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Seeing Selves and Others:

Rethinking 'the tourist gaze' of township tourism as inter-subjectivity in Cape Town, South Africa

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award of the degree of Masters of Social Science in Social Anthropology**

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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. I have used the author-date convention for citation and referencing. 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. I have not allowed, and will not allow, anyone to copy my work with the intention of passing it off as his or her own work.

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Abstract

This dissertation is intended as an ‘ethnography of the particular’ that might demonstrate the inter-subjectivity of ‘hosts’ and ‘guests’—subject-positions so often presented as static and oppositional—of township tourism in Cape Town, South Africa. While there is a breadth of tourism research across social science disciplines, the majority engage in a continuing debate that emphasize either the ‘hosts’ or ‘guests’ of a global tourism industry as either the victims or profiteers of exploitation, or else innovative and entrepreneurial agents of change. This research seeks to sit, if uncomfortably, within the ambiguities of systemized power and the potentialities of interaction. Taking Urry’s ‘tourist gaze’ (1990) as an entry point to rethink debates concerning tourism and postcolonial subjectivities, ‘the gaze’ is reconsidered as both a theory and a method for understanding the inter-subjective processes of seeing, imagining being seen, and being seen seeing within tourism encounters. By narrowing attention to the experiences of one family employed in township tourism and their interactions with their guests, I offer detailed and descriptive instances and conversation that comment on recent concerns of mobility and identity construction, belonging and signifying difference, and the commoditization of ‘culture’ under late capitalism.

While taking the problematics of power seriously by offering historical and political contexts, I also take seriously notions of conviviality (Nyamnjoh in Werbner 2002), inter-subjectivity, and forms of agency that emerged within the ambiguities of a relatively new mode of tourism in South Africa, taking place at a time of transition, transformation, and uncertainty. The perhaps naïve attempt here then, is to look for the transformative potentials in the ambiguities and ambivalences surrounding township tourism, as an industry representing evidence of further penetration by neoliberalism in sub-Saharan Africa, that does not pardon the proclivities of late capitalism to widen the gaps of social stratification, but rather questions its determinism in shaping subjectivities.

Key words: tourism, township, tourist gaze, subjectivity, ethnography of the particular, Cape Town, South Africa

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I also wish to thank my fellow post-graduate students of the social anthropology department at UCT. In his *Fragments of an Anarchist Anthropology*, Graeber writes, 'Foucault's ideas, like Trotsky's, are never treated as primarily the products of a certain intellectual milieu, as something that emerges from endless conversations and arguments involving hundreds of people, but always, as if they emerged from the genius of a single man (or, very occasionally, woman)' (2004:4). This sentence has stuck with me as I learn more each day about how academia 'works.' The theories and narrative styles that inspired this thesis are named and cited in its bibliography, but lacking is reference to the countless conversations and sharing of ideas that took place in the post-grad room of the social anthropology department; on coffee breaks as much as in the classroom. Without the insight, feedback, and encouragement from my peers, this thesis would look very different. I particularly want to thank Jennifer Rogerson, Jonathan Hilligan, Grant Fore, and Megan Greenwood, as well as Patrick Brown for his feedback and invaluable assistance with editing. The inter-subjectivity of academic colleagues is also deserving of greater recognition.

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CHAPTER 1: Introduction

'You're not from South Africa?' he asked,

I smiled back and sighed knowingly about the conversation to follow. 'No, I'm from the States.'

'Oh, the States,' he replied, smiling. 'How long have you been in South Africa?'

'About two years now.'

'Oh, I see. Two years, that's a long time. What are you doing here in Cape Town?'

I sighed to myself again. I could have said 20 years and I would have received the same question. My two years in South Africa had yet to really hone my own ability to discern the subtle differences in tone between South African accents, and those from other regions of southern Africa. I considered that perhaps this man was a foreigner to South Africa as well, a social category that could carry a very different meaning for him, a black African, than it does for me, a white American. In a glaring historical irony of power, poverty, and politics on the continent of Africa, xenophobia in South Africa was considered a black problem, not a white one. It was this consideration that kept me from asking him as casually as he had of me, if he was not from South Africa as well.

'I'm a student here.'

'Ah, at UCT?'

'Yeah.'

'What are you studying?' He handed me the paper voucher I had purchased.

'Well...' because I had spent the day contemplating how to start my thesis I was probably a bit more candid than usual. 'I'm writing a dissertation on township tourism in Cape Town, but I'm having trouble getting started.'

The man's face seemed to suddenly change from showing passive, friendly interest to appearing more seriously inquisitive.

'Oh... tourism you say? What about it are you studying?'

Not exactly an easy question to answer. 'Um... all kinds of things. I've joined some local tours to observe what tour guides and tourists do and say during their trip, and I've spent a lot of time with a few people who work in tourism.'

'So do you organize tours? Do you guide them yourself?'

'Um, neither. I hang out with tourists and tour guides, but... not just when they go on tours, and not all of them are tourists or guides exactly...' I knew I wasn't answering his question very well. He then took out his wallet and handed me a card with a picture of an aerial view of the cape peninsula next to an image of the South African flag, above which the man's name was printed in bold, followed by the title 'registered tourist guide, English and French.'

'You're a guide?!' I asked surprised, smiling at the serendipity of our conversation.

'Yes, I take groups to the peninsula, wine lands, townships... anywhere they like. And I can guide in French too. My information is on this card if you know a group wanting a guide.'

'Okay,' I replied, 'Maybe I'll phone you for an interview' I suggested only half jokingly.

Both of our smiles seemed a little more genuine now that we had comfortably 'placed' each other—he likely saw me as one of the many American study abroad students (a certain kind of tourist) that attend the nearby University of Cape Town, and I assumed him to be a 'foreign national' from a French-speaking, African country working as both a petrol station attendant and a tour guide—both grossly oversimplified subject-positions. Our shared interest in the subject of tourism had also revealed a common ground, however, with regard to 'what we are doing here.' This moment emphasized what had become increasingly apparent during my fieldwork: that while tourism may be an industry, it is a much more significant and multifaceted activity than the pastime of a leisure class or the impetus of a globalized hospitality industry; that tourist spaces as arenas for reciprocal 'gazing' can emerge in a petrol station shop conversation as easily as in a carefully crafted 'cultural' tour; that structures of power that position a white American female consumer and black African male service provider, as much as 'guest' and 'host' or researcher and research subject, can be as easily blurred as they can be reaffirmed through casual conversation; and that the search for difference and the search for sameness can occur side-by-side.

'Well thanks for this, I'll keep it in mind.' I tucked the electricity voucher into my wallet and motioned towards the door.

'Good luck with your studies' he replied.

I left the shop and walked toward my car, still looking over the man's business card and grinning over what had just transpired.

This research began as an attempt to apply recent trends in the anthropological study of tourism to the practice of 'township tourism' taking place in the city of Cape Town in post-apartheid South Africa. It became an 'ethnography of the particular' (Abu-Lughod 1991) that cautiously speaks to global trends regarding tourism's entanglement in creating subjectivities of 'our age.' By focusing attention on historical and contemporary modes of 'gazing,' while taking into careful consideration the importance of interaction within tourism encounters, I make a case for 'tourism *inter*-subjectivity': one that is (re)shaped through reflections and refractions of *seeing* and imagining *being seen*. By focusing largely on one South African family's experiences and the 'guests' with which they interacted, I offer detailed and descriptive instances that comment on recent debates concerning mobility and identity construction, belonging and signifying difference, and the commoditization of 'culture' under late capitalism. While acknowledging global and historical shifts in subjectivity at the center of these debates (See for example Comaroff and Comaroff 2000, 2009; Geschiere and Nyamnjoh 2000; Nyamnjoh 2006; Geschiere 2009), I demonstrate *inter*-subjective processes of *becoming* 'others' and 'selves' within a touristic context as a way to rethink problematic 'host' and 'guest' subject-positions and challenge a static and monolithic understanding of tourism's social processes.

Background to getting started and 'writing up'

Although anthropology only began to take the study of tourism seriously around the 1970s, anthropologists have since offered numerous analyses on the multi-focal arenas of the tourism industry: from modes of travel involving sand, sun, and sea, to Disneyland, sex tourism, the international philanthropist, and construction of the 'cultural village' (See van Veuren 2003). Such studies examine the 'hosts' or the 'guests' of tourism (Smith 1977/1989), suggesting and/or rejecting ideal types of each, as well as their motivations, behaviors, and exchanges. A significant question for the anthropology of tourism concerns tourism's effects on the meaning of 'culture' by representing values, practices, objects and life-ways as displays, souvenirs, and performances, and at a price. Moreover, what effects does a 'culture industry' have on its producers and what may be said of its consumers? These questions become more salient when we consider that bringing 'culture' into the realm of economics is having its greatest implications to those with little else to sell (and who, ironically, are seen as having a wealth of cultural heritage compared to their more 'modernized' and alienated clientele) (McCannell 1976; Comaroff and Comaroff 2009). Where then, does the practice of touring the 'townships' of Cape Town—sometimes called 'slums,' 'shantytowns,' or 'informal settlements'—fit into this broad discussion about the anthropology of tourism and a globalized 'culture industry'?

I entered fieldwork with questions concerned with international trends in 'poverty-tourism' or 'slum-tours' in so-called 'Third World' or 'developing' countries,¹ with whether or not this form of tourism encouraged a voyeuristic position regarding poverty and exotic otherness, and with how narratives of development were employed in their practice. I also

¹ The most famous perhaps being those in India, Jamaica, several African countries, and the well-researched 'favela' tours in Brazil (See for example Gentleman 2006, Williams 2008).

wanted to say more about experiences with young travelers (such as backpackers and study-abroad students) who were staying abroad longer and developing greater familiarity with their hosting communities than the tourists in the studies mentioned above.² I wanted to say something about how this tourist niche engages with township tourism; and about how township residents making a living by participating in tourism engage with them.

But as I fumbled around clumsily in ‘the field’ with my metaphorical telescope and microscope,³ I became more and more uncomfortable with the prospect of saying anything definitive about township tourism. I had become close friends with my ‘primary research consultants,’ a family living in the neighborhood known as ‘KTC’ in the township of Nyanga, all of whom were employed in tourism, and whose home periodically became the site of ‘township home-stays’ and ‘township braais’⁴ hosted for study-abroad students and internship-abroad participants. The prospect of *writing* anything definitive about this family and the incredibly diverse groups of young people they invited into their home began to feel like a disservice.

² While the anthropologist might more readily approve of this form of tourism as it arguably entails greater effort on the part of the tourist to learn more about their hosts, research has cited the invasiveness of this form of tourism, and its relatively low ability to bring income to hosts compared to tourists who visit for a short time, are less invasive, and tend to spend a greater amount of money more quickly. Scheyvens (2002) and Hampton (2003) have emphasized the ‘pro-poor’ advantages to back-packer tourism however, in which proceeds tend to stay within lower income communities.

³ I borrow the telescope/microscope distinction to indicate a macro-lens and micro-lens perspective of analysis, from Marlon Burgess (2007).

⁴ ‘Braai’ is a South African term for ‘cook out’ or ‘Bar-B-Que,’ though the events at Naomi’s house might be better likened to the ‘Block Party.’

At some point moving between the townships and the university suburbs, where the 'guests' of this study and I resided, I set aside my telescope and became caught up in the everyday dramas and routines of the people I was spending time with. We chatted about movies, sports, and celebrities, I talked with students about missing home, I listened sympathetically while Loyiso complained about the demands the interns made of him, and I joked with Naomi about my skill at 'cooking sandwiches' while helping her prepare food for upcoming 'township braais.' Added to this were a number of momentary interactions with people on the street in KTC and the neighboring townships of Gugulethu and Khayelitsha, and in cafes and bars in the suburb that started out much like the anecdote above, 'you're not from South Africa are you?'

An emphasis, then, on social *inter*-action and the significance of relationships that developed out of tourism encounters (including that between 'anthropologist' and 'informant') might demonstrate how the global implications of touristic *seeing* and *being seen* were manifested 'on the ground' and between subjects. As Abu-Lughod states, '...the effects of extralocal and long-term processes are *only* manifested locally and specifically, produced in the actions of individuals living their particular lives, inscribed in their bodies and their words' (1991:150, emphasis mine). This attention to interactions, relationships, and social processes that constitute an *inter*-subjectivity is therefore not about casting aside the telescope in favor of the microscope, or disregarding historical and structural considerations in favor of the 'instance' or the 'emergent.'⁵ Indeed the focus here on subjectivity is intended as a way to consider how historical and global discourses around

⁵ Bruner (2005), for example, considers "levels of dialogic narration" to avoid both strict structuralism and pure emergence in his analysis (171-6).

concepts of 'African-ness,' 'Third Worlds,' and difference factor into and are (re)produced through the everyday observations and interactions of people *as lived*.⁶

What I have attempted to do in the precarious process of 'writing up' that reduces what is multi-sensory and experiential into two-dimensional text, is to develop a way to theorize about those social interactions that were taking place within and around the practice of township tourism that challenge generalizing portrayals of hosts as either victims or profiteers of exploitation, and guests as self-indulgent and naïve voyeurs. This critique need not preclude us from confronting aspects of exploitation and voyeurism where they occur. Rather we might make room for the more surprising ways that hosts and guests undermine or reconfigure neoliberalism's atomizing forces and craft relationships beyond the confines of producers and consumers, without adhering to a celebratory or conservative position on the industries that constitute global tourism, and its implications for political economy. The chapters to follow are therefore presented somewhat lopsidedly (as fieldwork is often experienced). Persons, places, and theory begin as intellectualized objects written for the gaze of the reader, but gradually give way to what we might call 'narrativized engagement' as the idiosyncrasies of the people and places under the anthropological gaze of this research increasingly interrupt the text's contemplative distance. Explanation transitions to conversation, requiring a more engaged reader and calling on the inter-subjectivity between the text and its audience.

⁶ I borrow this from the term 'life as lived' used by Lila Abu-Lughod (1993/2008), who in turn references Reisman (1977).

Chapter outline

I begin by problematizing the use of terms like 'tourist', 'host', 'guide' and 'guest' that suggest homogenized and static subject-positions within touristic encounters. I also introduce fieldwork 'sites' and contextualize township tourism post-1990. In chapter three I offer background to anthropology's engagement with tourism, and the various ways that 'the gaze' has been theorized. I then position the aim of this research toward reconsidering 'the gaze' within anthropological trends that afford more attention to subjectivity and post-colonial critique, and contextualize the relevance these critiques have to the study of South African tourism. In chapter four I address the 'photographic gaze' as a transitioning mode of representing 'the other' and 'the self' and offer ethnographic instances from which I make a case for 'tourism inter-subjectivity,' made visible through the photographic practices of seeing and being seen. In chapter five I shift the focus of the gaze from questions of objectification and mastery to its importance in changing and reaffirming perspectives of place and space, specifically regarding perceptions of crime and violence, and how 'safety' was continuously renegotiated as tourism penetrated former barriers to mobility. Lastly, chapter six is dedicated to the particular experiences of Naomi, a Nojilana family member, with 'culture commoditization.' Naomi's venture into teaching Xhosa classes for interns allowed what she described as '*her* culture' to become the object of her own gaze, creating a space of distanced contemplation from which she grappled with her own sense of agency and inter-subjectivity.

CHAPTER 2: Zooming out and Zooming in...

June, Wine-Tasting

We (some 30 interns who were clients of the 'internship-abroad' company, some of their staff, and I) met at the train station in Observatory, the suburb where the company operated from, where their clients were provided accommodation, and where my apartment was located. Loyiso had hired two of his neighbors in KTC with minibuses to drive us—a much more direct route to the nearby wine-lands than by train. Loyiso was dressed up in football fan-gear and clearly excited about the soccer World Cup, just days away. He hooted his mini-vuvuzela and herded us into the minibuses. Over the course of the afternoon, I chatted with several interns I was meeting for the first time, mostly new arrivals who had planned their internship-abroad strategically to coincide with the FIFA World Cup.

One conversation stood out. I had sat next to a young man from Baton Rouge, Louisiana who had been in Cape Town for just over two weeks, but would be staying for several months as an intern for a film production company. Later, while we wavered from sipping wine and waited to board the minibus one last time to return home, he suddenly said that the one thing he was having trouble understanding from what he had seen of Cape Town so far is '...why South Africa is considered a 'developing' country. The roads here are way nicer than a lot of roads in my home city,' he explained. As our position on the side of the road offered a particularly stunning view of rolling hills covered by grapevines and mansion-like wine estates in one of the wealthiest areas in Cape Town, I nodded my head in agreement. I asked him if he had been to a township yet, 'like where Loyiso lives,' suggesting that there was 'another side' to what we had seen of the Cape today. He replied that yes, he had... 'But there are shacks in New Orleans now too, ya' know.'

Conversations like this one led me to critically rethink the usefulness of a 'tourist gaze' as a theoretical tool that organizes visitors' encounters with the 'other' by creating a sense of distance from the self and the everyday (Urry 2002: 1, 145). I repeatedly came across

moments that demonstrated questioning-gazes, looking for sameness as much as for difference, telling as much about home as about being away, and that were about the self as much as the 'other.' The example above challenges the idea of a monolithic tourist-subject and emphasizes the divergence of gazes rather than their homogeneity. In this chapter, I draw attention to recent theorizing about belonging, how such theories might be contextualized with regard to South African history and contemporary avenues to economic participation, and how these debates relate to township tourism and the particular field sites and people of this research.

**Unsettling views about people and places:
problematizing 'the local' and 'guests'**

A man I often saw sipping beers on the street near my apartment seemed particularly inebriated tonight. He was sitting on the curb, shouting greetings as people walked by. To my friend, 'Ha! Rasta mon, come to hear the jazz.' And to me, 'Hey! One of our local-tourist-residents!' No matter how many years I 'reside' in Observatory, something always makes me a tourist. But when had I become a 'local' one?

