superimposes his personal recollections and constructions of memory onto the space with specificity of people

and place. He adds depth and layers to perceptions of places presently characterised by barrenness - as in District Six - and violence and marginality - as with the Cape Flats.

Despite the conditions of the pre-existing District Six having been characterised by being "overcrowded, poorly facilitated and beset with sanitation issues" (Lea 39) – a narrative utilised by the government to initiate its destruction – the area is associated with the values and conditions which many believe defined the community prior to being dispossessed. Some of these widely shared beliefs include respect for elders, lower cost of living, and the longing for close-knit communities coupled with frequent social events (Adhikari 60). Similarly, Daniels makes reference to these ideals within the story entitled 'District Six Kaapse Klopse and the Malay Choir', "even the gangsters back then had respect for older people" and "we ran about freely; we played with everyone; we were safe there" (16). Adhikari writes that "one example of nostalgic commemoration that carries an implicit Coloured subtext is the portrayal of gangsterism as having been relatively innocuous" (Adhikari 90). That these perceptions are commonly and widely held by members of the Coloured community both serves to reinforce the nostalgic romanticisation of the past, and also speak to present feelings of marginalisation and unhoming as a result of perceived hybridity and unbelonging within the post-apartheid nation-building project. This is, of course, not to undermine the objective elements of truth in the belief that life was better prior to the destruction of District Six and the dispossession of land and community and that it became exponentially worse after this, with many of the scourges borne out of this period persisting into the post-apartheid period. The District Six area remains a site of trauma and spatial injustice to those who trace a claim to it and whose occupants were relegated from the central and picturesque sixth district - distinguished by mountainous views and greenery to the "barren

and windswept Cape Flats" (Adhikari 79). It also set off a trajectory of economic and spatial disenfranchisement with little promise of improvement. Thus, District Six occupies a crucial part of the archive of loss in Cape Town given the large-scale destruction which removed 60 000 residents (Layne 55) and maintains intrinsic value within the collective memory of its previous inhabitants and thus within the spatial history of the city itself. It is a space which cannot be divorced from the social and historical make-up of the city, and it is a space which inextricably links the Cape Coloured identity with the city of Cape Town. This is evident within the oral retellings of history and also in nostalgic theatrical expressions set in the area, such as within the lyrics found in the popular musical, *District Six*:

> When the south-easter blows, we will remember
>
> Wherever we go District Six…
>
> When the south-easter blows in a street called Hanover
>
> They will reap what they sow District Six ('When the South-Easter blows').
>
> (David Kramer & Taliep Petersen's District Six)

Within this context, space is key to the transmission of collective memory, given that space is the binding agent which upon which the community is based. It could be said that "a common, shared identification with District Six provided people with a means to cope with a new reality. It allowed them to nurture the stories and symbols of the district, and to dream of a return."(Lea 43). People who were displaced from District Six were bound together by a shared location, and their dispersal formed a distinctive commonality across a multitude of geographies known as the Cape Flats. Daniels's recollections are comprised of both childhood recollection and collective memory which is inherently tied to people and place, using spatial identifiers and street names – such as "my grandfather lived in the area and we would run

between his Bloemhof flat" (16) or "my granny's house on Plymouth Road" (13). The significance of the street names can be read as particularly significant in relation to the removal of the street signs in the apartheid era destruction and which were later displayed in the District Six museum in an exhibition known as *Streets* (Layne 58). The imbrication of spatiality with the historicality and sociality of this period is overt. In Maurice Halbwachs's theorisation on collective memory he writes that:

> Every collective memory unfolds within a spatial framework…It is to space - the space we occupy, traverse, have continual access to, or can at any time reconstruct in thought and imagination - that we must turn our attention. Our thought must focus on it if this or that category of remembrances is to reappear. (Halbwachs 139-40)

One way in which the active performance of collective memory and nostalgia takes place within the Coloured community, and which has persisted well into the post-apartheid era - maintaining a spatial link between District Six and the Cape Flats - is through the uniquely Coloured performances of heritage like the 'Kaapse Klopse' (or 'The Cape Mistrels'), characterised by their brightly coloured uniforms and vivid performances.

> Space plays a vital part in the performative event of the Klopse – the occupation of it during the time of the Carnival as well as the symbolic implications of tracing the route through District Six. Prior to the Group Areas Act, troupes gathered in District Six to begin the parade. Following removals to the Cape Flats, participants gather in the Flats to begin the procession. Troupes are bussed into the city centre, mirroring the journeys undertaken daily by many of the working-class citizens. (Jephta 174)

Daniels makes repeated references to partaking in the Klopse in his narratives and as a uniquely formative experience in his life. He describes the annual event as follows,

> Dancing down the streets of District Six on our way to my aunt's house where she had a table full of treats waiting. My face was fully painted as I hit that stick on the

> street to the beat of the band music…it was like one big carnival right outside my aunty's house, with the whole neighbourhood coming out to watch. Then we were ready to move into the streets and show off to the community…it was a whole day affair and it all ended at Athlone stadium or Hartleyvale Stadium, where all the different troupes competed in the various singing categories… After the prizegiving we would head to Salt River for yet another table of treats and celebrations. (15-16)

The entire festival of the Klopse is thus a testament to the spatial negotiation that Coloured people exert on historical spaces of contestation and enacts the assertion of identity on the streets as a site of reclamation and belonging, despite the navigation of the streets occurring within the limitations of imposed racial boundaries. On this, Amy Jephta writes:

> These experiences have created identity narratives for Cape Coloured people shaped by the history of the country, as well as being deeply rooted in the space and territory of the Flats and its relation to the Cape Town city centre. Through performance events like the Kaapse Klopse, Coloured people have represented, challenged and disturbed their own identity configurations in relation to the space and history of the city and the country. (Jephta 165)

Both the extracts from *Living Coloured* and Amy Jephta's writing respectively, reiterate my contention that spatiality is inextricable from the construction of Coloured identity, in that this spatiality permeates and forms an integral basis of Coloured artforms both in the narratives of Yusuf Daniels as well in the performance of Coloured identity exemplified in the Klopse.

Unhomed: The Cape Flats and Themes of Marginalization

Spatial organisation in the city is crucial for understanding history and society given the predominance of apartheid spatial planning as a major determining factor in the development of Cape Coloured identity. These factors also represent the crux of *Living Coloured* where removal from District Six and the transition to inhabiting the Cape Flats feature prominently and ties into the notion that "being compelled to live in racially homogeneous residential areas under apartheid reified Coloured identity as never before"(Adhikari xiii). Thus, one may view unhoming and unbelonging as major substantiating factors in the formation of Coloured identity under conditions of rupture and removal in the face of having to reforge spatial identities, re-establish community belonging, and come to terms with the exclusionary measures of being physically distanced from the inner city.

Even though much of the legislative boundaries restricting freedom of movement have been eroded and eliminated, in many ways this has not extended to contemporary spatial demarcations. The author writes that his stories depict his upbringing in the Cape Flats,

> The stories featured here track my life and, in particular, my childhood while growing up on the Cape Flats. I lived in Bridgetown until I was 10, then in Portlands, Mitchells Plain for about five years and finally in Surrey Estate for a while…It is a collection of my most vivid memories. (2)

It is here that the word 'planning' in the increasingly trite 'apartheid spatial planning' takes on significant meaning in reference to the persistence of the frameworks implemented to create homogenous racial groupings in Cape Town which remain in the present, despite the abandonment of the legal dictates responsible for its creation. From the above quote it

becomes evident how the author, as a Coloured person, was free to navigate only certain suburbs linked to his racial grouping. The Cape Flats remains largely and exclusively known as 'Coloured' and perceptions of the area are overwhelmingly dominated by the presence of crime and violent gang warfare (Samara 94). Despite this, the persistence of the Cape Flats as inextricably linked to Coloured identity suggests the formation of yet another racial enclave, as explored in Chapter 1.

The links between nostalgia and spatiality thus emerge in the context of dispossession and the prevailing conditions which remain, and which Coloured people were forced to live within by the apartheid government. The Cape Flats offers a prime example of Edward Soja's 'spatial injustice' and the "struggle over geography", a phrase he draws from Edward Said (Soja 2). Soja's spatial (in)justice stems from "the fair and equitable distribution in space of socially valued resources and the opportunities to use them"(Soja et al. 211). Certainly, the basis of apartheid social engineering was intrinsically linked to the inequitable distribution of land and resources. Soja further states that,

> Locational discrimination, created through the biases imposed on certain populations because of their geographical location, is fundamental in the production of spatial injustice and the creation of lasting spatial structures of privilege and advantage. (Soja et al. 211)

With little done to reorganise racial patterns of spatiality, and a post-apartheid neoliberal order in some ways serving to calcify these patterns and limit upward mobility, feelings of marginalisation in both an apartheid and post-apartheid setting has thus resulted in Coloured communities expressing little confidence in the current government and state-led attempts at transformation. This has resulted in the sentiment articulated within the Coloured

community expressing that better conditions existed for Coloured people under apartheid (Adhikari xv).

Feelings of marginalisation and much of the nostalgia within the Coloured communities are imbricated with feelings of safety and security in areas ravaged by violence and daily life-threatening conditions. As Adhikari writes "this sentiment of being trapped in a perpetual state of marginality is captured in the refrain common within South Africa's Coloured community that 'first we were not white enough and now we are not black enough'" (xvi), a phrase also echoed in the title of the book, *Living Coloured: Because Black and White Were Already Taken*. The notion of being caught in-between or 'falling through the cracks' in both the old and new government regimes reinforces the desire to cling to a time where a perception of belonging or security may have prevailed. This perception creates a sort of double unhoming in that apartheid dispossession and subsequent post-apartheid neglect and marginalisation of Coloured people can be read in the narrative as an increasingly bleak and pessimistic view of belonging. Daniels writes that "its not even safe to walk around alone in their area" (32), a sentence which speaks to the simultaneous state of belonging and unbelonging within the enclave in that the children to which he refers have a claim of ownership – as indicated by the choice of diction in "their area" - on the enclave by virtue of their shared Coloured identity but cannot feel safe within it and are subject to a constant threat of violence or crime.

Through his narratives, Daniels taps into a certain discontent among members of the Coloured community and feelings of marginalisation and neglect which further reinforces the spatial binary between the inner-city area of District Six, as an idealised space which

cherished diversity and community spirit, and the social fracture of the decentralised Cape Flats. District Six, as a site of memory and reclamation remains a contested space with Coloured identity cleaved between these two sites. This interstitial existence is highly evocative of the unhomely, which serves to destabilise the enclave and unsettle one's ability to move within one's space. As Bhabha writes, "it is precisely in these banalities that the unhomely stirs, as the violence of a racialized society falls most enduringly on the details of life: where you can sit, or not; how you can live, or not" (Bhabha *The Location of Culture* 15). This is echoed further throughout the text - such as within the narratives entitled 'Yusie the Hustler'; Dangerous Dalties (referring to a type of local fritter); and Manresa Farm' - where Daniels laments the lack of safety experienced by his own children and the conditions which obstruct members of the Coloured community from engaging in the same activities that he partook in, in what he perceives to have been much safer streets (38, 45, 80).

Naturally, one cannot overlook a certain level of romanticizing of the past as nostalgia is wont to achieve. Memory is somewhat unreliable in this regard and the highly publicised violence of the Cape Flats, especially the occurrences of children killed by stray bullets in gang wars and general feelings of unsafety, may sometimes obscure the adversity and oppressive injustices of the apartheid period especially in light of the highly racialised society that pre-dated apartheid by hundreds of years in the Cape (Baderoon 11). My intent in this chapter has been to articulate the way in which Coloured identity in Cape Town is one forged through narrative and memory through social fracture and neglect. I have sought to establish the link between memory and the home to indicate the perpetual unhomeliness in a materiality constantly under threat – and the grasping at a time of perceived safety. It is concisely expressed in the notion of 'an inadequate present and an idealized past'. By analysis of *Living*

Coloured the palimpsest of the city vividly emerges through the significance of memory and nostalgia as crucial to the formation of the Coloured community and the inextricable link between the spatial history of the city of Cape Town and the formation of Coloured identity. This becomes evident using theorisation on the hybrid nature of 'Colouredness' and drawing on the unhomely in the spatial construction of Coloured identity.