'Tourists' are diverse subjects, with perspectives, histories, motivations, and expectations as varying as their itineraries. Moreover, the stereo-typical tourist who spends days to a few weeks in a location, consuming images, landscapes, souvenirs, and expensive meals, and retiring each night to fresh linens and room service, has been joined in theorization by the backpacker and the 'voluntourist' (See Guttentag 2009, Benson 2011). These categories are not necessarily mutually exclusive, and two further 'tourist-subjects' central

to this research are 'the study-abroad student' and 'the internship-abroad participant,' integral groups in a growing trend of young travelers and industries designed to meet and provoke their needs. The World Tourism Organization recognized their burgeoning influence in their publication, 'Youth Travel Matters', which prefaced:

Young people travel with a purpose – to explore and to engage with cultures, and to mix their travel ambitions with study, work, volunteer placements and adventure. They tend to stay much longer and therefore spend more than the average tourist, interacting more closely with the communities they visit and making a direct contribution to local businesses.... Young travelers will be tomorrow's globally-oriented citizens, leaders in future trends, and pioneers in contributing to the Millennium Development Goals. (WTO 2008)

What may be said about tourist-subjects in all their diversity is that they have become integral to a social processes characterized by global movement. As surely as the early seafarer, the pioneer, the colonist, the missionary, the immigrant, and the refugee, the tourist has been a globalizing subject.

In addition to the tourist, the local guide or 'host' has been a privileged subject in the study of tourism, especially as concern over the degradation of tourist destinations, both environmentally and sociologically, became a favored critique of the industry (Turner and Ash 1975; Crick 1989, for example). The concept of 'the local,' however, as juxtaposed to 'guests' stems from recent social histories of movement that are intimately linked to the rise of the nation-state, the politics of autochthony, and perspectives of bounded, homogenous 'cultures' grounded to a place (See Urry 2007). Through these imaginings, the non-local person is positioned as 'out of place' except in spaces demarcated as 'tourist

spaces' or 'ethnic areas' like the 'Little Italys' and 'China Towns' found in many cities. The use of a singular 'local' opposite plural 'guests' in the sub-heading is intentional, emphasizing that claims to locality, autochthony, and belonging, are often accomplished by simultaneous acts of erasure, 'othering', and dispossession (See Comaroff and Comaroff 2009:143-147). The point here is that claims to 'natural' locatedness are highly political, and *the* right to locality is contingent, both on a particular history and the narrative displacement of many 'others.'

This deconstruction of 'the local' and 'guests' carries particular relevance to South Africa's history. Structured on ethnic classification and spatial division, apartheid policy was implemented through the demarcation of white and non-white areas, the rise of informal shack settlements, or 'townships,' housing non-white labor at the periphery of white urban areas, and the infamous Bantustan 'homelands' where Africans were relocated based on highly problematic categories of 'ethnic belonging' (Murray 1980). The apartheid program of 'separateness' denied citizenship rights to those categorized as 'black,' 'coloured,' or 'Indian,' essentially turning 'locals' into precarious 'guests' in their own homes. Add to this a history of slave labor from Malaysia, India, Madagascar, as well as elsewhere in Africa, followed by coerced labor migration from rural 'homelands' to urban peripheries in the years to follow. Finally, consider the expansion of European settler populations, who after generations born in southern Africa can hardly be denied their locality,⁷ and the authoritative local or 'authentic native' becomes a political figure rather than a natural one.

⁷ Though this is rife with political controversy in contemporary southern Africa as land reform policies and post-liberation nationalist sentiments continue to push the question of who *belongs* where.

The potentially explosive power of claims to belonging and *not* belonging, especially those articulated as primordial or 'natural' difference became evident in South Africa in May of 2008 when xenophobic violence broke out in townships near Johannesburg and quickly spread across the country. That such violent claims to locality, replete with language of cultural racism should begin in areas where material need is greatest demonstrates with unsettling clarity the link between so-called 'ethnic violence' and the growing impetus to capitalize on 'rightful' belonging as intimately tied to modern processes of globalization and the diminishing legitimacy of nation-states (Mbembe 2000; Nymanjoh 2006). As Geschiere and Ceuppens explain, 'What is at stake is often less a closer definition of the local than a struggle over excluding others from access to new avenues of riches and power' (2005:387).

How does the theoretical and historical deconstruction of the 'local' and the 'foreigner' offered here relate to the 'hosts' and 'guests' of tourism and culture industries, aside from the obvious irony that tourists from the West are not the targets of xenophobic violence? The global flows of economic opportunity and participation that often drive migration cannot be neatly separated from tourism industries. The tour guide at the petrol station, for example, became a guide because South African citizens were favored for the job he had done in his previous country of residence, whereas everyone was equally eligible to register for the course to become a registered guide in Cape Town, regardless of nationality. Here again we see that conflating 'guide,' 'host', and 'local' as categories of an 'authoritative native' is as problematic as the subject-position of 'homogenous tourist.'

Background to township tourism

Bound up in this inquiry of belonging is the social construction, negotiation, and positioning of 'the township' in the emerging national narrative of a post-liberation, democratic South Africa. The emergence of township tourism shortly after the repeal of apartheid legislation and the transition in government to the African National Congress in the early 1990s created a channel of access encouraging outsiders to enter the townships to see and experience the 'other side' of apartheid's divide. Post-1994 government tourism policy sought to encourage such niches for their transformative potential as part of its 'Reconstruction and Development Program' (DEAT 1996; Binns and Nel 2002) and South African Tourism has positioned itself as a community development program as much as a promotional body (Rassool and Witz 1996:338-340), emphasizing a politico-historical interest to international tourists through images of the liberation struggle and the celebrated release of Nelson Mandela. This view was reiterated by tourist operator, bed-and-breakfast owner, and experienced NGO advocate, Mama Thope, who has earned several awards and fellowships for her bed-and-breakfast business, established in 1999 and continuing to operate from her home in Khayelitsha.⁸ When I asked Thope about starting her business, she replied

... When I started my bed and breakfast... there were big companies already there, you know.... All these big tour-operating companies, which were bringing people to the townships,

⁸ South Africa's second largest township, located just outside of Cape Town, near Nyanga and KTC, where much of this fieldwork took place. Thope's business earned international attention when British politician Peter Hain, who fled South Africa with his family as a child, made a highly publicized visit to her 'township B&B'.

because overseas people... they do a lot of research before they come and visit. They know that there are townships. And after 1994, people were really curious to see the townships, to learn about our culture, to meet 'Mandela people'. Because after 1994, after we voted for the first time, South Africa got a lot of publicity, so people got to know about the country and they were curious.

After this 'Mandela tourism boom' post-1994 and South Africa's repositioning as a relatively safe 'long-haul' tourist destination post-'9/11', 2001, South African tourism showed economic significance through its increasing contribution to national employment and GDP (Rogerson 2006: 39, 46). Shifting perspectives and initiatives regarding tourism were taking place on a global level as well, specifically with growing attention toward 'Green' development and sustainability agendas in the mid-2000s, followed by a focus on livelihoods and tourism's impact on poor populations (Rogerson 2006: 43).⁹ The development prospects of township tourism as 'pro-poor' were given particular attention when South Africa became 'host to the world' during the 2010 FIFA World Cup (See Cornelissen 2004, 2006; Darkey and Horn 2009). Although still much less popular, brochures for township tours can now be found side by side with safari packages and maps of nearby vineyards.

Townships themselves have become important sites for dismantling the apartheid landscape and reconfiguring a national identity (McEachern 2002), their contested representation in the media attesting to the complexity of the nation-building project, the special role of townships' past, and the question of their future. In practice, a guided

⁹ Rogerson (2006) cites the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro and the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg as evidence of such growing initiatives.

township visit is imbued with rich and often contradictory meaning. I came across tours that presented 'the township' as a historical memorial to the resistance struggle, a site of capitalist development and entrepreneurial-ship, an economic legacy of apartheid and evidence of government failures, an area of reconciliation characterized by local innovation and global volunteerism, a place to experience rural and urban 'culture' as exotic 'Africanness,'¹⁰ and simply the home to hundreds of thousands of Cape Town residents who raise families and take pride in their communities as surely as do residents of the affluent suburbs. A single tour was likely to include several of these narratives rather than a singular script, especially as questions from tourists often interrupted the narrative presented to them, and guides included their own insights, opinions, and experiences.¹¹

Despite its richness and variability, township tourism also provokes particular and significant questions. The most striking aspect is the socio-economic divide between 'guests' and 'hosts.'¹² While such a clear-cut divide in affluence is not as straightforward as is often perceived as socio-economic status varies widely within and between townships, the expectation is fostered that tourists will be seeing historically 'informal settlements' that differ from the more affluent city center and suburbs of Cape Town. Topics of inquiry that therefore motivated this research included the perception of socio-economic distance between guests and hosts, the presence and practice of the 'tourist gaze' (Urry 1990/2002) and its negotiated or contested voyeuristic quality in the presence of poverty.

¹⁰ This is the argument posed by Witz, Rassool, and Minkley (2001).

¹¹ See Salazar (2006) for ethnographic research that emphasizes this dynamic in Tanzania tourism.

¹² This is of course assuming that the 'host' or 'guide' is a township resident.

Field sites and friends

My relationship with the internship-abroad company began when I first met its creators during my own semester spent studying abroad in 2007. At that time, one of the young men who would start the company was managing accommodations in the nearby suburb of Observatory for study-abroad students. When I returned to Cape Town in 2008, the company had just welcomed its first five interns, a group of young women and one man, all from the northwestern United States with internships arranged in business marketing, film production, and a refugee center. When I began this research in June (2010), the company was host to nearly 70 interns, primarily from the United States and Europe,¹³ in a range of placements including IT consultants, wine estates, NGOs, orphanages, education centers, law firms, and more. These internships lasted anywhere from one to eight months, depending on the participant's desired length of stay, and many of the interns in 2010 had timed their arrival to coincide with the FIFA World Cup. Many were also students earning college credit for their internship while others were taking time off from their university, or had recently graduated.

Through this company, I came to know the Nojilana family,¹⁴ a household of three siblings who lived in the community of KTC,¹⁵ one of several neighborhoods that make up the

¹³ While the company was host to interns from several other countries as well, including India, the Middle East, and other African countries, the majority of clients were from the U.S. and Europe.

¹⁴ The surname 'Nojilana', and the first names of each family member are pseudonyms, as is 'Daniel', the internship company owner. I felt it appropriate to protect the anonymity of my primary research consultants partly due to the personal content of conversations shared here, and due to the recognition that small businesses and their employees are at a greater risk of suffering

township of Nyanga, and all employed by the same internship company. Busi was the first family member to be hired by the newly established company as Daniel, one of the company creators, had come to know Busi through a previous business venture. Busi worked as cleaning staff in the same office building as Daniel, and when Daniel began to organize accommodation for international students attending UCT, he hired her as 'houses manager.' Not long after, Daniel hired Busi's younger brother, Loyiso, to help with house maintenance and repairs. As Daniel's company grew to accommodate international internships, Loyiso became coach of the company soccer team made up of staff, students, and interns, and he regularly organized matches with township schools. Additionally, when Daniel's company would accommodate 'faculty-led,' short visit groups, mostly from U.S. universities, Daniel hired Naomi (Busi and Loyiso's sister) as a caterer. At the time of this research, Naomi had just started offering a meal program through the company. She prepared packed lunches and dinners for students and interns from a make-shift kitchen attached to one of the company-owned accommodations in the suburb, and I quickly became her most loyal customer.

Daniel credits the addition of the Nojilana family to their staff as being instrumental to the company's success with international students and interns, and explained that the relationships they formed with these guests led to many of the company's activities in the townships. In an interview, Daniel explained that Busi and a particular group of study

the economic impacts of published opinion. Real names were only used where participants were speaking on the behalf of their business, and where explicit permission was given.

¹⁵ KTC is not a pseudonym for the Nojilana's community, however. I once asked Naomi what KTC stood for and she replied, laughing, that she had no idea. *'It has always just been 'KTC' to me!'*

abroad students in 2007 first initiated what have now become regularly held 'township braais' at the Nojilana home in KTC.

[Busi] is very very positive, very very open to the foreign students, which helps because they really like that interaction. She invited residents several years ago to a braai at her house and they caught a minibus [taxi] and they went... and I saw the photographs afterwards and I said, 'Well why didn't you invite me?' And she said, 'Oh, well I didn't think that you guys would want to come. And at that point, I hadn't been to see where Busi lived. I hadn't been to a township... so it was a new experience for all of us.... I mean, I think Busi's responsible for breaking down those barriers...

...And I met Naomi as well, and she has always had a dream to be a cook... so we supported her by [offering to make] the braais a more formal thing, so all the students who had arrived in Cape Town... I would take them out there and have her cook for the celebration, and yeah we pay her to provide all of the catering and that led to other things as well... So that's pretty much how it all started.

Naomi was also offered a position teaching weekly isiXhosa lessons, one of the more widely spoken African languages in the Western Cape, to interested interns and students. While many participants would attend sporadically, Naomi once organized a 'field trip' to a children's daycare near her home in KTC and her more devoted students sang songs in isiXhosa with the children.

I had intended to assist the Nojilana family in reorganizing their house in KTC to accommodate weekend township-home-stays for study-abroad students and interns as the focus of my fieldwork. A standardized home-stay program never materialized, but the Nojilanas often invited international guests to visit their home. As it turned out, the majority of my time was spent with Naomi as she developed her catering business. On

weekday mornings, after she arrived in Observatory by bus, I accompanied her to the grocery store. Most weekdays were spent socializing in her kitchen where I helped chop vegetables and wash dishes, and chatted with Busi and Loyiso as they stopped by periodically while moving between the six student/intern houses spread across the neighborhood. In the afternoons, after meals were prepared, I joined Naomi on her deliveries to the student/intern houses.

I was also invited to stay most weekends with the Nojilanas, which included outings to nearby *shebeens*,¹⁶ chats over beers while watching movies and soccer games, and entertaining Naomi's energetic five-year-old son, Thabo. During these weekends, I shared insightful conversations with Naomi's husband, Brilliance, a tour guide for South Africa Tourism who spent his days with tourists to attractions around the city. Brilliance had attended the University of the Western Cape with Naomi and elected to take anthropology classes alongside his tourism studies. We spent many enlightening evenings discussing anthropology's relevance to South African tourism. Through my interactions with the Nojilana family then, my own subject-position in this research seemed to shift continuously between anthropologist, township-tourist, and family friend.

¹⁶ A 'shebeen' is an informal pub or tavern. Many establishments still called 'shebeens' in South Africa are now fully licensed and legally sell alcohol, however.

CHAPTER 3: Tourism, Subjectivities, and the Gaze

A brief review of the anthropology of tourism

Anthropology came to the topic of tourism rather late compared to other disciplines. Since MacCannell's seminal work, *The Tourist* (1976) and Smith's reader, *Hosts and Guests* (1977/1989), however, the anthropological study of tourism has grown to offer an impressive amount of literature. These first studies explored tourism as a modern practice of the leisure class. They investigated the reasons people travelled (See MacCannell 1976; Graburn 1977, 1983), often interpreting tourism as a new ritual in the Victor Turner sense (1969, 1973) or pseudo-religious practice like 'the pilgrimage' (Turner and Turner 1978). Similar works suggested that alienation under 'modernity' encouraged tourism as a kind of spiritual search for 'authenticity' (Boorstin 1961; MacCannell 1976).

While authenticity has remained a favored topic in tourism studies, the various permutations of 'objective,' 'staged,' and 'constructed' authenticity put forward and critiqued over the years have largely followed trends in theoretical discourse around modernity, while the contentious advent of 'post-modernity' considerably called into question authenticity's usefulness in understanding contemporary tourism (Cohen 2004:4). Relating tourism to post-modernism, identifying the significance of the copy or fantasy rather than the 'authentic' (Eco 1986; Baudrillard 1988), provided a new way to theorize about the popularity of amusement parks like Disneyland (See Bryman 1995), and

ushered in the 'post-tourist' (Ritzer and Liska 1997), who delights in the practice of tourism not in a search for authenticity, but for the sake of 'playing' the tourist.¹⁷

Anthropology's theorizing of tourism also showed increasing concern for the industry's effects on its 'hosts' and related strongly to more general anxieties over processes of globalization. Turner and Ash (1975) for example, predicted that tourism would eventually lead to the denigration of the environment and local cultures across the globe. Other works have taken tourism's place within a global political economy as its main problematic,¹⁸ including Nash (1977), who posited international tourism as a new form of imperialism. Tourism ventures and industries in the Third World have been central to these critiques (S. Britton 1980, 1982; S. Britton and Clarke 1987), not only in concerns of economic disparity and exploitation, but also with regard to the unequal politics of representation (Crick 1989, 1991; Stanley 1998; Chambers 2000).

Closely related was the question of 'cultural commoditization' (Greenwood 1977) and how the shift of practices and materials deemed 'cultural' into the realm of market economies affected such practices and their practitioners. Just as the expansion of the tourism industry linked to concerns over globalization, so too did 'cultural tourism' provoke anxieties regarding late capitalism and the impetus to locate exchange value in aspects of life once considered outside the realm of economics. Recent tourism studies offer new

¹⁷ Bruner's chapter on 'The Maasai and the Lion King' (2005), offers an explanation of how the transitions in writing about tourism has followed trends and critiques on writing ethnography. See Bruner (2005) pp. 92-95 especially.

¹⁸ See Erve Chamber's chapter on 'Tourism, Society, and the Political Economy' in *Native Tours* (2000), for an introductory outline of tourism's relevance to political economy and related case studies.

interpretations, however, that reflect the ways ethnography has changed. These works challenge concepts of authenticity and resist pessimistic projections of globalization, examining tourism as dynamic sites of interaction, competing narratives, and cultural innovations (See for example Medina 2003; Bruner 2005; Salazar 2006; Zhihong 2007). An important change in emphasis here is the agency afforded to the 'objects' of tourism's gaze, with the purpose not to deny the voyeuristic qualities of tourism or its connection to capital, but to reconsider tourist-host interactions and their sites as stages where narratives are constructed, considered, and sometimes challenged (Bruner 2005).¹⁹

An important work to South Africa that has given renewed attention to tourism and 'cultural identity' under neoliberalism, is Jean and John Comaroff's, *Ethnicity, Inc.* (2009), which explores global trends in nation branding, and incentives to make ethnic identities marketable. In doing so they describe a double process, or a loose dialect, emergent in what may be called the 'identity industry'—a constitutive part of which is international tourism. The elements of this process, the Comaroffs explain, lies 'in the incorporation of identity, the rendering of ethnicized populations into corporations of one kind or another; the second, in the creeping commodification of their cultural products and practices' (2009:21). The Comaroffs' claims in *Ethnicity, Inc.* look beyond debates over the benefits and drawbacks of a tourism industry in the 'Third World' and suggest that a significant

¹⁹ The breadth of anthropology's inquiry into tourism is therefore extensive and inter-disciplinary. Not reviewed here, but relevant to recent tourism research in southern Africa and elsewhere include studies in sex tourism, voluntourism (Guttentag 2009), eco-tourism (Scheyvens 1999), heritage tourism, backpacker tourism (Hampton 2003; Hwang 2005), urban tourism (Rogerson 2008), dark tourism (Robb 2009), sports tourism (Cornelissen 2005: chapter seven) and museum studies (Nanda 2004).

shift, or even a 'metamorphosis in the production of identity and subjectivity' is taking place (20). They further argue that understanding such a shift may speak to the state of the global order and the significance of late capitalism to the ethics and ethnics of subjectivity (21).

The extent to which the neoliberal impetus to capitalize from a hardened understanding of 'culture' has influenced individuals and communities, or has led to legislated collectivities with claims to intellectual property,²⁰ most certainly varies across contexts, and its consequences for subjectivity are yet to be fully understood. At the center of concern over tourism and subjectivity in the research presented in this thesis then, is how the mechanisms that help to form subjectivities related to contemporary tourism might be observed ethnographically and 'in the particular.' While the Comaroffs' work offers a mosaic of ethnographic examples from across the globe to illustrate the scope and similar character of the culture-industry's influence and affects, the much more modest intent here is to add to the discussion on subjectivity through the experiences of one family, working with one company, in Cape Town.

Scoping out tourism subjectivities: perspectives of 'the gaze'

In working with an understanding of subjectivity and its formation, I draw from recent debates over how anthropologists might approach the topic through ethnography (Beihl, Good, and Kleinman 2007), and theories regarding the processes by which *power*, both

²⁰ See chapters four and five in Comaroff and Comaroff (2009) for some examples of this.

institutional and inter-personal, take psychic form (Butler 1997). Subjectivity, in these works, refers to the ways in which external forces—whether emanating from a government, the police, the law, a community, parents, or peers—are experienced internally. That we are ‘subject’ to forces outside of ourselves or beyond our control is only part of the story however, as Butler explains,

We are used to thinking of power as what presses on the subject from the outside, as what subordinates, sets underneath, and relegates to a lower order. This is surely a fair description of part of what power does. But if, following Foucault, we understand power as *forming* the subject as well, as providing the very condition of its existence and the trajectory of its desire, then power is not simply what we oppose but also, in a strong sense, what we depend on for our existence and what we harbor and preserve in the beings that we are (Butler 1997:2).

Subjectivity is then better understood as the ways in which external forces, be they the will of the state, the disapproving glance of a parent, or the loving gaze of a partner, are constitutive to our existence as subjects in a social world, and therefore a prerequisite to agency. The implications here are that one must be acted upon before one can act, that the power that subjugates also shapes our ability to resist and to create, and that becoming a subject, as well as a ‘self,’ is dependent on others.

What, then, does ‘tourism subjectivity’ look like? The ocular metaphor here is intentional as theorists of tourism, spectacle, and display have drawn attention to the privileging of the eye in how knowledge about the world is organized (See Jay 1993; Levin 1993; Magubane 2004:40-68). Putting similar emphasis on vision in the study of tourism, Urry’s influential work, outlining what he calls ‘the tourist gaze’ (1990/2002), describes how the shifting

historical trends of touring, largely influenced by technological advancements in mobility, has led to 'the fundamentally visual nature of tourism experiences' (2002:145). Two critical technologies for Urry were the 'inventions' of the camera in 1839 and the popularization of the railway in the 1840s. He posits the arrival of these trends in mobile looking to be 'the moment when the "tourist gaze," that peculiar combining together of the means of collective travel... and the techniques of photographic reproduction, becomes a core component of western modernity' (Urry 2002:148). He further draws from Pratt's account of 'imperial eyes' (1992), claiming that this gaze '...facilitates the world of the 'other' to be controlled from afar, combining detachment and mastery' (2002:147). While Urry's systematized and organizing 'tourist gaze' has often been critiqued for its neglect of the other senses, of the 'embodied' experiences of touring (Veijola and Jokinen 1994, for example), as well as the challenging or questioning gazes of tourists (MacCannell 2001; Bruner 2005:95-99) and the ever-present possibility that those under the tourist gaze may gaze back (Gillespie 2006; Maoz 2006), his emphasis on the importance of vision's privilege in tourism has been extremely influential in tourism research across the globe.

This brief discussion of subjectivity, vision, and tourism thus far has intended to draw attention to how the contentious privileging of vision in western philosophical models of 'knowing the world' (Foucault 1970; Levin 1993; Jay 1993), and vision's further hegemony in the historical development of tourism and its organizing of the mobile eye (Urry 1990/2002), has been integral in shaping what have been called modern subjectivities.²¹

²¹ The use of 'modern' here is not intended as a way to differentiate from 'other', 'less-modern subjectivities' of today. Rather I use the term 'modern' to distinguish vision's contemporary and global modes of organizing knowledge, that has been influenced by technologies of vision and

While Urry's theoretical development of the 'tourist gaze' seems novel in its attention to vision as structuring tourism experiences, a further consideration of vision's significance to subjectation—the formation of the subject—has not been thoroughly applied to ethnographic approaches to tourism.²² I therefore propose a rethinking of 'the gaze' as a method to ethnographically explore inter-subjectivity in tourism. While Urry's 'tourist gaze,' positioned firmly within a Foucauldian paradigm, emphasized systematization of vision through the various mediators of the tourism industry, such as guidebooks, travel agents, movies and magazines, and in the built environment meant to direct the eye (Urry 2002:145-6), a review of some of the other ways 'the gaze' has been theorized might open up the concept to other modes of interpretation.

One such theorization of 'the gaze' that has greatly informed this research is Lacan's description of 'the mirror stage.' Reinterpreting Freud, Lacan posited that a critical moment in the psychic development of the subject occurs when an infant is able to recognize its own mirror image. For Lacan, this marks the development of the 'ego,'—for our purposes, the conception of 'the self'—as a coherent whole that exists in the world as a unified object, a perception that is contrary to how the infant experiences its body in the world, as disjointed and difficult to control (Benvenuto and Kennedy 1986: 54-55; Mulvey 1975:section 2.B). This sudden conceiving of the world as contrary to how it is experienced is the moment when the subject enters into ideology, or what Althusser

mobility such as the railway and the camera (see Urry 2002), as well as other forms of media, ICTs, and the growing democratization of their use, as distinct from previous historical periods and modes of viewing and 'knowing the world' (See also Heidegger and Foucault in Levin 1993:5-7).

²² Gillespie (2006) may be considered an exception. His attention to the reverse gaze as creating tourist reflexivity employs models of symbolic interactionism and Goffman's theories of 'face' and 'embarrassment.'

(1971) called 'the ideological interpellation of the subject' (in McGowan 2007:1-2). Lacan's preliminary theorization of the gaze offers a way to conceptualize the formation of 'the self' rather than the 'other,' perhaps providing an entry point to consider how processes of 'the gaze' concerning power as well as the psyche might be theorized together towards developing an understanding of subjection and inter-subjectivity.²³

There are more interpretations of 'the gaze' to consider, however. Laura Mulvey, for example, famously utilized a psychoanalytic approach, identifying the cinematic gaze and its coding of sexual difference as predominantly 'a male gaze' (Mulvey 1975). This critique demonstrated how a gendered, 'voyeuristic-scopophilic look' (18) has been structured through image and representation, and that revealing its psychoanalytic processes challenges patriarchy. Toward similar ends, Indira Ghose's (1998) attention to women travelers in colonial India reminds us, with reference to feminist theory and post-structuralism, that just as the subject-positions of male and female are constructed, there is no essential male or female gaze. The growing number of women travelers, especially in university study abroad programs (Dolby 2004:154), highlights the problematic of a predominantly 'male' tourist gaze, however predominant patriarchy may still be.

Returning focus to critiques of 'the gaze' in tourism studies, provoked by Urry's concept, authors have suggested other modes of gazing that acknowledge the diversity of tourist perspectives, as well as emphasize the ability of hosts to gaze back. MacCannell (2001) suggested a 'second gaze,' for example, that knows that looks deceive. Similarly, Bruner

²³ My attempt to do so has been heavily influenced by Judith Butler's *The Psychic Life of Power* (1997).

posits a 'questioning gaze' to describe tourists' tendency to doubt the authenticity of touristic presentations. As Bruner explains, '[t]he key issue is that tourists have agency, active selves that do not merely accept but interpret, and frequently question, the producers' message' (2005:95). Gillespie's theorization of a 'reverse gaze' (2006), on the other hand, posited the apparent embarrassment of the tourist under the gaze of the host as evidence that the reflection of the tourist's gaze had been interpreted as the negative gaze with which tourists tend to view each other (346-8). Here we see how adding hosts' perspectives to 'the gaze,' as well as challenging a rigid tourist perspective, can offer insight into how gazes reflect and refract between subjects, leading to interesting questions regarding processes of inter-subjection within tourism.

In the chapters to follow, 'the gaze' is explored through modes of photographic reproduction and proliferation, as well as less 'ocular-centric' considerations of perceptions and encounters, that focus more on listening, telling, and public discourse, emphasizing that one can 'be shown' something, or change perspective, through the exchange of words. I therefore propose an interpretation of the gaze through tourism interactions that is along the line of Merleau-Ponty's response to Sartre's condemnation of the gaze's ability to sinisterly objectify (in Jay 1993:289-291): that the experience of the gaze may indeed be intolerable, but *only if* 'the recourse to the ruse of speech' allowing for 'a common domain of thoughts' is not possible, or prohibited (Merleau-Ponty in Jay 1993:324).

Subjectivity and Post-colonial Ambiguities:

The discussion of subjectivity thus far has largely been a generalizing one that posits tourism as an activity intimately related to a globalizing modern consciousness in which sight and mobility are privileged. Recent post-colonial scholarship reminds us however, that trying 'to generalize about subjectivity risks engagement with the oxymoronic' (Lambeck 2002:25), and to purport a globalizing, modern subjectivism acts to undermine 'the subjective ambiguities and ambivalences' that distinctly characterize postcolonial conditions in Africa (Werbner 2002:1).

Attempting to discuss and write about post-colonial subjectivities indeed seems to be an endeavor steeped in ambiguity. Mbembe (2002), for example, has written on the problematic attempts to posit a cohesive theory of post-colonial subjectivity, or of the contemporary African subject, that focus on a legacy of disenfranchisement and tragedy experienced historically through slavery, colonization, and apartheid. The two ideological modes of subjecthood to have taken up these three periods as elemental to understanding the uniqueness of African experience are categorized by Mbembe as 'instrumentalism' and 'nativism,' both of which he claims have unfortunately 'colonized' their own projects (242); the former by relying on a collective sense of victimization, turning the African into a castrated subject at the whim of the Other's enjoyment (251), and the latter by conflating racial and territorial authenticity, positioning Africa as exclusively 'the land of black people'

(256).²⁴ Mbembe's critique seems to quickly remind us of the political significance that claims to essentialist subject-positions evoke.²⁵

As mentioned above, a discussion of subjectivity is concurrently a consideration of agency. A primary concern of Mbembe's critique of 'nativism' as an approach to 'African subjectivity' is in its claim to speak for Africa as a whole while upholding a generalized African identity and geography as an authentic uniqueness of consciousness based on opposition (See Mafeje 2001, for example). Agency in this discourse is then founded not on claiming an 'alter ego' to that of a 'Western consciousness,' but rather, as Mbembe describes, a loud and forceful assertion of alterity (Mbembe 2002:254-61). The question then seems to be: how can we take care to consider the ambiguities of power and subjugation historically shared in 'the post-colony,' that singular noun used by Mbembe (2001) to connote a condition to be considered in its multiplicity and plurality, without limiting the agency of the post-colonial subject to that of victimhood, opposition, and difference? More specifically to this research: how can we claim to speak to global causes and effects of a tourism industries, the hegemony of vision in producing knowledge about the world, and the shifts in consciousness under late capitalism, while also taking into account the multiplicity of social transformations underway in post-apartheid South

²⁴ Mbembe (2002) also points out the contradictions such a claim would have within the continent of Africa as a whole, noting for example the presence of "Africans of Arab, South Asian, Jewish, and Chinese ancestry" and the differences in "historical relations and influences between the Mediterranean Maghreb and sub-Saharan Africa" and the importance of "Arabo-Islamic" identity in North and East Africa, for example (264-5). Mbembe also states, "the category of whiteness no longer has the same meanings as it did under colonialism or apartheid" and that "...it is clear that the experience of Africans of European origins has taken on ever more diverse aspects throughout the continent" (264).

Africa? And moreover, how do we do this without simply finding and confusing increasingly smaller boxes of determinism in which to package and contain our understanding of agency?

Werbner's reader on *Postcolonial Subjectivities in Africa* (2002) grapples with the extent that subjectivities are determined by the diverse and shifting economic, socio-cultural, political, and moral currents that are undergoing 'remarkably unlike postcolonial transformations' across the continent (3). Emphasizing the implications for agency in these chapters, Werbner further explains,

We open out the notion of agency in order to bring it beyond the analytic limits of individualism and the lone heroic actor. The relative autonomy of social actors, like the very category of the subject, is taken to be problematic under changing postcolonial conditions. We debate where and how marginalization, dispossession and exploitation form the grounds of subjectivities in very different postcolonies. (2002:3)

Werbner's comment speaks against generalities, and also brings to mind approaches to writing and research that seek to problematize predominantly Western models of individualism,²⁶ agency, and instrumentality in ways that flatten the sociality of people to modes that are more easily relatable and suited to generalizing (see Piot 1999: chapter one). While remaining mindful of the persistence of hegemonic and Eurocentric epistemologies that may deceptively paint a monochromatic picture of the world or, as post-colonial scholars have suggested, use Africa as a laboratory to test the universalism of

²⁶ For a critique of universal understandings of individualism, see Harris (1989) and Conklin and Morgan (1996).

theories formulated about the West,²⁷ care must also be taken not to compartmentalize difference into neat packages labeled 'non-Western' in order to critique all attempts to generalize, or we have slipped right back into subjectivities founded on opposition and radical alterity (Keesing 1994; Mbembe 2002). Furthermore, in setting up and trying to work within such oppositional assumptions as 'West and the rest' or 'non-Western,' we claim that such ambiguities and ambivalences do not exist in some essential, homogenous, static, and all-together mythical understanding of the West as some cohesive wholeness that all 'others' lack. To rethink an understanding of subjectivity and agency that can move between and beyond such unmoving and ultimately unrealistic subject-positions, anthropology has been called on to push for an interpretation of the subject, and therefore the self, as 'open' (Battaglia 1999), that takes contingency, ambiguity, ambivalence and uncertainty as its ethos as well as its telos.

Some recent ethnographic examples which emphasize the shifting, contingent, and ambiguous character of subjectivity, rather than the subject's locatedness in 'a position' (Battaglia 1999:117-8) or 'as opposition' (Mbembe 2002), include Lisa Malkki's (1995) attention to Hutu refugees living in the urban centers of Tanzania. Through her 'town' case-studies²⁸, Malkki introduces consultants who strove to dis-align themselves with refugee status through relationships with Tanzanian citizens and a re-fashioning of ethnic identification. Here the need to play with and bend subject-positions, and the desire of the subject to seek obscurity from definitive locatedness (Battaglia 1999:117) through the

²⁷ See Mafeje's critique of Sally Falk Moore's *Anthropology in Africa* (1994) in his article 'Anthropology and Independent Africans' (1998:32), for example.

²⁸ As opposed to the refugee 'camp' field site of her study.

avoidance of state surveillance and the strategic, instrumental use of ethnicity toward invisibility from state authority, speaks to the ways that agency may operate in innovative ways within and through the ambiguities of shifting subjectivity. Heike Behrend offers another example, and is further considered in the following chapter. Her piece in Werbner's reader (2002:44-62) discusses the photographic self-creation of youths living in Mombasa who appropriated styles of dress and pose made popular by American hip-hop personalities, and exchanged these images with friends to project an imagined subjectivity of self-fashioning beyond the physical immobility created by material lack. In this example, subjectivity defined by victimhood through economic impoverishment, or through claiming authentic and autochthonic Africanity (Mafeje 2001), is challenged by the youths in their creative appropriation of diasporic identities to project self-constructed selves out into the world through photographs.

As a final example, Francis Nyamnjoh (2002:111-138) addresses notions of agency, subjectivity and 'culture' using historical, anthropological, and autobiographical perspectives of Cameroon. Emphasizing the need for the post-colonial African subject to draw from a 'repertoire' of local styles and behaviors, *as well as* from the 'bazaar' that is globalization and modernity, Nyamnjoh suggests that with such hybridity, 'discussions of agency and subjectivity must be informed by the reality on the ground of the creative quest for survival' (2002:112-3). Furthermore, such hybrid ideas of agency and subjectivity require greater attention to notions of community, conviviality, and inter-subjectivity (113). Nyamnjoh's emphasis on inter-subjectivity draws attention to the ways that individual actions and achievements are always tied to, part of, entangled in, or on the

behalf of, a social world of others. He further explains that by accepting the locally negotiated moral implications of action as part of the repertoire of behaviors and self-stylizing undertaken by a person, s/he is able to both affirm their belonging with others while acting in their own interests. 'Culture,' in this regard, may be thought of 'as a compass that facilitates action without necessarily determining it' (113). Agency and subjectivity can therefore be understood in how one is entangled with others, and also in the creative ways that one works with their entanglements, or rather puts their entanglements to work. Subjectivity then does not make sense as anything other than inter-subjective.