Chapter 3

Urban Contestation and the Precarity of Homelessness in *Thirteen Cents*

This chapter will explore the parallel city of the precariat in the post-apartheid setting of Cape Town, South Africa, as imagined by Sello Duiker in the novella entitled *Thirteen Cents* (2000). It engages the city from a street-level and the ways in which the racialised city-space imposes parameters on the body. *Thirteen Cents* is one of three novels written by the late K. Sello Duiker (1974-2005). All which grapple with the travails of inhabiting the post-apartheid urban in various contexts. Though born in Soweto, Johannesburg, Duiker's first two novels, *Thirteen Cents* and *A Quiet Violence of Dreams* (2002) are both set in Cape Town but with the protagonists either moving from or to Johannesburg. *Thirteen Cents,* which draws on Duiker's own experiences of immersion with children living on the streets of Cape Town, imagines the life of an orphaned child – Azure - who leaves Johannesburg, school, and any semblance of a home after the death of his parents. Azure perceives himself to be on the cusp of manhood though he is only 13 years old and must navigate the streets of Cape Town within its shifting power dynamics. It is a place in interregnum, caught between the post-apartheid transitory period and globalized neoliberalism. On the streets of this place is where he is both subjected to and inflicts violence in his bid to survive homelessness and poverty, and is terrorised because of his blue eyes, a recurring motif within the narrative as a source of his unbelonging and unhoming and leads into my discussion on Azure's hybridity. The aim of this chapter is to further develop notions of the home and unhomely within the spatially contested streets of the city of Cape Town, through the narrative of a more overt and somewhat adjacent notion

of the unhomely - which is homelessness – given that "children on the street are seen as out-of-place, a destabilising presence to the social order"(Matthews 102). In this regard, the use of the child-voice becomes a pertinent narrative choice, and one must question how the child narrator functions in relation to place. About the child narrator, and the hybrid space that the child occupies, which will be elaborated upon further below, Madelaine Hron writes that "as children attempt to emulate adult behaviour, speech or cultural practices, they inadvertently render them excessive, or even dangerous" (Hron 29-30). Thus, one of the significant achievements of Azure's child-voice is that he defamiliarizes and destabilises the spatial demarcations of the city. By positioning Azure as a homeless child navigating the streets of the city's wealthier areas, the spatial challenges of the city are rendered through new eyes, that of the 'tabula rasa' – the child upon which the constructs of society have not yet been inscribed.

Azure traverses the urban landscape facing gangsters and encountering the diverse array of the city's poor and homeless, guarding parked cars, and selling his body to wealthy older men to survive. Duiker's rendering of the post-apartheid city of Cape Town as a contested space overtly sets up themes of precarity and inequality in the urban centre, often unseen or patently ignored and masked. By imagining the street child in the most jarring of circumstances, Duiker renders visible some of the most 'undesirable' elements of the city, set against a backdrop of wealth and modernity. This is alluded to in the title "Thirteen Cents", signalling Azure's young age but also the commodification of his body and the lack of worth ascribed to him as a human being. Towards the conclusion of the novel, all he has in his pocket as he reapproaches the city from the mountain is 13 cents (132), which when read

through his own assertion that “money is everything” (16) offers a bleak and pessimistic outlook on his chances of survival.

The Cape Urban

Sarah Nuttall describes, ‘the city’ and ‘the literary’ as one of the archives of the new social configurations of South Africa that are “underwritten by historians and anthropologists” (Nuttall "City Forms" 739). Given that most theoretical focus is centred on Johannesburg as South Africa’s urban centre and thus a representational archetype of the South African city, it is essential to explore the complexities and variances that exist so as not to create homogenous assumptions about South African cities. Duiker himself alludes to this binary in the novella, “daai glad hare, it does nothing for me. This isn’t Joburg,” (14) highlighting the notable cultural differences and expectations between the two cities. “Glad hare”, which refers to smooth or fine hair evokes the white beauty standards which are more distinctive in Johannesburg than in Cape Town - where ‘miscegenation’ and a more overt white presence makes the physical feature more prevalent. He thus positions Cape Town as a white space in contrast to Johannesburg which does not bear the same history of mixed races and suggests that people in Johannesburg bear a more homogenous set of physical features.

Sello Duiker employs the post-apartheid neoliberal city-form of Cape Town to construct the narrative identity of Azure as a street child navigating the treachery of the streets and learning to negotiate the precarious hierarchies that exist as a sort of parallel city. It runs counter to the mainstream, visible portraiture of the city and operates unhindered by formalised structures of authority. Through Azure’s narration he describes power relations on the street and his dependence on more powerful figures explicitly as, “the only way I can

be safe on the streets. There are too many monsters out there" (16). Thus, Duiker sets up the literary imaginary of the city of the usually voiceless precariat, using themes of poverty, exploitation, and sexual violence through the voice of the child narrator to highlight and critique the social failings of the post-apartheid city. By complexifying the city narrative and imagining the voice of a type of subaltern, those who traditionally would not be heard in mainstream discourse, Duiker creates a palimpsest of urban spatialities, providing depth and multiple facets to commonly traversed spaces in the city. In a sense, he enacts what Sarah Nuttall, using De Certeau, describes as follows:

> De Certeau's key insight was that people use cities by constructing who they are, producing a narrative of identity. They make a sentence or a story of particular places in the city, and the city is not available as an overview – the city is the way that it is walked. (Nuttall *Entanglement* 37)

Azure walks the city, providing specific and direct insights in the child voice, a device generally characterised by a certain uninhibited bluntness. Azure is a product of the city; his movements are determined by the spatialities which either protect or endanger him and his search for an identity is mapped by his experiences of these spatialities. However, the narrative of the city is also a product of Azure's existence within it. The way that Duiker's city narrative is created and takes shape is largely dependent on the way in which Azure moves through it. In addition to highlighting these 'neglected urban spatialities', Duiker also subverts notions of the flâneur, reconstructing Azure's flânerie and redefining the literary figure of the city walker through the complexities of the modern city in the Global South, while accounting for the unique racial dynamics of South African society.

> De Certeau suggests that walking establishes the experience of being in the city as "an immense social experience of lacking a place". Postcolonial texts consider the

> implications of "lacking a place," bringing into view material experiences of homelessness and situating the experience in relation to fraught questions of citizenship, home, and belonging. (Herbert 203)

Azure does not find a home or an identity within the city and ultimately must escape from the urban to experience any sort of clarity, which he achieves on the mountain. He also visualises the destruction of the city, concretizing the inability to find a home within its streets and eliminating the possibility of belonging. Home and belonging constitute central themes of the narrative and this chapter, which explores how these concepts converge within the urban setting, or the fraught and treacherous streets upon which Azure lives. Throughout the novel, Azure is exploited and abused by most of the adults that appear in his life, much of which can be read in the context of a post-apartheid racialised society. Azure inhabits multiple sites of hybridity and his narrative of liminality – a sort of transitional state prior to a rite of passage - culminates with him ascending the mountain that overlooks the city to escape the violence of the streets and the powerful gangster, Gerald, who terrorises him and subjects him to sexual abuse and violence. This ascension occurs in both the physical environment as well as the metaphysical space, drawing on themes of hybridity and thirdspace which will be discussed below. These encounters eventually enable him to see what he describes as "the centre of darkness" (164) signalling the city's fraught spatial history and the imbrication of physical place and social memory within the city narrative, particularly in the diction of the sentence, "I have seen the slave-driver of darkness" (164).