Clearly there are many innovative and provocative ways that subjectivity and agency can be rethought as open, contingent, and productively rich with ambiguity, rather than flawed by it. Now we can return to the question of how to theorize about contemporary subjectivities without positing a generalized and globalized subject whose world is organized by the hegemony of vision, who becomes ever-more subsumed and coerced by a global market to capitalize from an authentic notion of identity-culture-commodity, and who is caught up in the precarious flux of transformation in the post-colony—without denying the significance of any one of these notions on processes of subjection, yet refuting their determinism.

Related to this problematic, and particularly relevant to research on township tourism, is the question of how to balance a consideration of power, political-economy, and poverty, without overlooking the friendships, conviviality, and creativity that imbue lives with meaning, even on the peripheries. Or, put another way and just as important, is how to

shift the focus of inquiry to reveal the surprising and innovative ways that people manage to share and shape their own lives without denying the pervasive structural inequalities of an unrelenting political economy that seems to persistently frustrate the attempts of people at such peripheries to find and keep their footing on precarious and shifting ground. It seems more and more doubtful that the metaphor of the telescope and microscope, or perspectives from the global supplemented by snap shots from the local, can help us see a clearer picture of the implications of township tourism to subjectivity and agency. Rather, we might gain greater insight by looking for signs of the inter-subjectivity of the two, the interconnectedness of the local and global, of power and resistance, through the ongoing becoming of subjects in the everyday. The hope is that this angle of inquiry into tourism, through an 'ethnography of the particular' (Abu-lughod 1991), might demonstrate the interdependence between 'hosts' and 'guests,' global North and global South, First and Third Worlds, and center and periphery, that challenges binaries whereby only one half makes the other.²⁹

Contextualizing 'the gaze': a view from KTC

²⁹ I have found the phenomenological theories of Merleau-Ponty and Michael Jackson, and attention to the philosophy and psychoanalysis of Lacan extremely helpful in rethinking the significance of vision in tourism encounters as a mechanism from which to understand the formation of inter-subjectivities between gazers and gazees. I acknowledge, however, that the question of 'African modes' of personhood and individuality is not dealt with extensively here, and the risk of applying 'Western models' of subjectivity to explain postcolonial contexts is recognized. I have intended then, as others have done, to situate discussions about theories of the gaze and inter-subjectivity within a historical context that considers the interconnections of 'Western models' and 'African modes' and of 'selves' and 'others.'

The debates surrounding post-colonial subjectivities make it clear that because 'the gaze' is a concept with many permutations and subsequent implications, it is important to contextualize the significance of 'seeing' and 'being seen' for this research in post-apartheid South Africa. In Levin (1993), for example, after describing the possible turn from considering 'the gaze' as predominantly a relationship between subject and object, in which the subject represents 'a detached spectator-observer,' to considering 'the gaze' as a mode of visual *inter*-action, the author expresses his doubt in such an optimistic prospect by recalling an anecdote from apartheid South Africa (19).

In "Children As Moral Observers," Robert Coles reported what a black child of eleven, a child living in Soweto, South Africa, told him in the summer of 1979: "One day, I'm ready to go die for my people. It's that bad. We are treated like dogs.... When I go to Joburg [Johannesburg], I look at the white people, and there is fear in their faces. They can't see us, but we see them. They don't want to see us, but we have to see them! I hope, some day, God helps us settle this; He will have to come down here again, and open a lot of eyes!" For this child, the connections between vision and domination, vision and violence, could not be more visible (in Levin 1993:19-20)

In lieu of an over-simplified discussion of the changes in political climate between 1979 and 2011, the following anecdote taken from a conversation with Naomi's boyfriend, Brilliance, might better illustrate how the importance of 'seeing' and 'being seen' has carried over into the post-liberation setting.

He began with colonialism. He asked me what the name of the memorial up high on the mountain was, sitting at UCT. 'Rhodes' I said. 'Yes,' he replied. He used hand gestures to express up and down, emphasizing that, '...with colonialism, they put that memorial up there.'

He raised his hands above his head, palms facing down and flicked his fingers open and closed while looking up as if to gaze at an imposing being from above, whose energy was shooting down from his fingertips. '...While they, the Africans, were below it...' he pointed with both index fingers toward the ground and then swirled them around, indicating the masses spread out below. 'And this colonialism made them think, "We are what we are not".'

'This thinking was around during apartheid as well... The Boers wanted to keep outsiders away from the townships, they didn't want others to see them and it was a way to keep the difference between the whites and the Africans. But today,' Brilliance qualified, 'foreigners want to come to the township and they fall in love with it because it is different from town. Because visitors see that there is a unique culture in the townships, and that the city is too much like what they are used to from abroad.'

Attention to metaphors of visibility and invisibility in Brilliance's explanation here is insightful. While visibility was imbued with virtue in both Brilliance's narrative and in the child's interview from 1979, as making the injustices of the apartheid state visible to the rest of the world became a moral imperative of the liberation struggle, the apartheid state, in contrast, employed tactics of invisibility through censorship that restricted mediation of violent images and police brutality taking place in the townships to the eyes of South Africa's other citizens, and of policy-makers abroad. Also significant in Brilliance's telling is his transition from identifying the state's desire 'to keep outsiders away from the townships' as 'a way to keep the difference between the whites and the Africans,' to citing the importance of 'difference' as *attracting* visitors to see the township today. In a historically ironic transition from state confinement to neoliberal penetration, the perception of difference created by the invisibility upheld by the state has now become the desired uniqueness that has made the township a marketable tourist destination. One might argue that the morality of visibility in the post-apartheid state has been reconfigured

in township tourism through market incentives to capitalize on difference. And yet, there were many moments during fieldwork when township tourism was described to me as evidence that times had indeed changed, in comments such as: ‘when I was your age, white people only came to the townships with guns.’³⁰ It may also be argued then, that the reverse gaze of hosts towards tourists in KTC were seeing the gaze of foreigners as signifying that the child’s wish—that ‘they will see’—was being realized.

The different modes of vision and gazing, doing different kinds of work in township tourism, are further addressed in the chapters to follow. The intent is to demonstrate how processes of inter-subjectivity at work within township tourism encounters in the post-apartheid city of Cape Town, offer a particular post-colonial context in which to rethink modes of subjectivity and agency in ‘our age.’

³⁰ This was told to Loyiso by a customer at a shebeen that was one of Loyiso’s tour stops in Nyanga. The man was much older than Loyiso, and said to him in Xhosa (which Loyiso translated for me later), that the man ‘wished he was part our time, because when he was my age, white people only came to the townships with guns.’

CHAPTER 4: Cameras in the field and pictures on display; rethinking 'the photographic gaze'

... from 1840 onwards tourism and photography came to be welded together and the development of each cannot be separated from the other. Both sets of practices remake each other in an irreversible and momentous double helix. From then we can say a 'tourist gaze' enters and makes the mobile, modern world. (Urry 2002:149)



Five-year-old Thabo takes a picture of me, taking a picture of him, using his father's camera-phone one day while spending time in the newly renovated kitchen, where Naomi (in the background) caters for the internship-abroad company she works for.

During my time in the field, I began to notice the increasing occasion of township residents taking photographs or making video recordings (most often with cell-phones) of the tourists who had come with cameras to see their community (myself included). Not only did observing this practice feel like a breath of fresh air in light of comments by hesitant tourists, anxious that township tourism might be 'like a zoo' with poor people as the immobile objects of interest to mobile outsiders, but it also drew attention to tourists as objects of interest under an explicitly visible 'reverse gaze' (Gillespie 2006). This initial observation encouraged me to pay closer attention to the use of cameras and photographs by both hosts and guests during my fieldwork, and from a collection of observations—or ethnographic 'snapshots'—I have come to suggest three conclusions.

The first, that although cameras were still closely tied to the tourist and a particular mode of gazing (prompting poses, for example) its power as a symbol of economic differentiation between hosts and guests, and its exclusivity to the tourist as a mobile technology of representation, was often undermined by hosts' apparent 'reverse gaze' through similar technology. A second observation was that many guests seemed to readily acknowledge the power problematic of the camera and made attempts to assuage such dynamics when they became evident, suggesting that structural inequity in the photographic gaze was still perceived by many participants in tourism, yet often actively challenged. Thirdly, the photographs displayed by hosts and guests that were relevant to their touristic encounters largely emphasized relationships and interaction over contemplative distance.

Photographs were therefore utilized to make relationships visible, both in the manner of their display (in the home or on Facebook), and as gifts that strengthened reciprocal ties.

The development of 'the tourist gaze' has been intimately linked to the privileging of the eye and its mobility, and to the invention of the camera (Urry 1990/2002). For Urry, the organizational aspect of vision has been implicated in the historical processes of colonialism and imperial encounters, which included the observation, documentation, and photographing of 'otherness,' and has similarly encouraged a distanced and objectifying gaze of people and places through modern tourism. Just as the imperial Western eye identified, categorized, and placed into hierarchies what was different based on a Eurocentric perspective, so too has a global tourism industry driven by the Western leisure classes identified what is different, and therefore, worth seeing.

Urry's point here is important and well-founded. Colonial travelogues demonstrate the exoticizing gaze of European travelers in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Said 1979; Ghose 1998; Lemke 2009 offer examples). The use of ID photographs and documents have been enforced as modes of surveillance and control in colonial states (Behrend 2002:45), ethnographic portraits and exhibitions were displayed to categorize 'primitive cultures' and their accoutrements for the education and contemplation of upper-class Europeans (Magubane 2004:chapter three), and who could forget the photographs of skull measurements made infamous by eugenics movements? There is also research, however, that draws attention to the ways that photography and film, as recent technologies of the gaze, have been appropriated towards very different goals, including a critique of a Western visual hegemony of representation (See Behrend 2002, Pinney and Peterson 2003, Feurle 2009).

Furthermore, Urry's point in the quote beginning this chapter, that the practices of tourism and photography continue to remake each other, presents an interesting premise from which to rethink the 'tourist gaze' given the recent changes in technologies of image (re)production and social media. Online social networking sites that include programs for the upload and display of digital photographs such as Facebook, Flickr, and Snapfish have clearly influenced how tourists collect and display images of their travels, offering a much faster way to share images with more people than through postcards. Recent research has also investigated how participants of forums like Facebook, which include user-profiles that expressly identify its users, have used photo-sharing as a means of identity

construction (Zhao, Grasmuck, and Martin 2008; Mendelson and Papacharissi 2010). This recent increase in visibility and the dispersal of images through new forms of popular social media opens up an interesting space to consider psychoanalytical theories toward 'the gaze' as an organizing social system of seeing and being seen, and to consider modes of subjectivity that may be distinct from the historical periods outlined by Urry (2002:chapters seven and eight).

Additionally, the growing democratization of such technologies carry real challenges to the previous power dynamics implicated by 'the gaze' that closely linked mastery over an image to who had the ability to capture, proliferate, and frame its representation. The addition of cameras and internet-connectivity to cell phones and their affordability in the last few years has further expanded the mobility of the image. This trend may be particularly relevant in sub-Saharan Africa, where as of 2010 there were ten times as many cell phones as landlines, and cell phone subscriptions had increased by 49 percent annually between 2002 and 2007, compared to 17 percent annually in Europe (ITU 2008, 2009 in Aker and Mbiti 2010). The quickly dropping cost of mobile communication technology, including SIM cards that can be purchased in South Africa for 2 rand (approx. 30 cents, U.S.), has led many researchers to write enthusiastically about its development potential in Africa, particularly in rural and peri-urban areas where access to electricity and landlines are limited or intermittent (Aker and Mbiti 2010).

While it would be a misguided exaggeration to celebrate the worldwide penetration of communication technologies and declare camera-phones fully democratized, the influence

of such technologies to social processes of gazing deserves serious attention. When I first became acquainted in 2007 with the internship company that would later host this fieldwork, Facebook had only recently launched in South Africa and Daniel had only just set up his profile. Midway through my fieldwork in 2010, the Nojilanas all had facebook accounts, and I had been taking photographs of Naomi's meals to advertise her catering business on her Facebook page. At the time of this writing, the Nojilanas' Facebook profiles are filled with images uploaded via friends from KTC, many through camera-phones, and from former tourists/interns.

While Urry's 'tourist gaze' offer valuable insight into the historical and dialectical relationship between the development of hegemonic epistemologies related to vision and the technologies of mobility and image reproduction, by continuing to trace the 'double helix' of photography and tourism, we may consider the ways that the hegemony of representation is being challenged, the power problematics of the gaze reconfigured,³¹ and the photograph's objectifying gaze put to surprisingly different 'work' than most studies of tourism have considered. The following sections therefore offer examples from fieldwork that inspired the tentative conclusions listed above, and encourage a reconsideration of how 'the gaze' might be employed as a theoretical model, as well as a methodological tool, when put toward understanding a touristic inter-subjectivity shaping the way people gaze as they move through 'other worlds.'

³¹ A further question to be raised, but is beyond the scope of this thesis, is how mastery over the image is being transferred to new forms of ownership and property rights under social media-network corporations such as Facebook. Additionally, it is certain that more research will be forthcoming that examines the roll of social media and ICTs in circumventing the control that states attempt to maintain over media during the period of uprisings in North Africa and the Middle East labeled the 2011 "Arab Spring".

Democratizing technology and reversing ‘the photographic gaze’

... Kelly held a large, professional-looking camera that belonged to her friend. I brought my smaller point-and-shoot camera, but kept it in my bag and out of sight, as I felt a bit uncomfortable using it. Naomi had told me to be sure to bring it when she invited me to her aunt’s party in Khayelitsha, in celebration of recent initiates who had ‘returned from the mountains.’³² ... We sat in a circle, hugging the walls of the main room of the house with the other women while the men drank beer and chatted in a large tent outside. Every now and then a woman would rise from her seat, initiate a song, and start dancing while those making up the circle clapped in time to her steps. Kelly snapped some photographs and entertained the children by taking their picture and then showing them their image on its large digital screen.

On the next day of the celebration, Naomi’s aunt again welcomed us warmly and asked Kelly, who again wore her friend’s impressive camera around her neck, to take a picture of her. Another woman encouraged Naomi’s aunt to sit on a chair against the cement wall outside the house, as though she were posing for a portrait. Seeing the woman’s excitement at having her picture taken, I quickly scrambled for my small point-and-shoot camera, not wanting to miss the opportunity for a picture if Kelly was being asked to take one. The woman posed with a stoic face, and straight posture. She wore a long orange skirt and a black top, and wrapped a matching orange blanket around her shoulders, below an orange hat. The outfit was decorated with black stripes and white dots, and white dots were painted across her face. After Kelly and I both took several pictures, the woman stood up to look at our digital screens and seemed very pleased with the images, showing them to the other women in the house. Soon after, Naomi drew my attention to the street. ‘They are here!’

...Naomi took my camera right out of my hands, clearly thinking I wasn’t moving fast enough, and she moved quickly through the small crowd of spectators that had gathered

³² Circumcision was often referred to as “going into the mountains,” though in urban areas was often conducted in a nearby open space or field, isolated from family and friends, for a duration of about one month (pers. comm. Naomi Nojilana)

around the new initiates and took a few pictures on my behalf. I laughed and thanked her when she returned with my camera. The two young men were dressed in khaki pants and khaki button-down shirts. They both had black cloths wrapped around their heads, nearly covering their eyes. They walked with long wooden sticks in their hands, and stared down at the ground. The crowd that gathered around them cheered as the young men passed by.

While people milled around outside after the two initiates had moved to a back room of the house, Naomi's aunt told Kelly and I that we should go next door where more women were preparing food for the occasion. She told us to have our cameras ready, and as we entered we were greeted with excitement. The women inside were using large tubs to prepare an impressive amount of food. Prompted by our entrance, the women posed for us, holding their large wooden spoons and tongs up in the air like weapons of victory, grinning widely while we snapped some pictures. Naomi then led Kelly and I through the house to greet more people.

We found ourselves sitting with yet another circle of women who were chatting and sharing jokes, and Naomi would lean over to translate when a particularly funny story or comment was shared. Several hours passed, spent drinking the alcoholic gifts that were brought from the main house and conversing, with intermittent singing and dancing. I had become less shy about using my camera now, especially when I noticed that many of the women who remained seated during the dancing were using their cell phones to record videos of those in the middle of the circle. After refills arrived, when the sun had begun to set making the room without electricity considerably darker, I was convinced to join in the dancing. I noticed more cell phones, with video cameras 'rolling' despite the lack of light, were trained on me as I attempted to impress the crowd with my rendition of Miriam Makeba's 'Click Song,' that Naomi had taught me.

The celebration in Khayelitsha was one of my first invitations by the Nojilanas to join them on an outing outside of Nyanga, KTC, or nearby Gugulethu. While I had started to feel at home on the street where they lived, my 'guest' status at Naomi's aunt's felt as though it had easily slipped into a touristic subject-position. Interestingly, it was the use of cameras

that seemed to mark this quick transition. While I arrived at the celebration with my smaller point-and-shoot digital camera concealed from view, Kelly arrived with a large and professional-looking camera with a strap that hung from her neck, though the weight of the apparatus required her to hold it in her hands rather than let it hang freely. Our initial entrance into each room seemed to provoke poses from those who greeted us, and our tour of the celebration space felt as if it were spontaneously mapped by places and people thought of as appropriate and interesting enough for our photographing.

Urry's chapter on 'seeing and theming' (2002) discusses how photography has come to shape travel as a motive to collect images; giving a reason to stop, look from a particular vantage point, and snap a photograph. He further stresses that with the democratization of photography, everyone becomes an amateur semiotician. The semiotics of photography in tourism has also come to significantly entangle the photographer, however, as 'one learns... that a person with a camera draped around his/her neck is clearly a "tourist"' (128).