Cape Town's coastline and the coastal areas known as the Atlantic Seaboard play a highly politicised role in the social dynamics of the city. Historically, and ubiquitously, described as a 'tavern of the seas', the spatial organisation of the city has long been inextricably linked with

the ocean – colonially in relation to its status as a port and slave colony, and in modern times with tourism and the location of centralised wealth. It has thus long been a globalised city with the arrival of settlers, the passing through of merchant vessels, and the initial arrival of slaves from other parts of the world like Angola. Dorothy Driver writes the following,

> The tavern of the seas, represents not a home but a tarrying place, where men come in one way or another to propagate, for the tavern of the seas is also something of a brothel where liaisons take place between travelling men and local women. Thus the tavern of the seas is a place of the spreading of the European seed, in a different way from the Company Garden (or perhaps it is after all the same). The tavern is about interbreeding and so-called miscegenation, and stands as the sign of a Cape that is "neither African nor European". (Driver 102)

Despite locating his work firmly in the post-apartheid context with few direct references to apartheid, Duiker places on Azure signifiers of the post-*apartheid* context, strategically making this evident in choosing a child narrator who likely had limited awareness of the functioning of the apartheid state. However, imprinted upon Azure's physical features lies the memory of the Cape as a place characterised by its 'miscegenation' and "stands as the sign of a Cape that is neither African nor European"(Driver 102) and is also suggestive of the Cape's specificity and exceptionalism in relation to other South African major cities like Johannesburg which do not share this (un)classification. It is in this way that the layers of history shape and blend with the physical place to reiterate a reading of the city as palimpsest. The above highlights the occurrences on the land, locating the ocean as a port of entry to the violence of the Cape, both in the past and the present, which Duiker hints at in the following extract:

> There's a certain order about it. Out at sea there'll be one or two white faces, mostly surfers. They don't fear the sea. As always they go at it like they own the sea. And

> then still out at sea but closer to the beach you'll find the Coloureds, laughing and frolicking in the water… And then at the water's edge you find black people. We always seem to be scared of water… You can always tell by how we dress that we are scared of water. (151)

Through Azure's mixed feelings about the ocean, Duiker renders it as simultaneously threatening and a place of safety and refuge which affords Azure a space to bathe and find respite from the dangers of the streets (Vital 219) reflective of the opposition created between the disorder of the natural environment and ordered chaos of the urban which imposes certain codes of behaviour and the threat of violence upon transgression. His relationship with the ocean is paralleled by his relationship with the mountain which may be read as signifying a shift in Azure's persona as a place of refuge but also one of vantage where he is able to gain perspective of the urban (dis)order below him. The mountain becomes the site of Azure's envisioning of society's destruction and is coupled with a mythological encounter with a woman named Saartjie – likely based on historical figure Saartjie Baartman – who is "at times maternal and protective of him, defending him against the omnipotent and diabolical T-rex, whom she claims is his father and her husband"(Viljoen "Introduction").

> At the cave I meet a woman who looks like she lived a very long time ago. She is short and her bum is big but she has the lightest smile I've ever seen. She wears only a leather thong and her long breasts are like fruit, like fat pears. She is shy and hides in the cave. I follow her in, careful as I walk. She sits in the corner of the cave while a small fire burns. I go inside and sit next to her. I can't stop looking at her face. She has a beautiful face and a yellow skin that seems to glow. In the cave she looks at home. It is neat. There are carved bones, herbs that make you want to smoke them, clay animals and lots of other small beautiful things. And the floor is the earth. It is the

> softest sand I have ever sat on. I play with it while I stare into her eyes. They are big and sad. (119-20)

Like Azure, Saartjie Baartman represents notions of the body as a site of memory and as a "figure of alterity"(Moudileno 202) within their respective contexts. With the presence of Saartjie, the past merges with the present as a bleak assessment of society's trajectory. Saartjie Baartman – who was taken from Cape Town in 1807 and displayed and exoticized in Europe - is a prominent figure in South African history and is representative of the theft and exploitation the land, and bodies which belonged to the land, were subjected to (Wicomb et al.). Coinciding with the time of the publication of *Thirteen Cents,* a campaign had been ongoing for the restoration of Saartjie Baartman's remains to South Africa from where it was kept at the Muse´e de l'Homme in France. She was ultimately returned in 2002 and buried in the Eastern Cape. The relationship between the two characters, much like that of a mother that Azure never had, can further be read into Zoe Wicomb's description of Black bodies "that bear the marked pigmentation of miscegenation and…bound up with the politics of location"(Wicomb et al. 93) reinforcing the temporal linkages between the two figures. Saartjie Baartman was very literally unhomed and her physical features became an overt display of her otherness to Europeans. Azure's blue eyes bear a similar significance, acting as a marker of difference and unbelonging.

The Bluest Eyes

Azure's blue eyes can be read as a distinctive intertextual reference to Toni Morrison's first novel, *The Bluest Eye* (originally published in 1970) in which the child protagonist, Pecola, an African American girl in a highly racialised society desires nothing more than blue eyes. Thus, a brief comparison of the two characters is useful for locating Duiker's novel in the race-

based spaces which exist in both narratives. Azure, in a sense, is Pecola's most ardent desire made manifest, as a Black child with uniquely blue eyes. Where Pecola's characterisation diverges from that of Azure's however, is that while Azure acts as the narrator in *Thirteen Cents*, Pecola's story is told through the eyes of others, reinforcing her voicelessness as a Black *girl* child and reminiscent of Gayatri Spivak's 'gendered subaltern', one whose "voice is always mediated and appropriated by others"(Kapoor 653). The two characters, however, remain bound together by the notion of blue eyes and what it represents within their respective narratives and the accompanying racialised societies.

Azure represents certain extremes in narrative characterisation which finds a basis in Pecola. Pecola "yearns for the blue eyes of a little white girl"(Morrison 162), a strong indicator of the social dominance of white, western beauty standards which she believes would lead to her being *seen.* For Azure – who narrates, "I wear my blue eyes with fear" (19) - his unique physical features (blue eyes and dark skin) make him distinctive in his society and subject to abuse and violation (1). Another example of this extreme is that Pecola's precarity can be explained in the theoretical underpinnings - elucidated upon in the previous chapter – of 'unhomeliness' which Homi Bhabha explains as having "to do with the uncanny literary and social effects of enforced social accommodation, or historical migrations and cultural relocation"(Bhabha "The World and the Home" 141). Pecola's social context and precarity envelops and consumes her homelife, "as long as she looked the way she did, as long as she was ugly, she would have to stay with these people"(Morrison 43). The relation between 'unhomeliness' and Pecola's circumstances can thus be construed as a deliberate narrative choice by Morrison evident in the following extract relating to homelessness, or the "outdoors":

> Outdoors was the end of something, an irrevocable, physical fact, defining and complementing our metaphysical condition. Being a minority in both caste and class, we moved about anyway on the hem of life, struggling to consolidate our weaknesses and hang on. (Morrison 15)

Therefore, while Pecola can be considered as 'unhomed' in the above context, Azure embodies an extreme form of this because his precarity extends to Toni Morrison's notion of the "outdoors" or *homelessness.* In Chapter One, the 'home' was employed as a device evoking shelter or protection from the 'outdoors' mentioned above, and the 'unhomely' a state in which the world intrudes upon the notion of the home. In this chapter I question the subsequent stripping away of the walls of the home and examine what happens when there is no home, as with Azure, who is wholly exposed to the perils of the outside world. The merger between the 'home' and the outside world is so complete in Azure's case because essentially his only semblance of a home is the streets. Shaun Viljoen writes that, "*Thirteen Cents* is as much about Azure's interrogation and exploration of the temporal and spatial dimensions of his urban world as it is about the social and sexual dimensions" (Viljoen "Introduction" 25). In turn, the author interrogates the newly developing dynamics of race and space on the streets of post-apartheid Cape Town.

Much of Azure's observations of the streets of Cape Town and the contested spaces within are based on his experiences and interactions with the adults who have failed to fulfil their basic social duty of protecting the vulnerable, in this case – the child. Azure is made particularly vulnerable by his distinctive blue eye colour which evoke the racial tensions and perceptions of racial hierarchy of the post-apartheid context. Because of his blue eyes, he

becomes difficult to categorise, failing to fit into typical racial groupings as evidenced in the novel by the following:

> I have blue eyes and a dark skin. I'm used to people staring at me, mostly grown-ups. When I was at school children used to beat me up because I had blue eyes. They hated me for it. (1)
>
> But I can never look at myself too long in the mirror as my blue eyes remind me of the confusing messages they send out to people. I wear my blue eyes with fear because fear is deeper than shame. (19)
>
> 'He thinks he's white because he's got straight hair and a light skin. If you show up with those shoes and your blue eyes, he'll kill you. He'll say, Who the fuck do you think you are? Trying to be white?' (35)

The above contentions are repeated throughout the novella leaving much to contextualise in the still racialised post-apartheid Cape Town setting. Duiker utilises Azure's blue eyes as a motif to evoke commentary of themes endemic to the post-apartheid context. One such theme can be read as a critique of post-apartheid hopes of non-racialism. The below, from Shaun Viljoen's introduction in the Modern African Writing edition of *Thirteen Cents* becomes relevant in this part of the analysis.

> His blue eyes, to characters like the gang leader Gerald, are anomalous, given his dark skin, and provoke and interrogate stereotypical ideas of race, identity, and social hierarchy. Azure troubles the main racial categories of apartheid identity, "white," "Coloured," and "black"—he is none of them and at the same time all of them. (Viljoen "Introduction")

The idea of 'non-racialism' – to eliminate race as a defining factor in society and to instead embrace a singular human race (Viljoen "Non-Racialism Remains a Fiction" 46) – has long been a preeminent ideal within post-apartheid discourse. Duiker effectively expresses a

critique and highlights the flawed (at times unrealistic) nature of this ideal through imagining Azure's physical features and the hardship he experiences as a result of this overt physical 'anomaly' which combines some of the most distinctive markers of respective races. Thus, what should theoretically signify 'non-racialism' which transcends social groupings and demarcations based on physical features generally beyond human control – something which is further emphasised by Azure being a child – becomes a source of suffering and unbelonging for Azure. As Daniel Hammet writes:

> Non-racialism, despite its centrality to post-apartheid nation-building discourses, remains an elusive concept. It is an ideal located at the heart of the new South African nation, a founding principle of the Constitution and a key theme of citizenship education projects. However, the conversion of this aspiration into everyday reality is problematic, contested by daily encounters with racially framed social and spatial divisions and the frequent re-inscription of race into everyday life. (Hammett 71)

Azure's blue eyes combined with his dark skin becomes a temporal paradox for him and serves to 'unhome' him even further by negating his belonging to a particular racial group, locating him instead in a sort of hybridity. Though it should theoretically mirror present or future tense ideas beyond constructions of race – reminiscent of the refrain in the author's other novel, "perhaps the future of mankind lies in each other, not in separate continents with separate people. We are still evolving as a species, our differences are merging" (Duiker *The Quiet Violence of Dreams* 456), it instead serves as a reminder of historical violence wrought upon Black people. It alludes to perceptions of miscegenation, the accompanying shame of the Black body, and racial hierarchies. This is made particularly evident in dialogue between Azure and his friend Vincent who also lives on the streets and is also from

Johannesburg. In the conversation they are outsiders taking measure of the racial dynamics in Cape Town. Vincent remarks about Allen, a 'white-passing' gangster, "It's that white thing. It just eats him up that he's not all white" (37). In the same conversation it is established by the two that "Cape Town is fucked up" (37) and so is its people, "they're also fucked up (37)". The imbrication of the actual place - as a deeply racialised space - and its people is highlighted, subverting hopes of nation-building through moving beyond racial barriers and positioning Cape Town as a city where race and miscegenation is endemic to the social dynamics of the city.

Instead of a hope for the future, Azure becomes representative of a population marred by historical oppression and exploitation that even within a post-apartheid context is largely impoverished and inhibited by spatial demarcations. His physical features bear a painful reminder of what Sarah Nuttall describes as "creolisation (that) carries with it a particularly vivid sense (compared to, say, notions of hybridity and syncretism) of the cruelty that processes of mixing have involved"(Nuttall *Entanglement* 25). It is in this way that Duiker attempts to subvert post-apartheid ideals and points to the persistence of race-based inequality in modernity and the lasting effects of historic scars.

The Post-Apartheid Flâneur

Much like I discussed in previous chapters, 'the street' - as place - acts as a constitutive subject in the narrative, and not merely a backdrop to the plot since the street is also Azure's turbulent and unfixed home. Through *Thirteen Cents*, one witnesses the fluid character of the street and how it may act as a different space entirely based on the relation that the characters have to it and the intersecting power dynamic which affects the nature of the

space as a place of contest. To Azure, a child, it is a treacherous and dangerous place where threat levels vary and where spatial contestation renders him powerless and without belonging within the urban environment. To the homeless and the untethered, the street divides into territories with varying power dynamics between the spaces that require careful negotiation or to be avoided altogether. This is at times a markedly different experience to his counterparts who share the streets but who often hold the balance of power in transactions and interactions with Azure. It is this configuration which Abdoumaliq Simone describes as the way in which "the city becomes legible for specific people at given places and times"(Simone 70).