Gillespie (2006) addresses this symbolic link between the camera and the tourist in his description of 'the reverse gaze.' While 'the reverse gaze' brings to mind the ability of the objects of the tourist gaze to gaze back, as in Maoz's (2006) 'mutual gaze,' Gillespie's point is less about the perspective of photographed 'hosts' than about how tourists identify the implications of being seen photographing. To illustrate, Gillespie describes an instance from his fieldwork in northern India when a woman in traditional dress playfully mocked the tourist photographing her by pretended to take a picture of the tourist. This created noticeable anxiety in the tourist, and prompted him to leave the area. Gillespie theorized

that this tourist's embarrassment at being caught in the act of photographing was less an empathetic reaction by the tourist imagining the woman's reaction at being photographed, than the tourist attributing his own negative perception of 'other tourists,' most strongly identified by the act of photographing, to himself (354). Gillespie uses Goffman's theory of self-presentation (1959) and Edelmann's analysis of embarrassment (1987), to model his interpretation of this reflection and refraction of the 'tourist gaze,' to demonstrate how the 'reverse gaze' complicates the Self's image of how the Other perceives the Self (Gillespie 2006:347).

Gillespie's (2006) analysis demonstrates the ways the 'tourist gaze,' and indeed the tourist subject-position, is complexly entangled with, and constituted through, a dialect of seeing Selves and Others. While the role of the camera as a symbol closely linked to the tourist subject-position is perhaps represented most clearly in the anecdote above through my own reluctance to use a camera, and my attention to reactions at Kelly's ready use of hers, this seemingly solipsistic analysis might be forgiven if we consider the significant role of narcissism, as well as voyeurism, in understanding the photographic gaze. Gillespie's attention to the 'sociopsychological processes' (343) of the 'reverse gaze' to position the tourist offers another angle to consider the implications of psychoanalytic theorizations of the gaze toward mapping a mode of inter-subjectivity particular to tourism. The 'reverse gaze' observed at Naomi's aunt's house involves more angles to consider than the perspective of hosts *as imagined* from the perspective of guests, however. There were moments when Kelly and I seemed to attract more attention from our hosts than the

initiates for whom the celebration was in honor, making the tourists the obvious objects of interest to their hosts' gaze.

A further example of what we might continue to call a 'reverse photographic gaze' occurred during a township walking-tour of Khayelitsha. Paul, an American study abroad student and in this instance, a township tourist, was willing to share a collection of photographs and videos he had taken during his tour. The sequence of images below was taken from a short video clip filmed by Paul, of a young girl filming the group of tourists that Paul was a part of, with a mobile phone. The girl's first reaction to being seen by this small crowd of visitors is to wave at the group who notices her. She then seems to realize that Paul is filming her with his large, professional-grade camera, attached to a tall tripod with extended microphone. The girl then smiles with eyes wide while still looking at Paul through her cell phone, and she covers her face with what appears to be embarrassment at suddenly realizing that she is being filmed, filming.



It seems that Gillespie's analysis of the 'reverse gaze' as the jarring acknowledgement of being pulled into the Other's gaze while gazing, suddenly moving the tourist to consider the

image s/he has of how others see her/him, and therefore mediating the emerging tourist self (Gillespie 2006:347), may not be strictly attached to the subject-position of the tourist. Rather it is perhaps more broadly related to the idea of the voyeur (that most infamous distanced and contemplative gaze), who is caught in the act of seeing, and the sudden recognition of being seen as, and thereby becoming, a seeing self through others.

Gillespie states that during his 12 months of fieldwork in northern India in 2006, the instance he describes was the only time he saw a Ladhaki photograph a tourist (2006:347). I found that by the end of 2010, a township tourist in South Africa, especially if part of a large group, could expect to draw the attention of a camera-phone or two. While tourism is an industry predicated on touristic seeing, with hosts as the objects of their gaze, the growing use of technologies of image reproduction may be creating more opportunities for gazing back. Even in a mode of tourism organized around viewing difference predicated, in part, by a problematic, semiotic amalgamation of Africa as 'culturally rich' and poverty-stricken, a teenage girl whose street has become a route for touristic gazing may be seen gazing back with similar semiotic tools as her gazers. In that moment when the gaze of the tourist and the gaze of the host—both mediated in a process of reproduction, of capture, are caught in each other's gaze—who is the object and who is the subject? Or may we consider this a moment of inter-subjectivity? Furthermore, what does the camera, as both semiotic tool and touristic signifier, add to this instance of mutual gazing, and how might their growing democratization be reshaping a 'tourist gaze,' and a mode of tourism subjectivity in South Africa? The remaining two observations regarding the photographic gaze that emerged during my time with the Nojilana family also speak to these questions.

Challenging image mastery, sharing in the visibility

I have describe moments when our hosts who posed for Kelly and me as we took their pictures would ask to see, or be invited to look at, their digital image immediately after their picture was taken. Naomi's aunt shows the image taken by Kelly, displayed on her camera's digital screen, to the other women attending the celebration, and Kelly entertains children by taking their picture and then showing them the images of themselves. This practice of taking digital photographs of township residents and then immediately sharing the image with the person photographed was a regular occurrence on township tours I participated in, and during Naomi's 'Township Braais' in KTC. This was especially noticeable with regard to tourists' encounters with children. While I did not question tourists or residents about this practice during fieldwork, as it seemed to fade into the etiquette of touristic picture-taking as much as other forms of touring habitus,³³ in retrospect, and in light of Gillespie's analysis, two motivations in particular warrant consideration.

One may simply be an excuse to take a picture of another person while attempting to minimize the discomfort of the reverse gaze. This suggests that tourists feel anxiety or guilt at taking a photograph of a township resident. Such concerns were often brought to my attention when I spoke to tourists, students, and interns about my research interest in township tourism. One intern from the United States, while on her way home from one of

³³ Although this would not be an expected practice at a touristic performance, for example, where a distanced gaze is generally expected and encouraged by careful staging.

Naomi's braais in KTC, explained that she would like to 'go on an actual tour' and had heard that Loyiso organized and guided tours for Daniel's company. Another intern added that she thought 'it sounded cool' but that she could 'also see it going the other way, ya know, and become like a trip to the zoo.'

Although Gillespie associated the discomfort created by 'the reverse gaze' with how tourists perceive other tourists, he recorded similar sentiments among tourists in Ladhak, who explained, 'I try not to be, em, to take pictures of the people, though, em, I want to...,' 'I feel embarrassed to do it, because it is like, like making them feel freakish,' 'It's like "look at the freaks there!"—that's just horrible for the people' (Gillespie 2006:249). Gillespie also describes the tactics some tourists would take to avoid the reverse gaze:

... some tourists pretend to photograph a landscape or a building that is in the same general direction as the target Ladakhi. The camera is then focused on something roughly equidistant. Then with a sideways sweep, the target Ladakhi is photographed quickly and unsuspectingly. A development of this method is to take photographs without looking through the lens at all.... Using an automatic focus camera, the strategy is to simply, and swiftly, point the camera in the right general direction and take the photograph. With practice this can be done so quickly that it almost dissolves into a fluid motion. Digital cameras greatly facilitate this method because they reduce the cost of wasted photographs. Surreptitiously using a telephoto lens from a distance is yet another popular strategy to avoid the reverse gaze. (2006:347)

The tourists I observed during fieldwork, who took photographs of township residents and then offered a glance of the image to those photographed for their approval or comment, seemed to assuage the discomfort of the reverse gaze, and the noticeable inequity of being

the one with a camera, by involving the photographee in the production of their own image. The addition of digital view-screens on the backs of most digital cameras may have also encouraged this practice by allowing camera-users to instantly review the image they have taken. Moreover, inviting the objects of their photographic gaze to review their image sometimes led to requests for more images to be taken, in which the photographee might experiment with different poses, or invite others into the photograph with her/him. This practice then seemed to demonstrate a distinct break with a distanced, contemplative gaze—or an ethically questionable, covert gaze as described by Gillespie (2006)—toward a mode of interaction between subjects. In the end, however, the tourist usually left the township possessing the images, although the growing use of social media and online image sharing discussed above may be changing the inequity of this trend as well.

A second motivation seemed especially significant during photographic interactions between tourists and children. Group walking-tours of the townships I visited, and Naomi's 'township braais,' always attracted the attention of children from the surrounding neighborhoods. Interactions between township tourists and children, particularly with the interns and study-abroad students of Daniel's company, were almost unwaveringly mediated through 'play' with a camera. Children would often pose for pictures and then eagerly reach for the camera to see their image and that of their friends.' Sometimes tourists would also assist children in taking a photograph with their camera, helping them to hold the camera steady in the direction of a posing friend, and push the correct button. I began to wonder during these moments of exchange—when children, curious and eager to have the attention of young adults, and the tourists I observed, perhaps feeling less

awkward or anxious about a self-conscious subject-position of ‘township tourist’ when entertaining a child—whether the use of cameras became an *excuse* to interact, rather than interaction being an excuse to leave with a picture. Whatever the individual motivation, it became clear that the picture-taking I observed on these occasions was a practice that seemed to *facilitate* interaction more often than it created a perception of distance. Suffice it to say that while both motivations considered here were likely at work simultaneously, the tourists in these interactions seemed to tire of using their cameras far more quickly than the children.



Left: Diandra, an intern/study abroad student from the United States, shows a child the picture she has taken of him on the digital screen on the back of her camera while on a walking tour of Khayelitsha. Right: A boy uses a digital camera lent to him by a tourist to take photographs of other children who pose for him during one of Naomi’s ‘Township Braai’s’ in KTC.

If these photographic practices I observed are indeed examples of emerging camera etiquette, it suggests that the power problematic of the ‘tourist gaze’ at work within township tourism, and the mode of tourist subjectivism provoked by a ‘reverse gaze,’ is being both recognized and actively challenged by township tourists. Just as Bruner (2005:95-100) critiqued Urry’s systematic description of a ‘tourist gaze’ by pointing out the ‘questioning gaze’ of many tourists who did not readily accept the tourist narratives

presented to them, so too does acknowledging changing touristic practices allow space for examining tourists' agency. Doing so does not necessitate denying the legacy of the structural inequalities of representation, however. Rather, we might gain insight as to how both hosts and guests engage with such legacies, at times reproducing them, and at times creating new spaces of engagement and resistance.

The study-abroad student pictured above, for instance, demonstrated one township-tourist's attempt to redress a politics of representation. Diandra, a participant in Daniel's company who held a short term internship in a children's hospital in Cape Town's townships, was asked to submit an article about her experience abroad to her home university. In one segment of her essay, she writes,

I have included two photographs with this article that I feel best capture what I gained from my time [at the children's hospital]. The first one is one of the children of [the ward I worked in] with tears dripping down his cheeks. I chose this particular photograph because it is strikingly similar to photographs used on rice bowls and on TV ads that reinforce the stereotype of the African child. Having taken the photograph, it is almost comical the reason for such grief and challenges the stereotype with great strength. He isn't hungry, or in pain; he is actually crying because he is afraid of the sprinkler on the playground. The kids [in this ward] grew to adore the sprinkler and played in it for hours to help cool off on hot days. [The boy photographed] did not like the sprinkler and was quite terrified of it and therefore kept me company while others played (Entler 2011).

Diandra's statements and accompanying images pose an explicit challenge to the stereotypes she argues characterize the images of African children she is familiar with. By utilizing a photographic gaze to draw attention to what Poole (in Pinney and Peterson 2003) has called 'visual economies,' emphasizing the representational politics of the global

flows of images, Diandra demonstrates her ability to redirect the power of representation by making the object of her gaze the photographic gaze itself.

The point intended here is not to suggest that the practice of photography need no longer be seen as carrying the kind of aggression that Sontag (1979) reveals in her often cited work, *On Photography*, in which she describes the act of picture-taking as an event 'with ever more peremptory rights—to interfere with, to invade, or to ignore,' that 'has set up a chronic voyeuristic relation to the world...' (11). Indeed, the practices of interaction that the township tourists I observed engaged in suggest that these picture-takers recognize the presence of inequity between the subject-positions of 'host' and 'guest,' photographee and photographer, and actively attempted to assuage this dynamic by interrupting the distancing gaze the camera creates. Or, as Diandra's commentary on her photograph illustrates, by turning the aggression of the photographic gaze against itself and employing touristic photography towards its own critique.

Reciprocity and relationships through photographs

June 16th, Nojilana house

...I went inside and sat on the couch across from Brilliance, trying to catch a break from entertaining the children outside. Brilliance was scrolling through some pictures on a disc from his DVD player. A list of MPEG files showed up on the screen—pictures from the night at Mzoli's that my friend Thandi had taken. He must have downloaded them from the photo company that Thandi works for. Then a picture that I had taken of Brilliance and Naomi popped onto the screen, and I smiled. It was one of the pictures that I had developed

and put in the album I gave Naomi for her birthday. I smirked at myself. Even though I still thought the photo album I put together made a nice gift, I realized that in giving it I had assumed that because Naomi doesn't own a camera her only access to these photos was through her Facebook account from work. The disc of photographs displayed through Brilliance's DVD player made me rethink any assumption I had made regarding their access to the kinds of technology used by tourists to capture their image.

I was not the only guest of the Nojilanas' who had thought that photographs made an appropriate gift. Once Naomi's five-year-old son pulled out a photo album to show me his family pictures. Interspersed with pictures of Naomi's graduation dance, Thabo's grandmother, and baby photos of Loyiso's son were photographs of two young women whom Naomi explained had travelled from overseas and taken an interest in their family as I had. One of the young women was from Norway and was pictured with Thabo and Naomi at the beach in one image, and in another she was wearing a traditional Norwegian dress and standing in front of a window fogged by snow, next to a Christmas tree, the picture having clearly been taken in Norway and later given to Naomi. The other young woman, whom Naomi said was from Canada and had often spent weekends with her in KTC during her time in South Africa, was pictured with her mother, also visiting from Canada, sitting on the couch in the Nojilanas' living room, the young woman holding Loyiso's infant son in her lap and smiling towards the camera.

I was struck by the presence of such photographs of former guests to the Nojilana home in their family photo album, which seemed to seriously challenge the assumption that all township tourism encounters adhered to some boundary, distancing 'hosts' from 'guest' as producers from consumers. The 'framing' of these photographs given as gifts by former guests within a family photo album suggested an ongoing relationship of not just friendship, but even kinship. Another visible example of photographs demonstrating the inclusion of former guests within family networks was a framed image of a group of seven former study-abroad students posing with Busi, displayed in the main room of the Nojilina

home. When I asked Naomi about the photograph of young people, she responded by putting her hand to her heart and told me how emotional she becomes just thinking about how nice they were. They were the first students who had asked to visit the township with Busi. The picture had been taken in 2007, a year before Daniel had started his program for interns. The connections, relationships, and neither least nor most importantly, a mode of income that this group of students had created a precedent for by asking to visit Busi's home, seems to have earned their photograph with Busi a position in the Nojilana household on the same shelf as photos of Busi's wedding party.

When recounting this anecdote to a colleague, expressing my optimism at finding evidence that the tourist encounter was not necessarily as contrived and profit-oriented as critics of the industry often implied, I felt suddenly bulldozed by my colleagues response that I should consider the role of status possibly at work in the display of photographs of 'white' acquaintances in a township house. I was reminded of an excerpt from Steven Otter's *uMlungu in a Township* (2007), and the excitement of a man who had asked to photograph the author while holding the man's newborn. The author later learned from a friend that the man's enthusiasm was because he would someday show his child that a white man had held him (38-39). I felt as though I were carrying a brick labeled 'white guilt' in my stomach as I considered my colleague's comment. But as I browsed through the Facebook profile's and online photo albums of students and interns who had recently returned home, and their prominent display of photographs depicting themselves with the many 'black' acquaintances they had developed friendships with during their stay, my concern regarding the politics and semiotics of race and place actually began to ease. If there exists

a component of status-making in the display of 'white' acquaintances in a 'black' household, there may indeed be a similar component to the display of 'non-white' acquaintances in the photographs displayed on social media profiles of former guests, perhaps relaying the message that 'I met *real* Africans during my stay in South Africa.' The point here is not to deny the racialized problematics of power that at times seem to reproduce and bind subject-positions of 'host' and 'guest,' 'local' and 'tourist,' into oppositional and racialized binaries, but rather to challenge the determinism of such subject-positions, and to note the moments when they seem to melt away or are called into question.

A final example of how the photographic gaze was used to strengthen a relationship rather than reinforce a host-guest opposition, was when one intern, upon returning home after five months in Cape Town where he had developed a close friendship with the Nojilanas, mailed Naomi his own digital camera as a wedding present. In return, Naomi took several photographs of her and Brilliance, and of the rest of the family, and sent them to the intern as a thank you gift. In this case, rather than reinforcing a contemplative and distancing gaze, the camera, and its images constructed and reproduced by the Nojilanas, were used as gifts to strengthen the closeness between this former host and guest, diminishing the effect of their physical distance through reciprocity.

Rethinking the Gaze

If we are to suggest that the tourism industry engenders a mode of subjectivity that is tied to the global hegemony of late capitalism, predicated on a visual quest for difference (Urry

1990), and the objectification of one's 'culture' for tourist consumption (Greenwood 1977; Comaroffs 2009), then attention to 'the tourist gaze' as *inter*-action between *agents*, as much as the historically systematized, social field that *organizes* action between *subjects*, might create a space for considering the complex and creative *inter*-subjectivity of tourism's hosts and guests. Attention to the changing practices of photography within township tourism in this chapter has attempted to shift 'the photographic gaze' from the realm of theory to that of method, to demonstrate some of the ways a touristic inter-subjectivity can challenge oppositional subject-positions of 'host' and 'guest' as much as reproduce them. In the examples above, cameras were used not only to mediate the experience of travel (Behrend 2003:222), but also to mediate relationships between hosts and guests, often encouraging interaction over distanced contemplation, and producing valued photographs that were displayed in family photo albums, in homes, and on social networking sites to visually demonstrate the desired global interconnections of individuals. Furthermore, social media and networking sites like Facebook, and their increasing accessibility through democratizing technologies of image reproduction and proliferation, are creating new and important spaces for continuing to track the 'double helix' of photography and the tourist gaze (Urry 1990/2002). It seems that even tourism encounters that clearly invoke the notion of systematized looking between hosts and guests described by Urry's 'tourist gaze' are also permeated by reflections and refractions of multiple gazes emanating from various and flexible subject-positions, where mastery is continuously called into question.

In concluding this discussion however, despite the more optimistic tone of this analysis, there remains a nagging reminder that exploitation, objectification, and a troubling political economy are still visibly and powerfully at work within global tourism. Oddly enough, I was quickly reminded of the awkwardness of trying to make sense of the simultaneity of subjectivity and agency, subjugation and resistance, market incentives and conviviality that I had encountered in township tourism, when walking through the mall of the V&A Waterfront in Cape Town one day. While browsing this much more mainstream tourist destination than the townships of my research, I was suddenly struck by the window display of a popular camping and sportswear store, of which I took a picture:



Two mannequins, with skin tones paler than most Caucasians, are posed contemplatively, the man with hand on hip and the woman seated with a hand held up as if to comment on something in the distance—and yet also disinterestedly, each gazing in a different direction and to the sides of the display. Assorted at their feet are all the accessories a traveler could think they need, from flashlights and plug adaptors to thermoses and insect repellent. Behind the blasé beige figures is a large image of Maasai women in traditional regalia, appearing to be in mid dance. Reflected in the windowpane is the mall's bureau of exchange, where tourists can change their currency into rands and continue shopping. The coordinates for consuming Africa all seem to be in place for the travelling guest to buy into their racialized, tourist subject-position, except for one striking dissonance in the image behind the mannequins. The Maasai woman at the center of the photograph appears as though she is staring directly at the viewer of this display, almost as though she were grimacing in defiance of the observer. Whether this particular pose was staged for dramatic effect, to signify the wildness of an Africa to be found deeper in the continent than its southern tip, or was an accidental snap shot that happened to reveal what Barthes calls its 'punctum' (1981), the effect of this women's stare on the passerby is palpable.

Here is perhaps an example of what McGowan describes as Lacan's true meaning of an 'objective gaze.' 'It is not the look of the subject at the object, but the gap within the subject's seemingly omnipotent look... the point at which our desire manifests itself in what we see' (2007:6). In this way, the gaze is more an effect of the object, one that draws us within it. The effect is powerful because 'the gaze marks a disturbance in the functioning of ideology rather than its expression' (7); it defies signification. In this conception of 'the

gaze,' existing between subject and object, rather than belonging to either, and in my own reaction to what *felt* like the stare of this woman in the photograph, 'the gaze cannot offer the spectator anything resembling mastery' (8). While critiques of tourism have likened its organizing gaze as one that objectifies hosts for the desire of tourist subjects, perhaps this rethinking of a Lacanian gaze can lead us to reconsider where the power and resulting subjectivity of tourism encounters take shape: if not solely through the eyes of guests gazing at hosts, or hosts gazing back, then perhaps in the inter-space of both. If, as Indira Ghose explains, '[t]he gaze at the other is, in effect, a gaze into the mirror' (1998:15), what may we call the effect when the mirror is given theoretical room to not only gaze back, but to *inter-act*?

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CHAPTER 5: Spaces, Gazes, and Mobility

Mhlobo's seemed just as busy as my previous visits and the same Tracy Chapman CD was playing over the commotion. 'Molo Mhlobo's' is more a sports bar than shebeen, built in the middle of what used to be Nyanga's hostels for migrant labor, it is equipped with large TVs at either end of the room, a pool table in the back, and is Loyiso's favorite venue for watching soccer. The three of us (Loyiso, his friend Tapelo, and I) purchased some beers and Loyiso excitedly began to tell me about the previous weekend when he had brought a large group of students and interns to Mhlobo's after Naomi's most recent 'township braai.' During this conversation, a man approached our table, greeted each of us, and reached for a stack of City Vision papers across the bar, a free newspaper distributed weekly in the townships. He flipped through the pages until he came to an article titled, 'Whites spend night ekasie,' which read...

Forty white students from across Europe spent last Saturday in KTC partying with locals where they were also served traditional food. [Daniel's business partner]... a United States national who has been in the country for the past five years said he decided to form [the internship program]... for white Europeans to experience the African atmosphere³⁴.... He said the internship helps in changing perceptions about the continent. 'They go back home knowing that Africa has a sense of community. They feel welcomed. They keep coming for more, especially for chakalaka and pap.' ... [Loyiso and friend], the hosts, said they felt the need to invite Europeans to get rid of bad publicity about Nyanga in particular. They said on Sunday: 'We are very nice and kind here. We are very certain they will keep coming. They spent the night here unharmed. We want to show them that it is not true that Nyanga is SA's crime capital.'

Loyiso, Tapelo, and I were impressed and Loyiso said he would take a copy to work on Monday. The man with the paper then explained to me that 'the journalist who wrote this is

³⁴ Many of the company's interns were not white, nor from Europe or the United States, however.

trying to show that apartheid is over, that the townships are different now... that whites can come here and not worry,' and that they should keep coming.

To talk about township tourism is to discuss the importance of space and its representation in South Africa. Twinned to space in this context is also a consideration of mobility. To tour is to move through unfamiliar spaces, after all, and while South African tourism has been dominated by scenic beauty, wildlife, and 'cultural villages,' township tourism highlights the historical role of spaces of exclusion and resistance, and their contested representation within narratives of the 'new' South Africa. During my fieldwork with the Nojilana family, and with a few other tour guides who operated in townships near Cape Town, narratives of township spaces in touristic encounters often centered around the presence of crime and violence, evidence of social transformation and development, service delivery delays, popular leisure activities, and personal experiences of oppression under the apartheid state.

Spaces with histories of state-mandated and racialized marginalization are not exclusive to South African cities. While several former colonies come to mind, in many of which a form of 'slum,' 'favela,' or 'pro-poor' tourism has developed,³⁵ cities in the United States and Europe also retain similar spaces with histories of gentrification, political resistance, and state oppression and neglect, over which political claims and challenges to social and economic transformation are contested. Yet a tour through a housing project in the inner

³⁵ As Williams (2008) and Mendes (2010) suggest, often these industry's are encouraged and closely linked to popular films in the U.S. and Europe that represent, and create an interest in, these communities. These authors reference the Michael Jackson music video, 'They don't care about us' and the film 'Slumdog Millionaire' as examples.

city of Chicago, for example, in which 'traditional food' is served to visitors or a former Black Panther headquarters becomes a featured highlight, has never developed. What, then, creates the distinction whereby a curious conflation of poverty and culture sits seemingly comfortably alongside a political and moral imperative to make visible and redress a legacy of injustice and negative representation of township spaces?

There are additional contexts of township tourism to consider. For example, it is generally agreed upon by the township tourism operators I worked with that township tourists are predominantly from Europe or the United States.³⁶ As illustrated by the newspaper article above, township tourists are often generalized as 'white Europeans,' while it is acknowledged that white South Africans do not 'tour' townships, both perceptions contributing to critiques of tourism as a form of neo-colonial encounter (See Akama 2004) and emphasizing the continued racialized understanding of who 'visits' townships, who lives there, and who does neither. Additionally, the state's support of a township tourism industry as a method of 'pro-poor' development (Rogerson 2006) contrasts the representation of urban peripheries in many other countries. Much of the ANC's leadership, support, and legitimacy emerged from these marginalized areas throughout the liberation struggle, adding a discourse of 'new' nationalism to their representation.

This focus on social space, and the ways that race, disorder, violence, and mobility become entangled in its understanding, is intended to map a social landscape that is continuously shaped in the present by understandings of the past and future. The hosts and guests I

³⁶ Charmaine McEachern's research on township tours in the Western Cape also confirms this observation (2002:102).

observed moving across Cape Town's suburbs, city, and townships through the avenues carved by a tourism industry as well as beyond them, often demonstrated surprising channels by which many managed to navigate their social movements. This chapter describes some of the border-crossing between social spaces for both tourists and guests, at times reconfiguring apartheid-era spatial representations of Cape Town while at other times reinforcing them. Firstly, how other researchers have interpreted the significance of township tourism near Cape Town provides a blueprint from which to build, or diverge.

Contrasting perspectives of township tourism in the Western Cape

Charmaine McEachern and Leslie Witz have each studied the significance of township tourism in South Africa through formalized tourism companies and both have given attention to tourism in Nyanga and KTC. While both McEachern and Witz et al. describe a number of different township tours in their works, each incorporated similar highlights as Loyiso's tours.

Loyiso offered township tours for interns and study-abroad students connected to Daniel's company and accommodations, and to their visiting friends and family. Tours began in the city or its suburbs near the university and moved outwards towards the city's peripheries and into the townships. Stops on Loyiso's tours included a taxi rank in Langa and a walking tour of both old and new hostels, once used to house migrant labor and now as small apartments for whole families. This was then followed by a visit to a *sangoma* (traditional

healer), who operated out of a shipping container and showed guests his animal skins and byproducts from which he made traditional remedies for a variety of health and social concerns. Next, a stop at a community and tourist center, where young students performed with drums for visitors, and tourists could buy crafts made by community members and meet the program staff. From here the tour continued with stops at the 'Gugulethu seven' memorial commemorating seven freedom fighters gunned-down by the apartheid state, the Amy Biehl³⁷ memorial, a *shebeen* located in a shack in Nyanga where tourists were encouraged to chat with local patrons and sample the *mqomboti* (home-brewed beer), and ended at a popular outdoor restaurant where chakalaka, pap, and grilled meat were served.

McEachern's work on national narratives and media representations preceding the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), highlighted township tourism's role in calling for the inclusion of township spaces within narratives of the 'new' South Africa (2002). McEachern emphasizes the ways that the spatial cartography of township tours draws attention to the very existence of townships as projects of national spatialization, and therefore, in a very Foucauldian sense, a technology of power utilized under apartheid (2002:87, 93, 96); a historical confrontation that the TRC's narrative fell short of distinguishing (89).

McEachern further argues that township tour guides construct narratives that are both personal and political, that challenge negative media representations of townships, and have created a space of cultural production through guides' varying narratives in which past, present, future, and nation may be elaborated in different terms (98). McEachern further explains,

³⁷ A university student from the United States, attending the University of the Western Cape as a Fulbright scholar in 1993, who was killed by protesters in Gugulethu.

In this complex representational space, the tours are also constructing a social memory that is explicitly and deliberately directed at installing a particular history and a moral message for the new nation. Against apartheid's exclusions, they are claims to belong as *urban* dwellers, overturning apartheid understandings of nation that depended so profoundly on visions of the 'white' city (2002:90).

To McEachern, then, township tours may be considered a mode of transformation and reconciliation that fills some of the gaps of the TRC's project in that, '[t]heir work of representation makes *other* local histories available for the imagining of national space' (88).

In contrast to McEachern's cautiously optimistic analysis of township tours in Cape Town, Leslie Witz and Ciraj Rassool write from a more critical perspective that considers township tours within a broader analysis of South Africa's tourism industry's 'repackaging' of the past and representations of 'Africanness' for tourist consumption (Rassool and Witz 1996; Witz, Rassool, and Minkley 2001). Witz et al.'s (2001) interpretation of township tours rather illustrate their role in maintaining apartheid-era spatial boundaries by recasting them through old colonial narratives as the new way to journey the 'African frontier' (283) just outside the city. To these authors, 'life is put on show and scripted into a special genre of the township tour,' configured as journeys 'to go "where no man has gone before."' These tours open up 'the other side of the color line,' enabling the post-apartheid adventurer to enter areas 'previously inaccessible to whites' (Witz et al. 2001:282-3).³⁸ Witz et al. (2001) also comment on the grafting of 'cultural Africanness' onto narratives of repression and resistance on even the more politically oriented township tours, stating that

³⁸ Internal quotes from 1999 *Grassroute Tours* travel pamphlet, cited in Witz et al. (2001).

'[a]lmost invariably... the "Struggle Route" gives way to the "Shebeen Route." In order to attract tourists seeking the African spectacle, the township is presented as an extension of the rural village in an expression of timeless ethnicity' (284-5).

Witz et al.'s (2001) interpretation therefore stands in sharp contrast to McEachern's (2002). While tourism may indeed be creating avenues of border-crossing between city and township, Witz et al. describe the paths carved out by township tours as staged for the eyes of white outsiders, thereby furthering townships' 'otherness' alongside essentialized notions of 'Africanness,' and turning 'curiosity about the country's recent past into voyeurism' (2001:278). While acknowledging township tourism's troubling tendency to conflate essentialist notions of culture with representations of history, Witz et al. fall short of grappling with the ways representations of poverty also entangle themselves within township tourism narratives. Witz et al. also attempt to distinguish between tours foremost promoting political struggle and appreciation over 'cultural authenticity,' acknowledging that these tours may hold 'the potential to construct a new cultural map of the city, focusing on the traces of urban resistance' (287), but only as a qualifier to their statement that, '[i]t might be that on the edges of the tourist gaze, the sites of resistance and remembrance slide almost uneasily into the world of cultural difference' (286).

While McEachern and Witz present contrasting analyses, more stands to be gained by considering both interpretations than from choosing sides, or attempting to claim definitively whether township tourism is transformative and a mode of reconciliation, or exploitative and essentializing. More helpful is to consider the points on which these two

interpretations seem to agree, yet leave underdeveloped. For example, both Witz et al. and McEachern comment on the persistent racialized categories of township tourists, namely 'foreign whites,' although a consideration of the participants in Daniel's internship company quickly complicates this label. Both works also write ambivalently about the co-presence of narratives of resistance and memory, and of cultural spectacle common to even the more historical and politically oriented tours. To this end, McEachern writes insightfully concerning the persistent tension within township tours that seem to simultaneously, and contradictorily, emphasize a notion of both sameness and difference—an observation that appeared several times in my own field notes written nearly a decade later, and which continue to complicate my own analysis. McEachern writes,

This narrative constituting a structural explanation for the townships is filled out with detail about people's everyday lives which overall, has a rather contradictory tendency. On the one hand there are details directed at producing a realization of people's humanity; information about family life, education, self-help projects, work, networks for assisting each other in times of crisis and so on. Here the message is of normality and sameness. Yet at the same time, the tours, some more than others, will stress *difference*, pointing out the cattle and goats, taking tourists to visit *sangomas* and to see beer-making or pointing out circumcision schools. Here the townships are constructed to some extent in liminality, as borderlands between urban and rural (cf Watts, 1996:64 in McEachern 2002:97, emphasis hers).

For both McEachern and Witz et al., it is the representation of difference, of extraordinariness, that forms Urry's 'tourist gaze' within township tourism. What each sees as the future of this gaze in township tourism, however, returns us briefly to the contrast of their interpretations. For McEachern, the transitional period between 'post-apartheid' and 'new South Africa' is the historical moment of the township tour, and as national

transformation continues, the tourist gaze will transform and eventually wither away along with the structural inequalities that make townships unique (2002:106). For Witz et al., their conclusion suggests that the cultural objectification and the manufacturing of ethnic difference propelled by South Africa's tourism industry will persist in suppressing efforts to subvert the tourist gaze (2001:291-2). Writing nearly a decade later, Jean and John Comaroff (2009) suggest that to continue to participate economically in the identity industry supported by international tourism increasingly requires the reinvention of a tourist gaze toward new ways to capitalize on difference. In this way, the empowerment of sameness promoted by McEachern becomes that of the neoliberal promise: the ability to *similarly* objectify one's *difference* for market participation.³⁹

Considering the significance of these analyses to the topic of tourism and subjectivity, the remainder of this chapter explores how an 'ethnography of the particular' (Abu-Lughod 1991), centered on the experiences of one family employed through tourism in Cape Town, can contribute to an understanding of agency and transformation within township tourism as it operates 20 years into the post-apartheid era. Focusing our attention to social space, agency is discussed here in terms of mobility, both socio-economic and physical, and how members of the Nojilana family and other township tourism 'hosts' I spent time with managed to navigate the contradictions and demands of sameness and difference

³⁹ Jean and John L. Comaroff make this interpretation of 'empowerment' clear in their statement, "In the post-colony, it connotes privileged access to markets, money, and material enrichment. In the case of ethnic groups, it is frankly associated with finding something essentially their own and theirs alone, something of their essence, to sell. In other words, a brand"(2009:15).

encouraged under tourism toward increasing their own social mobility, and in some cases, to imagine and inhabit new social spaces.

**Avenues of mobility and reimagining spaces:
Or, 'If we can't move out, let's bring the world here!'**

For our purposes, 'mobility' here is considered broadly. For example, physical mobility related to employment in tourism included the daily movement across urban spaces, such as the daily journeys taken by the 'hosts' I worked with, from their home in the township of KTC to the suburbs of Cape Town where the company's interns resided. This required a morning commute by bus, minibus taxi, or train, and across buffer zones of golf courses and highways carved into the apartheid landscape to neatly divide the 'white city' from what McEachern calls its 'shadow city' (2002).⁴⁰ In some cases, however, employment in tourism took the Nojilanas much further than the daily commute travelled by hundreds of thousands of South Africans daily from township to town, such as the time Naomi was asked to join a group of interns on a trip to Mozambique as their chef, leading to Naomi's first trip beyond South African borders. Socio-economic mobility is also considered here, especially with regard to its entanglement with physical mobility across the urban landscape of Cape Town. An example of this became clear when Naomi and Brilliance announced that they had saved up enough money to buy a car, and that this would help Naomi with buying groceries and delivering meals to interns and students.

⁴⁰ See also Turok (2001) for a discussion of the difficulties facing development and urban planners post-apartheid given the physical layout of the Cape Town central business district, its suburbs, and townships under apartheid.