The prominent role of the street within the urban space in the narrative is evocative of reading a uniquely South African iteration of the concept of flânerie. The figure of the Flâneur is a familiar one within discussions regarding modernity and the literary urban-scape as a "spatial practice of specific sites"(Shields 65). The idea of the city-stroller who both depicts and observes the city, is a useful trope for creating the city-narrative and interrogating it. Though Benjamin writes of Paris as "the promised land of the flâneur", the term has become adaptable in its usage and has spawned significant literary tropes. The flâneur can be read as a lens or even a tool to critically examine the city space. The flâneur is simultaneously distant and immersed, critical of their surroundings but flawed in their outlook. The city in this way becomes the above-mentioned palimpsest in which the figure of the flâneur can be superimposed onto both Azure, as the protagonist whose thoughts and opinions the reader is privy to, as well as the author, Sello Duiker himself, who depicts the generally invisible sides of the city, spawning a critical appraisal of its socio-spatial dimensions.

My own definition of the flaneur as it relates to Azure can be viewed through a reading of the following quote from the novel:

> My feet are sore, they have walked too much. My eyes hurt, they have seen too much. And it never ends. It just keeps going. I can hear a clock ticking in my head. I can hear bicycle spokes running, a car speeding. Speeding very fast, screeching. That sound, it goes on forever. (65)

What emerges from Azure's lament is the double use of "my" followed by "they", signalling his lack of control over his circumstances and his own body. His movements through the streets are dictated by the streets themselves and not by his own volition, in such a way that the urban is imposed on him and not the other way around. This flaneur has no retreat, no respite, and no sanctuary to return to from his flânerie. It is flânerie in its most extreme form in that he is so enmeshed with the environment, he becomes a part of the street – he embodies the title "street child" - to the extent that the evocation of the passage of time (in the form of a 'ticking clock') combined with the inescapable urban sounds which trespass upon his consciousness evokes the control that his temporality has over his body. Azure is simultaneously stuck in the space and untethered to it.

Reading Azure as the flâneur (and subsequently as the 'post-apartheid flâneur) in comparison to Zakes Mda's Toloki in his novel, *Ways of Dying* (1995), which is set in an unspecified South African city, allows for commenting on and dissecting the similarities and variances which occur between these characters. Toloki is a self-described 'professional mourner' with an eccentric style of dress, a kind of "caricature of the 'gentleman stroller' envisioned by Baudelaire"(Ngara 17). Both Toloki and Azure are observers of the street, contemplating their surroundings through complete immersion, each seeking to – as originally written by

Baudelaire - “establish his dwelling in the throng, in the ebb and flow, the bustle, the fleeting and the infinite”(Baudelaire as quoted in Tester 2). Where the flaneur chooses to home himself in the metaphysical spaces of the streets, Azure is unhomed by his precarious existence and the street acts as a liminal space for him, similarly with Toloki, “the roaming voyeur is unhomed until he locates himself in the modern tableaux”(Johnson 321) and seeks fulfilment through roaming the city (Tester 7). Azure is empty in a different sense because he is unhomed in mind and body and has no belonging. He does not belong on the streets but inhabits it because the conflation of history and society has determined his circumstances. Toloki, “struts like a king, for today the whole city belongs to him”(Mda 45). Toloki and Azure are bound by their similarly observational natures and survivalism. However, Toloki “fashion(s) his own story of the city rather than becoming helplessly subject to it”(Ngara 18). Azure, as a streetchild in Cape Town - unlike Toloki - is viewed as ‘miscegenated’ and thus caught in interstitial racialised spaces, the violence of the streets and the precarity of existence.

Liminality and the Street

The first section of this chapter explores the narrative significance of Azure’s eye colour while the second examines the role of ‘the street’ in relation to Azure’s flânerie. This third section uses Azure’s liminal state to create an intersection between these two elements of the novel, his eye colour and the streets which home and unhome him, in Homi’s Bhabba’s theories of *hybridity* and *thirdspace.* In triangulating the three concepts of liminality, hybridity, and thirdspace, it is useful to understand the intertextuality and commonalities which exist between Duiker’s characterisation and other texts which are known to have influenced his writing. One such example is South African author, Bessie Head’s *A Question of Power* (1973)

in which the Coloured protagonist, Elizabeth, who is unable to find a definitive home in either the Black or white racial space, undergoes a physical and spiritual journey from a place of precarity in search of safety and belonging, cutting the figure of hybridity in a distinctive and overt way. Azure's hybridity is rooted in his racial unbelonging, much like Elizabeth's who "becomes an 'unhomely' refugee who carries the burden of two cultures while excluded from "both"(Moosavinia and Hosseini 340), as well as being caught in the transition between childhood and adulthood. Regarding Elizabeth, Moosavinia and Hosseini writes the following based on Bhabha's theoretical underpinning:

> He posits hybridity as a form of 'liminal' space, where the 'cutting edge of translation and negotiation' occurs. He terms this space the 'Third Space.' Elizabeth, as a Coloured, belongs to this space. She has been placed in the 'in-between' space of Botswana. She is a liminal figure on the verge of the Kalahari desert. (Moosavinia and Hosseini 335)

In addition, Duiker was also heavily influenced by Ben Okri's work *The Famished Road (1991)*, in which the child protagonist, Azaro, bears notable similarities to Azure- including their names - (Viljoen "Introduction"). Both novels are written in the first person with child narrators at the helm and in both narratives the street acts as a site of contest, "the 'Third Space'…inhabited by the liminal figure of the hybrid"(Moosavinia and Hosseini 336). *The Famished Road* and *Thirteen Cents* are both titles evocative of liminality and a state of poverty in which the child narrators are caught in the interstices of a nation in transition. *The Famished Road,* set in a Nigeria transitioning to independence, embodies many of the characteristics of the postcolonial novel and endeavours to "explore the radical potential of hybridity, provide a comprehensive critique of Eurocentricism, debunk essentialist notions of the nation, race, ethnicity etc."(Mathuray 1100). It also deals with the disappointments and

failures of nation building to achieve an equitable modernity. As Okri writes:

> He saw our people drowning in poverty, in famine, drought, in divisiveness and the blood of war… He saw the rich of our country, he saw the array of our politicians, how corruptible they were…he saw the widening pit between those who have and those who don't. (Book 8, Chapter 1)

Okri directly addresses many of the issues endemic to the post-colonial state of African nations which, though written in 1991, persist well into the 21st century. It is particularly the disillusionment of a unified nation beyond the widening wealth gaps and poor governance which overshadows Duiker's writing nearly a full decade after the publication of *The Famished Road.* The post-apartheid condition of South Africa shares many of the scourges facing the post-independent Nigeria in the narrative, with vulnerable populations like children and women – who Okri describes as "inheritors of the miracle of forbearance" (Book 8, Chapter 1) - bearing the brunt of impoverishment and insecurity, and which both novels highlight on multiple occasions. In *Thirteen Cents,* the women characters are frequently associated with violence and rape (14, 138, 140) and appear as another figure associated with the street as a liminal space, the prostitute.