Mobility is also addressed here more imaginatively, such as in the relationships that were maintained despite distance between hosts and former guests, through new forms of information and communication technologies (ICTs) and their growing accessibility. As discussed in the previous chapter, social media sites like Facebook may be considered social *cyber*-spaces, where imagined mobility across national and continental boundaries are realized, allowing for the continued maintenance of relationships across physical space. Mobility is therefore considered here in flexible terms that refer to the ways that 'hosts' have been able to harness the flows of global capital and networks that are more often associated with the obviously mobile tourist. By thinking about mobility in this way, we might also open up our understanding of social space and the creative ways people manage to navigate within and across them.

The tour operator I spent time with outside of the Nojilana family most explicitly incorporated themes of space and mobility into the narratives of her tours, however, by emphasizing the ways that entrepreneurialism through township tourism had not only given her the opportunity to travel overseas, but also to reconfigure township spaces as communities and developing suburbs, rather than shack-lands. The narrative focus of Mama Thope's tours, organized from her home in Khayelitsha, was to emphasize the ingenuity of township residents, local entrepreneurial endeavors, and the new shopping malls and hospitals being built nearby. On more than one occasion I heard Thope explain the importance of tourism in Khayelitsha to her guests by declaring, 'if we can't move out, let's bring the world here!' And her response to former visitors who would ask if she is still living in the townships was always, 'Of course! I am still *proudly* living in Khayelitsha.'

The tours I was invited to join with Thope generally either began or ended in the lounge of her home, extended and renovated to accommodate guests, where she chatted over tea and coffee with tourists about her experience working with NGOs before starting her Bed and Breakfast, her role in organizing workshops for women looking to start their own small businesses, and the many opportunities she has had to travel through invitations to different conferences around the world, including Australia, Nepal, parts of Europe, and the United States. During one visit to Thope's B&B, I was introduced to two journalists interviewing Thope for a special report in a Norwegian newspaper about development and tourism as South Africa was preparing to host the FIFA World Cup. Thope excitedly explained that she would be travelling to Switzerland in the following month to speak at a conference on the same topic. During the day's tour, I spoke further to Thope about her opportunities to travel, and mentioned that during the time I had been spending with the Nojilanas, I was impressed by the number of former guests who had attempted to reciprocate the Nojilanas' hospitality by looking for ways to include them in the rest of their travels. Thope nodded, and explained that a group of young students from the United States had recently spent 10 days at her B&B until they found new accommodation in Green Point, a more affluent area of Cape Town where the new soccer stadium had been constructed. Shortly after moving to the city, the group of young visitors had invited her daughter to stay with them in Green Point for their house-warming weekend.

Just as Thope's daughter's interactions with international tourists led to invitations to other spaces in the city and its suburbs, so too did Naomi's interactions with the

participants of Loyiso's tours, and with the interns and students for whom she prepared meals and taught isiXhosa lessons, often result in invitations to bars and clubs in the suburbs and city center. Furthermore, these invitations, extended to Naomi in particular, most often came from young women participating in Daniel's company, and created opportunities for Naomi to venture across the urban spaces of Cape Town with other women in a manner that would likely have been considered inappropriate by her family and boyfriend were it not loosely linked to her employment in tourism. Naomi, who took pride in her ability to both cook and entertain, quickly became known to newly arrived interns and students as incredibly friendly and extroverted, and had an uncanny ability to turn uncomfortable situations for anxious interns into occasions for playful joking and laughter. Naomi's genuinely outgoing and energetic personality allowed her to slide easily into constantly shifting social circles of international young people. And as Naomi's presence almost invariably lifted the mood of company outings, Daniel encouraged Naomi and her siblings to include themselves in social activities with interns and students after working hours. Naomi would often talk to me about the fun she had on particular weekends with interns and students in the suburbs or in town, and occasionally joked about turning off her phone so she would miss Brilliance's concerned calls from home. In this way, the regular encounters Naomi had with international visitors to Cape Town through her employment in tourism allowed her increased mobility across Cape Town that had been previously limited by boundaries of race, class, and gender still implicit in the city's social landscape.

While the 'Taxi Queens' of Elaine Salo's study, which explored the ways young women in the coloured townships of the Cape flats managed to traverse the social boundaries of race, gender, sexuality, and the policing of their elders (2003), would hitch rides with taxi drivers and prominent gangsters to town and faced ostracism and even eviction from the social networks of home to do so, Naomi's network of international township-tourists and connection to the company that hosted them, afforded her the means to occasionally traverse such boundaries with impunity, and even admiration from her community. Tourism networks in this way acted as a form of cultural capital that allowed Naomi greater access to the cosmopolitan spaces of Cape Town associated with the ideals of the 'new' South Africa, while simultaneously entering more imagined, global spaces, through international tourist social circles. Naomi became, in a sense, a tourist in her own city, experiencing many parts of Cape Town for the first time and in the company of other young people, unbridled by the immediate surveillance of significant others at home, very much like the tourists who 'hosted' her on such excursions. The pleasure Naomi took in playfully inverting her subject-position as host to tourist was made further apparent when she and Brilliance married a few months later and received a monetary wedding present from a former intern in the United States, with the instruction: 'do something fun for your honeymoon!' Naomi and Brilliance complied and toured the nearby wine-lands of the Western Cape.

Persistent Boundaries: Crime, Violence, and 'Common Sense'

While employment in the tourist sector afforded the Nojilanas and Mama Thope a means of physical mobility across the city of Cape Town and beyond, as well as a sense of mobility between subject-positions of 'host' and 'guest' that many township residents continue to lack, reconfiguring perceptions of township spaces appeared a much more difficult undertaking. Firstly, the crossing of physical boundaries between township and town is still predominantly a unidirectional flow in which townships provide the laborers that enter and exit the city and its suburbs daily and out of economic necessity while city dwellers, both local and tourist, need only enter the townships out of curiosity. Secondly, although Witz et al. critique township tours as simply another form of cultural tourism in which white South Africans now feel they can encounter the 'real' Africa at home rather than travel to the 'more African' countries to the north (2002:284), the general perception among township tourism operators is that white South Africans do not participate in township tours (McEachern 2001:102). That conceptions of race and nationality, rather than strictly social class, still explicitly divide the social boundaries of urban space in Cape Town was made clear to me when Naomi responded to my surprise at how nice people are to me when I visit a township, 'I expected some residents to actually be kind of mad at seeing me there because I'm white.' Naomi replied, 'those that might be mad, it is because they don't know you, they don't know that you are not South African.' While one might be quick to conclude that South Africans categorized as 'white' under apartheid have always had the advantage of mobility over the majority 'non-white' population, it should be remembered that under the Group Areas Act of 1950, white South Africans were not allowed to enter the city's surrounding townships, or venture outside of mandated 'white

areas' without a government issued permit, successfully institutionalizing a landscape and legacy of immobility and separateness.

One of the greatest challenges to reconfiguring township spaces in tourism however, are the narratives of crime and violence that, sensationalized in the media and through salacious rumors and cautionary stories in the everyday talk of hosts and guests alike, serve to reaffirm their marginality. While McEachern's impression of the township tours in Cape Town at the millennial turn was that they tended to downplay the occasion of intra-township violence, rather emphasizing the structural violence of apartheid and promoting the 'sameness' of township communities towards a message of urban inclusion (2002:101), in the tours I observed in 2010, crime and violence had become prominent topics of discussion and negotiation between hosts and guests. Indeed, as indicated by Loyiso's concluding comment in the newspaper article above, challenging perceptions of townships as predominantly spaces of violence, disorder, and criminality has provided township tours with new moral impetus. From here, it would be instructive to continue the anecdote that began this chapter:

...Later, I mentioned to Loyiso that I should be leaving soon. Daniel had asked if I could meet with him and a new intern who had been injured in her first few days in Cape Town. Loyiso replied that since it was already dark outside, they would ride with me to the highway exit and then either walk or take a taxi back home. My assurances brushed aside, Loyiso was adamant that it wasn't any trouble for him and that he wanted to be sure I got to the highway okay. I didn't argue the point further and drove them to within a block of the exit where Loyiso said they would be fine, and that I should phone him when I was back in Obz safely.

It wasn't until I was sitting with Daniel and the new intern that I began to ponder the irony of the socio-spatial boundaries that I had negotiated that night. The young woman that

Daniel had wanted me to meet, and perhaps offer some comfort to, had been shot at with a pellet gun while jogging near her accommodation in Obz. One pellet had lodged into her eye, requiring surgery, and had resulted in the loss of vision in the injured eye. And so, the celebratory words of welcome to 'white European' outsiders expressed in the newspaper article and at the bar that evening, had been followed by the insistence of an escort when leaving the township after dark, so that I might safely return to the suburb where I resided, to help comfort a young woman who had been partially blinded by some unknown sniper with a bee-bee gun while jogging by my apartment.

Jean and John Comaroff have written extensively on the perception of violent crime and disorder in 'the post-colony' (2006, 2004), and explored the forms and reasons of the public obsession with criminality and disorder that seem to extend beyond 'the mere fact of its reality' (2004:801) in South Africa. A characteristic that seems to color perceptions of increased criminality in a society in transition is its unpredictability, its defiance of logic, and seeming 'unpoliceability': its very *disorder*. Compounding anxieties, the Comaroffs add, 'no genre of communication is authoritative: "dark circuits" of rumor and popular media alike flash signs of inchoate danger lurking beneath the banal surface of things, danger made real by sudden, graphic assaults on persons and property' (2006:9). Under the repression of the apartheid regime, it may at least have appeared clearer who one's enemy was: the police, the state, the more elusive informant. In an extended period of transition, where liberal democracy resembles and (in)forms the neoliberal subject, and where 'zones of deregulation are also spaces of opportunity, of vibrant, desperate inventiveness and unrestrained profiteering' (2006:9), and where commentaries of political corruption confuse distinctions of law and lawlessness, democratization seems to also precipitate anxiety.

It might seem that such blurring of the boundaries of seeming security, and the bleeding over of such 'desperate inventiveness' into all spaces of the city, might de-territorialize townships as predominantly violent spaces—as Mama Thope would say, 'but there are bad apples everywhere.' And yet, public discourse concerning violent crime seemed to stubbornly re-territorialize, and attempt to make navigable, spaces of criminality and spaces of relative safety, especially with regard to tourism. This tendency became particularly apparent following the highly publicized 'Dewani honeymoon murder,' in which a hotel shuttle transporting a newly wed couple visiting from Europe was hijacked inside a township, allegedly while on their way to a popular restaurant and tourist destination near KTC (a common stop on Loyiso's tours) resulting in the release of the husband by his hijackers, and subsequent shooting and abandonment of the new bride in Khayelitsha. Although evidence and motive quickly began to point to the surviving husband as the key person of interest in organizing the likely 'hit' on his wife, public discourse and sentiment surrounding the event was even quicker to call on the gods of 'common sense' to condemn the tourist-couple for venturing into the townships after dark.

The Mail and Guardian reported on the developing story and its reception overseas, with headlines such as 'How dangerous is SA for tourists?' including such statements as,

South Africa has one of the highest crime rates in the world, with an average of 46 murders a day. The majority take place in townships, and tourists are rarely the victims. (M&G, Nov. 15, 2010)

The British mass circulation *Sun* newspaper said on its website that Gugulethu is a 'no-go area on Saturday night.'

Sky News online also led with the story, quoting travel writer Jane Anderson saying: 'This is not a country where you can slum it ... there's obviously a lot of poverty.'

The *Deccan Chronicle* said on its website that while townships are not too dangerous during the day, 'weekend nights are notoriously volatile. Many local people get paid on Friday and so, on Saturdays, everyone drinks away their wages. Some say it would be suicide for a young, foreign couple to go to Gugulethu on a Saturday night.' (Underhill, M&G 2010)

The reader comments made online in response to these and related reports added to such discourses of violence and space in the country with comments such as:

This couple came to SA to have a honeymoon and wanted to take a drive through the townships because they wanted to 'feel and experience South Africa'. It seems they got their wish when one of them got murdered.

And what were they doing in the townships? Well, they DID say that they wanted the 'Real Africa' That's exactly what they got. (reader-comments in de Wee, news24.com 2010).

The Main thing about this tragic event is that it should alert tourists to this country to engage their brains and not visit the sort of areas which would be 'off limits' after dark at home. That is common sense.

Oh I am a tourist in New York, it is 10:30 at night and I want a place to eat. I am going to drive to Harlem. I am a Tourist in London, it is 10:30 at night and I want a place to eat. I am going to drive to the East End. It is not rocket science to figure out that some areas are dodge.... stupid tourists! (reader-comments in Underhill, M&G, 2010).

The Dewani murder case quickly became an anchor for discourse concerning 'nation,' tourism, and crime and its international perception in South Africa, particularly because of its proximity to the conclusion of what most in the media, domestic and abroad, declared a successful World Cup. Negative reports concerning South Africa's high crime rates leading up to the FIFA mega-event, especially reports circulating in U.K. newspapers stating repeated doubt that South Africa's police would be capable of reigning in its cities' criminal elements, created resentment among many South Africans toward the international press. Such resentment turned quickly to satisfaction however, when reports of highly visible policing and successful crime prevention spread internationally during the weeks of the World Cup (Timse 2010; Keepile 2010). The Dewani murder, just a few months later, struck a sensitive nerve among South Africans, especially considering sentiments that the increase in foreign investment and tourism to come from positive international perceptions would be the key to harnessing the event's after-effects towards development in the country (See Stewart and Futterman 2010).

Comments berating the tourist-couple for their judgment of tourist spaces and lack of 'common sense,' as well as reports regarding safety concerns over South Africa's tourist sector, seemed to work toward three simultaneous goals. The first, to compare the socio-economic spaces of Cape Town to major metropolises in Europe and the United States, emphasizing the sameness among such cities and their structured avenues of penetration organized for tourists, in turn—and the second goal—placing the fault on the tourist-

couple for ignoring what was projected as universal 'common sense.'⁴¹ 'Common sense' here becomes the signature trope that works to reinforce boundaries of social space and tourism in Cape Town, and confirms township spaces as 'other' to the city. Such a discourse may also be understood as an attempt towards a third goal, one that renders the urban landscape of Cape Town navigable through binaries of safe and unsafe spaces, restoring a sense of order to disorder, by *placing* disorder, and shifting its international visibility towards the margins of the city. This repositioning of violence into something that is locatable, and therefore avoidable for some, reaffirms apartheid's legacy of spatial differentiation in Cape Town.

As many other comments in the threads of replies to the articles mentioned above suggest however, discourse regarding safe and unsafe spaces can be deceptive. While it is not my intent to suggest that historically impoverished and marginalized spaces are not also zones of desperation, or that 'criminality' does not often accurately describe the avenues taken by many in their 'creative quest for survival' on the peripheries (Nymanjoh 2002:113), it is, however, significant that discourse surrounding space and violence in South Africa carry consequences that extend beyond 'the mere fact of [their] reality' (Comaroff and Comaroff 2004:801). Calls to 'common sense' not only check the mobility of tourists through the city, but also undermine attempts to reconsider or subvert domestic and international gazes upon township spaces as synonymous with disorder and danger. Furthermore, one might be hard-pressed to explain how the laws of 'common sense' could have saved the young woman's eye from the anonymous pellet in the suburb. There is something gruesomely

⁴¹ References to 'common sense' reminded me of a popular saying in Cape Town concerning the recipients of crime due to ignorance or 'laziness': 'Then you're not a victim, but a volunteer!'

poetic in that this invisible, seemingly childish act of less lethal violence has forever limited this particular tourist's visual gaze,⁴² while it seems likely that the desire to contemplatively gaze at violence from a distance, gentrified to its familiar, marginal space and bounded by 'common sense,' may have become the alibi for another tourist's 'desperate inventiveness' against his spouse (See Morris 2011).

Concluding thoughts on re-territorialization and inter-subjectivity

To conclude, attention to how notions of sameness and difference are employed in the representations of townships as tourist spaces illustrates their malleability and potency, and perhaps another angle from which to think about touristic inter-subjectivity. While township tourism in Cape Town penetrates persistent apartheid-era socio-spatial boundaries, carving avenues for economic and physical mobility for many of its hosts, it often does so in ways that promote an exoticized and essentialized understanding of cultural difference (problematically associated with poverty), undermining claims that liken tourism to modes of social transformation. And yet, transformations are visible in the micro-scale, and in surprising ways. The Nojilana's growing network of international associations has certainly led to new avenues of mobility, and participation in social spheres of imagined global citizenship. McEachern made a similar claim when she suggested that the sympathy imbued in township tourists created a kind of alliance between hosts and guests based on a sense of political and moral sameness, evident in

⁴² Her injury and subsequent surgery convinced her to return home shortly after her arrival to South Africa.

guests' willingness to enter township spaces (2002:103) despite prohibiting discourses of 'common sense' and disorder. While public discourse over violence and criminality continue to both shape and complicate the gaze toward township spaces, with increasing concern over 'being seen' by a world order seeking investment opportunity while avoiding bad headlines, the international alliances forged through tourism is also making a different kind of global subjectivity ever more visible in the cyber-spaces of Facebook, and the academic and philanthropic institutions promoting global education.⁴³ Left out of this newly imagined cartography, creating new exclusions as much as forging alliances, is the old regime of isolated wealth and 'whiteness' that post-apartheid economic policies are seen as generally leaving intact.

⁴³ One more extraordinary manifestation of such an alliance is Loyiso's recent marriage to a former intern, who after returning to her home in Washington D.C. and learning that Loyiso's application for a travel visa to the U.S. was turned down, moved back to the Western Cape, married Loyiso, and is living in KTC with her new husband while they apply for spousal visas in both countries.