Azure's observations of the city and its inhabitants, mostly in relation to his own experiences and based on his interactions are coloured by elements of the child-narrator. They are presented in a distinctly matter-of-fact tone - indicative of a sense of categorical acceptance rather than resignation – and evocative of his treacherous circumstances which have little hope of change or improvement. The child-voice is reinforced by Azure's definitive manner of speaking but also by his denial of his own childhood in the following quote,

> I must understand what it means to be a grown-up if I'm going to survive. That's what they all keep telling me. Grow up. Fast. Very fast. Lightning speed. Everything is always like that. Quick. You must act quickly. Understand quickly. Otherwise someone will fuck you up nicely. They'll beat you up so that you must always remember. (66-67)

Azaro is a "spirit child" possessing an innate sense of unbelonging with half his being inhabiting the spirit world and seeking to return to it fully (Okri Book 1 Chapter 1). In *The Famished Road,* the street – a recurring motif as in *Thirteen Cents* - becomes a liminal space for Azaro where his hybridity is enacted by Okri in full,

> And when the spaces in the street began to expand…transfiguring the area into an expanse of sacred fields, I realised with a shock that it was the strangeness which was so familiar…They were the twilight voices of my spirit companions, luring me to the world of dreams, away from this world where no one cared about me, enticing me to a world where I would never be lost. (Okri Book 1 Chapter 4)

Thus, in both narratives, the street - as a site of thirdspace - enacts the hybridity of living and unliving where Azure is constantly trying to survive and Azaro is caught between the world of the living and the spirit world. The street is both a place of danger, in contrast to the shelter of a home, and a necessity as a tool upon which the protagonists must travel to safety. This echoes Bhabha's framework which designates the thirdspace as being a place of transition and 'in-between' for the liminal figure (Bhabha *The Location of Culture* 224). Azure narrates this space as "roads to hell" (66), where his dreams intersect with his reality, the threat of which makes him believe that he must quickly "grow up" in order to secure his survival (66). There is a sudden shift towards the supernatural toward the end of the novel where Azure attains a measure of clarity regarding his circumstances entwined with the social reality of the city.

> I open my eyes. I have seen the centre of darkness. I have seen the slave-driver of darkness and he is a mad bastard. I know his secrets. I know what he does when we sleep. My mother is dead. My father is dead. (164)

At this point in the narrative, Azure's temporality depicts the palimpsest of the city. Through his visions of Saartjie the layers of the past and the present and the real and the supernatural merge. Saartjie is told to "go back into the earth" (127), but the absence of this kind of closure for Saartjie – in the form of a burial - in Azure's visions is evocative of the tension between honouring memory without really achieving reparation for past wrongs. Through reading Azure's dead mother and father as Saartjie Baartman, and the many other Black bodies who were casualties of the city's dark history, in light of the absence of true reparations for what was taken, and structural damage to the space and people which persists, Azure's development as a character can only move forward once he envisions the destruction of all remnants of the city's spatial history, determined by the same colonial powers that dictated the course of Saartjie Baartman's life. Duiker describes the city as palimpsest through Azure's visions and his realisations of the dark centre which radiates outward becomes a bleak indictment of both the failures of the post-apartheid city, which has maintained the spatial demarcations exacerbating inequality as well as the failures of modernity which has allowed children, and specifically Black bodies, to fall through the cracks of society. Azure "serves as a gruesome reminder that post-racial South Africa has reneged on its promise of social equality and regard for human rights"(Ngom 54).

Given the post-apartheid setting of *Thirteen Cents,* it has been useful to approach analyses of the novel through its intertextuality and, in comparison to some of the author's literary influences, thus establishing a contextual understanding by merging post-colonial theoretical

underpinnings with South African and African literary fiction. It is through these texts that social history and contested space converges with narrative fiction to create the story of the city. To conclude this chapter, it becomes evident that Duiker, through Azure's liminality, destabilises the modern cityscape by imagining the voice of the subaltern, allowing the concept of hybridity to be read into his construction of the multi-layered city space. I have sought to convey Azure's trapped existence, where he is stunted by the urban environment and caught in the interstices of childhood and adulthood. Azure represents a temporal intersection of the past and the present, the culmination of the unhomely as developed in the previous two chapters. Through the eyes of the child, the reader is drawn to a consciousness of futurity based on materialities conceived of by the past. It is this past that remains embedded in the space, and the spatial ordering of the city, leading to the precarious environment which is unable to home a childlike Azure. Thus, it is through the effectiveness of the child-narrator who does not 'belong' that the nuances of the city-space emerge, and that the literary city becomes a complex setting that transcends material ordering through the emergence of thirdspace.

Conclusion

Through three chapters, this thesis develops the different iterations of being unhomed through temporalities which see social context and history intruding on identity formation and belonging. It is my assertion that this unhoming is mainly achieved through space in which the spatial makeup of the city plays an integral role in identity and leads to various sites of contest which determine and affect subjectivity. Thus, I have primarily focused on the use of space in the formation of the literary imaginary within the texts I have analysed. Through my analysis I have attempted to establish the multi-faceted role of space and spatial history, specifically the city-space, in reading characterisation and narrative identity. I have focused on Cape Town as a site of historical and contemporary spatial contest given its highly racialised past and concomitant spatial divisions based on race which, as I have argued, have significantly affected and – to a large extent – *determined* the social makeup of the city. Edgar Pieterse discusses "the inability to recognise and name the inherently heterogeneous, hybrid, impure and contested nature of the social as manifested in ubiquitous urban cultures of contemporary invention"(Pieterse "Post-Apartheid Geographies" 2). It is this inability to recognise and name that is countered through the narrative imaginary and the depiction of memory in the texts analysed in this thesis. The social fracture depicted in the three texts, when viewed through the lens of unhoming, articulates the hybridity and contest mentioned by Pieterse, and constructs a narrative of individual materiality within the urban

As I have mentioned in my introduction, academic endeavours relating to South African spatial history have largely been focused on Johannesburg as the larger metropolis in the nation (Barnard; Nuttall and Mbembe). However, I have found the city of Cape Town to

possess a different kind of intrigue as a place of scenic beauty, international appeal, and inordinate wealth in relation to the rest of the country (McDonald 44), all of which is paired with uneven development, severe inequality, poverty and homelessness. It is a city of contradiction and vastly different experiences and subjectivity which can be mapped through spatial determinants like history, race, and identity and which I have attempted to achieve in my selection of texts. Where "Johannesburg is proud that history and beauty and all that bunk aren't a significant feature of its landscape"(Matshikiza 223), Cape Town's racialised and fraught past is imprinted on the landscape and permeates the spatial demarcations which configure the city and the suburbs - and its racial enclaves - and which I have discussed at length in this thesis. These three facets mentioned above – history, race and identity - when examined in the context of space, comprise the foundation of my literary analysis and inform my reading of the narrative city as a palimpsest, given the shadow of the past which colours the negotiation of the city as a home to its inhabitants and in some cases, its failings in that regard. Writing on the postcolonial city, Patke extracts the following from Walter Benjamin's *Arcades Project*, "it is traversed in space but studied in time. It historicizes space. Through that space, which is always haunted by its own history, walks a typology of marginal characters" (4). Each of my three chapters deal with the negotiation of urban spaces by the various protagonists who are stifled by their respective marginal subjectivities and are caught in interstitial existences in different ways.

I explore the way that the spaces that they inhabit plays a significant role in this marginalisation. Each protagonist can be read as transgressing on spaces which are not designed for them, from the white suburban enclave to the inhospitable Cape Flats, and finally, the treacherous streets where the threat of violence and danger is constant and

always imminent. The layers of history which emerge through the various subjectivities negotiating the contested city-space combine to formulate my reading of the city as a palimpsest in which space becomes more than place, encompassing the fluid identity of the city as postcolonial, post-apartheid, neo-liberal and global. The texts chosen for this study are all anchored in the specific spaces through their respective settings. Each uses space with significant historical imprints where the past and present collide in the physical space to help shape the narrative. One of the primary aims in choosing these particular texts was also to speak to what Shaun Irlam describes as the post-apartheid trend towards the "literature of the unheard" (Irlam 715). The three texts respectively engage with generally marginalised voices such as elderly women, the child narrator, and the Cape Coloured subjectivity. It forms part of both Ndebele and Irlams descriptions of post-apartheid literature which is introspective, confessional and diversifies the homogeneity of the 'national narrative' while still engaging with – but not necessarily centering - the social and political contexts. This thesis intervenes by contending that this is largely achieved through anchoring the imaginary of the narratives in distinctive and identifiable spaces within the city. The limitations discernible in this, is that even further diversification of narrative voices is required in post-apartheid literary analysis, in which an array of various subjectivities and identities are often unheard.

In each chapter I have a explored an experience of the city through the different imaginary constructed in the narrative. These constructions offer various viewpoints achieved through the depictions of different racial categorisations, class structures, ages, and most importantly, the spatial demarcations which constitute the respective settings. In Chapter One, I sought to introduce and establish the post-apartheid condition using Yewande

Omotoso's *The Woman Next Door.* Delving into a brief history of the narrative setting of Constantia allowed me to contextualise the city's present through its colonial past and the racial dynamics which played a significant role in the spatial make-up of the city even prior to the more organised systematic spatial demarcation by the apartheid government. *The Woman Next Door* also utilises the setting of the suburb of Constantia as a 'transhistorical site' and gestures towards the imbrication of spatial history and identity within the notion of unhoming. This formed a large part of the theoretical basis of my analysis. In this regard, the following can be viewed as an encapsulation of the theory underpinning my analysis, "although the 'unhomely' is a paradigmatic colonial and post-colonial condition, it has a resonance that can be heard distinctly, if erratically, in fictions that negotiate the powers of cultural difference in a range of transhistorical sites (Bhabha *The Location of Culture* 10). Here, Bhabha invokes the intrusion of historical and social context in the establishment of 'home' and is particularly poignant in the analysis of spatial contest within the novel which is characterised by the transitory post-apartheid period of changing racial dynamics.

It is the space itself which is witness to these shifting dynamics but is also the key tool which was used to enact the exclusionary practices of the past. The spatial order of the city which was cleaved and scarred by the apartheid government has proven difficult to undo, and ultimately, as I have discussed, many of the scars and borders on the land remain as vestiges of a scorched earth in a racialised city. Thus, in Chapter One I have sought to answer the question of how apartheid spatial practices and demarcations have persisted into the post-apartheid era and the difficulties associated with attempts at dismantling the lack of permeability of these racialised spaces.

One way of reclaiming spaces is through the assertion of identity and the retelling of one's own stories, using the frameworks which bind communities - such as the nostalgic approach to narrativization in *Living Coloured,* explored in Chapter Three. Homi Bhabha writes that "the Coloured South African subject represents a hybridity, a difference 'within', a subject that inhabits the rim of an 'in-between' reality" (Bhabha *The Location of Culture* 13). In Chapter Three I attempt to contextualise this hybridity within its spatial history but also analyse the way in which *Living Coloured* subverts this perception of an 'in-between reality' by reifying his community identity through shared notions of nostalgia and collective memory. This is achieved through the articulation of his narratives in the language of space, using specific street names and locations as markers of a common history within his community. While Yusuf Daniels's stories are coloured by a childhood innocence, the final chapter shifts to a hyper-awareness of being thrust into a highly contested and conflicted space where hybridity unhomes the liminal figure of Azure in the most extreme sense of unbelonging.

In the third chapter, the full palimpsest of the city emerges through reading the layers of history which ultimately compound to form the modern neoliberal cityscape, the failings of which is emphasised by the narrative voice enacted through the city's most vulnerable, the child who must negotiate the spatial contest of the street which shuns and endangers him. All three of my chapters engage with the intersection of race and space in the post-*apartheid* context in order to read the social makeup of the city within the literary imagination and the way in which certain racialised enclaves are portrayed and created. In relation to the post-apartheid geography, Pieterse contends that:

> there is much that remains to be done to fill this vacuum because in the absence of careful, nuanced and grounded research we are unlikely to animate the requisite political discourses that can engender a truly post-apartheid condition… as important as the macro dynamics…is to explore the rich practices of living, livelihood, becoming, imagining and invention that pulse through South African cities… such an articulation could get us closer to a reasonable account of the elusive post-apartheid city.
> (Pieterse "Post-Apartheid Geographies" 13-14)

Therefore, this thesis contributes to the growing analysis of the post-apartheid condition and the concomitant complexities of its various, heterogenous materialities and could perhaps form a basis to conduct further analysis of Cape Town urban culture – by reading aspects of gender, sexuality, or religion into spatial identity in the context of the urban narrative. As a broader introductory foray into this field of study I have mapped the imaginary of the city of Cape Town through various identities as attached to and constituted by various spaces of contest based on apartheid spatial demarcations in which the racialised nature of these spaces have persisted and perpetuated, resulting in varied degrees of unhoming and unbelonging.

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