CHAPTER 6: Cultural Commoditization:

learning with Naomi

In this final chapter, I wish to address more closely the topic within tourism practices that has captured the attention, and frustration, of many social anthropologists and critical theorists: that of 'culture.' As already emphasized, cultural tourism has been criticized for its tendency to present specific practices, rituals, and values as static and stringent moral codes and customs, most often used to signify and essentialize difference through spectacle for the eyes of Western leisure classes. To add insult to injury for the anthropologist, ethnographic texts are often used to legitimize static cultural descriptions, implicating anthropological discourse in its proliferation (see Stanley 1998; Bruner 2005). Of specific concern here, as Jean and John Comaroff have pointed out in *Ethnicity, Inc.* (2009), is that with the incorporation of 'culture' into the market and the abstraction and objectification of its products has come a hardening of primordial perspectives of 'ethnic essence' and subjectivity.

While bounded notions of essentialized 'culture' have long since been rebuked by anthropology, it has also been noted that the concept, often accompanied by 'culture's' sister-term of 'tradition,' has remained a powerful and persistent paradigm of identity and claims to belonging (Comaroff and Comaroff 2009,). It is important that we take claims to 'culture,' and the types of 'work' it seems to be doing in the present, seriously as its commoditization continues to offer avenues to economic and political participation

(Geschiere, Ceuppens, and Bambi 2005; Comaroff and Comaroff 2009). Taking up a concern with this new 'work' of 'culture' in (re)shaping subjectivities does not preclude us from 'writing against' notions of 'culture' (Abu-Lughod 1991) as primordial, bounded, unchanging, and determinant, however. Rather, the tourism industry has provided anthropologists with renewed incentive to do so.

The method by which I have attempted to illustrate cultural commoditization as it operated in 'the particular' of Naomi's experience is therefore modeled from Lila Abu-Lughod's work *Writing Women's Worlds* (1993). By presenting detailed narratives of individuals Abu-Lughod challenged the adequacy of generalizing themes of cultural practice, such as 'Patrilineality' and 'Honor and Shame,' as models for describing women's experiences. The remainder of this chapter therefore primarily consists of ethnographic notes taken from conversations and participation with Naomi. Because these notes were often elaborated from brief jottings, rather than formal interviews or voice-recordings, quotation marks are seldom used. I have taken care in reproducing and clarifying Naomi's phrasing and specific words, yet there is a noticeable shift across the presented narrative. Beginning with excerpts from Naomi's Xhosa classes, her voice as authoritative culture-broker is dominant, interrupted periodically by my own retrospective insights. As class notes give way to field notes, however, the story becomes a dialectical and tactical telling in which the commoditization of culture for the sake of economic participation bleeds into the everyday construction of the self through others, and others through the self. In this narrative, 'culture' shifts from an abstracted (yet still contingent) code of conduct presented for

guests (myself included), to an introspective and inter-subjective topic of conversation by which 'Xhosa gender' is constructed and contested.

It is my hope that this narrative style might demonstrate the ways that speaking of 'selves' and 'others' through significations of cultural difference worked to reproduce such significations, while also, paradoxically, creating a sense of sameness through interaction, empathy, and alliance. Furthermore, although Naomi often spoke in timeless and essential terms, her own interjections also challenged such notions, and revealed the often conflicted and dynamic (re)negotiations surrounding 'cultural practice' and its entanglement with gender, even when mediated through tourism.⁴⁴ The following therefore calls for two kinds of reading, one in which Naomi's students and I are asked to gaze upon 'Naomi's culture' as objectified; in the other, 'culture' becomes a complicated compass (Nyamnjoh 2002:113-114) used to navigate expectations and actions, its ongoing construction entwined with its abstraction for the telling and display for others.

Course notes/field notes, from Xhosa class

I was always struck by the confidence and openness with which Naomi spoke to her students. Her classes had started as primarily language-based: she taught greetings in isiXhosa and some preliminary vocabulary, such as days of the week, counting, and some

⁴⁴ While an analysis or comparison of gender and work in tourism industries in various countries is neglected here, authors such as Sinclair (1997) and others have made gender the focus of their critique. It is my hope that the following narrative speaks to such critiques in a way that indicates the significance of gender in South African tourism, while also challenging over-generalized notions of South African women's experiences.

children's songs. Her students would often ask her 'how do you say...' or 'how would I tell someone to...' that related to their particular internship. Questions from interns and study abroad students who attended Naomi's classes, mostly young women, often turned more personal nearing the end of a session, inquiring about particular 'Xhosa traditions,' or Naomi's own experiences. It seemed that Naomi had picked up on the interest of her students in this regard, and this was the first of Naomi's classes that was primarily a 'cultural lecture,' rather than a vocabulary lesson.

May 25th, Xhosa class notes

She started by saying... *'I don't know it all, but these are things that I know and that my elders have told me.'* (Using herself as an example, she began to explain what happens if a woman becomes pregnant before she is married.) *Your uncle from your mother's side will take you to the boyfriend's house after three months of pregnancy to speak of 'damages' done. This is called 'Isisu.'*

'Ihlawulo yesisu' is the payment made for damages, different from 'lobola,' which is the wedding payment, and if the couple later decides to get married, the man's family will have to make this payment too, even if they have already paid 'Ihlawulo yesisu.' For both payments, the girl's value depends on her education, the amount of money she contributed to her household, and whether or not she has had children before.

For marriages, the uncles negotiate the terms of payment—for 'lobola.' First they will meet to discuss this payment and money for the girl's face will be made. This is called 'Ubuso bentombi' and before the meeting begins, whiskey must be brought—I'm not sure by the man or by the woman's uncles. If the family is Christian or very religious, it might not be whiskey but something else. Bringing the bottle of whiskey is called 'Ivula Mlomo,' and even for Busi's wedding, though her husband's family is very Christian and they don't drink alcohol, they still presented the whiskey.

Evangelists are changing the ways some things are done, but not always. For example, there is often the mixing of the 'white wedding' with the Xhosa wedding. A white flag is placed outside the house and the two families will compete with their singing. No one will sleep the night before, they will just sing all night. After the 'white wedding' ceremony, the bride is given to the other family; she changes out of her white dress to a traditional head cloth, long patterned skirt, and a special blanket is placed over her shoulders, and she sits behind a door to the house and looks down at the ground while women elders tell her how to be a good wife. She must wear the blanket for a week after the wedding. Different parts of her outfit can be changed after time has passed, but she will always wear long skirts and a head cloth now that she is married.

The woman's religious practices should conform to the man. (This was in response to a question raised by one of the interns as to who decides what traditions to follow.) But I don't agree with some of the things the elders say to the bride about how to be a good wife—like not to shout at your husband if he cheats on you! I don't agree with that at all.

Such lectures continued in her classes and focused on different topics of Xhosa cultural practices, often, as shown above, using herself and family as an example, as well as an exception. Her students were riveted.

June 1st, Xhosa class notes

(This week's class was not as big as the week before. Naomi again spent the majority of class talking about 'her culture,' this time, Xhosa funerals... She started by saying) *'I want to tell you about us... we don't wear black, there is just so much to do when someone dies...'*

For funerals there are these things called 'stokvels' where people make monthly payments to the group, so that when someone dies, they can take money out of the group's fund to help pay for the funeral, which is very expensive. They have meetings once a month, and the members must wear a uniform so that people know you belong to the group. When a person dies, there will be 'umthandazo' which means 'prayers.' The first day is called 'ukwankela

umphanga' which is when people come to the house to pray with the family, mostly from seven to eight at night, when they get home from work, people come to sympathize with you.

Stokvel members will check their records to see that you have paid regularly over the months and then give you money for the funeral. If you do not attend church and don't have many friends or ties to the community, and if you don't attend community events or go to other people's funerals—it can be a very painful time because people won't come to your house and this is very bad in our culture to be alone at this time, it's better to have people around you. This makes people want to attend events and keep their obligations to the community.

(One intern asked Naomi if the funeral might be different depending on whether or not the person who died was considered a good or bad person. Naomi replied that...) it depends, maybe if this person didn't go to church often, and drank a lot, but he was seen as a friendly person, who was always saying hello and knew many people, then people would say even though this man drank a lot he was still a good person, and people who knew him would go to his funeral.

'Our funerals waste too much money!' The night before we slaughter cows or sheep, and there is lots of food and many salads and often a very expensive casket. On the morning of the funeral, in the township, we first greet the body as it arrives from the morgue. In the Eastern Cape, the body would stay in the house until the funeral. After the funeral, you can't go home until after washing your hands, or you will bring the bad into your house. Washbasins are often set up so everyone can wash their hands before returning to home.

There is a long queue for food to eat after the funeral and there are some VIPs in these lines. (She added that a fairly new tradition has started, called) 'After tears'—whereby the night after the funeral, people buy drinks and talk about this person's life. About one week after the funeral—people make 'umqomboti'—African beer to drink, and they call this time 'umhlabo peki' which means they are washing the spades used to dig the grave. But they don't actually wash anything, this is just a symbolic meaning. They just get together and drink the traditional beer. This may be done differently depending if they are very cultural, or else maybe Christian.

(Naomi then emphasized again that she thinks there is too much money spent for funerals, and said) 'I will write in my will that I don't want anything slaughtered, I just want

sandwiches served and the people must just go home, all that is important is people's respect, not their money.' (With that she handed out a list of Xhosa words and phrases and a piece of paper with the lyrics of the national anthem and said that we would start with the song next time. Our homework was to practice singing along while listening to it on youtube.)

I continued to think about Naomi's comments concerning money and 'Xhosa traditions.'

Although I had often heard her speak disparagingly about the amount of money expected for special occasions, it had been my understanding that organizations like the *stokvel* served to guard its members from excessive spending. Moreover, on the occasions I had attended in KTC and Khayelitsha, I had developed the impression that the whole neighborhood could expect to be fed by participating in the day's festivities. This was also true of Naomi's 'township braai's' held at her home to entertain international students and interns. Dozens of the Nojilanas' neighbors and their children were offered food and encouraged to join in soccer games in the street and dance at these events. Although such occasions may have appeared lavish, they also visibly strengthened community networks that could be called upon when individual crises emerged.

Furthermore, I had been having frequent conversations with Naomi around this time about Thabo's upcoming fifth birthday. She had begun planning for the event months in advance and took every opportunity to do some bargain hunting for fabrics and party-favors that were the Disney movie *Cars* themed. She was making plans for a bounce-castle in the street outside her house, and for someone to bring a video camera to record the event. Naomi had explained that she really wanted this birthday to be special because she thought it might be the first one Thabo would remember when he was older, and added that she

would not plan so hard for another birthday until his initiation year. I was reminded of Fiona Ross' ethnography of resilience and hope in a poor community in Cape Town, in which she described one woman's persistence and creativity in ensuring that her children's transitory life moments were 'properly celebrated.' Ross explains,

Rational choice theory would suggest that she would have been materially better off by saving the money she spent, but she felt that it was important to celebrate life's accomplishments and to mark its cycles in culturally validated ways, which, rather like the classic anthropological example of the potlatch, involve forms of conspicuous consumption (2010:122-3).

Demonstrating a further challenge to prescriptive perceptions of 'cultural practice' with personal specificity, when I would remind Naomi of her own extravagant planning for Thabo's fifth birthday party when she would criticize the money spent on 'Xhosa traditions,' she replied by assuring me that planning a special fifth birthday for her son was a 'Naomi thing,' not a 'Xhosa thing.'

August 3rd Class with Naomi, who is upset about something

I arrived at Naomi's kitchen in the afternoon and could tell she was feeling stressed... she wasn't her usual animated and smiling self. I asked her if she was feeling okay. She told me... *my heart is really hurting; I feel like I've been torn in two and am so upset.* She added that she would tell me why when she came up with a solution, which she would do very soon. I suggested that we could be upset together, but I didn't push her to tell me what was wrong, as it was clear she wasn't ready to say. I told myself not to jump to conclusions. What could she mean about finding a solution, after all?

(... Later that day) Naomi managed to muster up enough energy to teach her class with all the enthusiasm and laughter that she usually brought to her lessons. As there were

several new arrivals in attendance, she ended with a description about how her classes usually run, explaining that... *some days will be spent discussing cultural things. For the next class I will talk about the procedures in 'Xhosa culture' if a woman becomes pregnant. It is very good to be a Xhosa, because if you're a woman and a man wants to marry you or gets you pregnant, he must give money to your family.* She then smiled and held up a hand rubbing her thumb against the tips of her fingers to signify 'money,' provoking laughter from her students. As they got up to leave she reminded everyone to please order food from her kitchen, that she often cooked traditional African food and vegetarian options were also available. With that Naomi went to catch the bus, and I went home pleased that the class seemed to lift Naomi's mood.

August 10th Naomi's secret

... After purchasing the day's ingredients for the intern's meals, Naomi said she wanted to buy herself a pie, then without skipping a beat she suddenly grabbed my arm and said that she had something important to tell me. I had been worried all weekend about what Naomi's news might be, but now I saw that she was smiling and seemed excited. *'I'm getting married in a month!'* Right as she said it she covered her mouth with her hand and giggled, looking away. *'Married?! Really?! Are you excited?'* She said she was and I said *'congratulations!'* She added... *Very few people know about it and I wasn't going to tell many people in case it would make it not happen.* I took her to mean that she might 'jinx it,' but she explained to me that it was a little more serious than that: she didn't want to tell people in case someone got jealous and went to a 'sangoma' (that someone might use witchcraft to sabotage the wedding). She added, *'us Xhosas, we are worried about these things, really.'* I assured her I wouldn't tell anyone and was so moved that she had let me in on this secret.

(Later that day...) I offered to drive Naomi home when it was clear that no students were coming for class. We drove down the highway towards KTC and talked about her son's upcoming birthday party, and Naomi's thoughts about her wedding. Naomi said that she wasn't so sure anymore if she wanted to do the home-stay program since she would be getting married, and explained that she wouldn't be able to go out and party with the

students like she had before. She added that she would still be able to go out sometimes, but not all-night without Brilliance, and pointed out that Brilliance would have to behave differently as well once they were married. All the changes didn't just apply to her, she assured me.

August 21st Cooking and conversation with Naomi

I arrived at the Nojilanas' house in KTC around 10:30 and was greeted by children, most of whom I had come to recognize by now, shouting '*uMlungu! uMlungu!*' (White person! White person!). I found Naomi and Loyiso watching the morning soap-opera reruns. Naomi laughed about how lazy she was this morning, and that she hadn't done any cooking yet. She got up from the couch to prepare herself a bath before we went to the store. She set a pot of water on the stove to heat for her bath, and then turned to me and said that this would be her last time drinking and really having fun at Mzoli's with the interns, that once she was married she would still be able to stop by and deliver food and greet everyone, but that was it. *This will be the last time that I can have fun 'as I, Naomi.'* I tried to gauge her face to see what kind of reaction I should offer, a joke, or sympathy. 'Surely you can still have fun as "you, Naomi".' She shook her head emphatically and replied, '*not according to our culture*' and went to her room to change.

Naomi and I drove to the mall in Gugulethu to buy ingredients for making some side dishes for the intern's meat at their outing to Mzoli's (a popular township butchery/restaurant). Naomi waved to a woman in the car park that I didn't recognize on our way back to her house where we began to prepare the food. We got to work grating carrots, chopping cabbage, and roasting veggies. Naomi shared more of her thoughts about getting married: '*Our culture has a lot of restrictions.*' She told me about this woman she knew who married a man who had a very strict family. *The husband was not so bad here in town, but when she went home to the Eastern Cape with him, she had entered her in-law's house and stood in a place that the wife is not supposed to stand, and some of the children pointed this out to her. The woman's in-laws got up SO early too, and as the wife, she was expected to be up before them. She was very upset, because making these mistakes was seen*

as a kind of disgrace for her, but she was also upset with her husband because he didn't tell her that his family would be like this. I asked if Brilliance's family was strict. She didn't think so, but he had told her that he wanted his wife to behave in a certain way, that a wife should have respect and dignity. She said that she wouldn't be able to go out separately anymore, that they must do things together as a couple. She assured me that she did want to marry Brilliance though, because she loved him and she wanted to be a family with their son. She added that getting married was a lot about security as well. *If something were to happen to an unmarried couple with a child, the man's family could maybe try to take their child, and other things that were the woman's but in the man's house—they could just do that! In our culture, your in-laws can really take advantage.*

(I knew that these concerns about getting married had been on Naomi's mind for a long time, and in many ways brought to mind my own anxieties about 'growing up.' Her examples made me feel uneasy however, making me question my ability to really relate to the expectations she was describing, and if her anxieties about getting married were outweighing her excitement. And yet, I also knew that marriage was not something that Naomi was willing to rush into. She had been dating Brilliance for nearly a decade, since they were in high school. Brilliance was unrelentingly loyal to Naomi and their son, and had made his hopes of marrying Naomi clear for many years. Naomi had moved in with Brilliance for a while, who lived just around the street from her house, but sometime before I had begun my fieldwork she had moved back in with her siblings, explaining that she wanted some distance for a while. Brilliance had been disappointed, but not deterred.)

Naomi and Loyiso's friend Masi stopped by during this conversation and Naomi explained that the woman she had greeted at the mall was Masi's wife, and pointed out that he was not very strict because his wife wore jeans. Naomi sighed that she would miss her jeans, but she wasn't worried about switching to dresses and a head wrap, as she felt she could still be sort of stylish in her own way. (Since her wedding, I have taken to calling her 'the funky *makoti*,' or newly-wed. Naomi has always fashioned herself with such style, married or not.) She nudged me to ask Masi why he had gotten married. *It's a difficult question to answer*, Masi replied, a bit perplexed. Naomi said ... *I know that it is nice to be with someone you love, but why else? What other reasons are there? I want to hear what a man thinks.* Masi laughed and said it was just nice to be married... and added that it was

nice to have someone cook for him. Naomi then told me... *some women, when they are not married, will refuse to do things like cook and clean for their boyfriends and can say, no I refuse, I am not your wife!* Naomi was still hoping for more responses from Masi, but he left shortly after. We talked a while longer on the topic, and Naomi added... *my mother would really be proud of the choices I'm making if she were alive. ... I want to impress my in-laws in the Eastern Cape by cooking for them. I might even take some of my own ingredients in case there are certain things that I can't find in the stores there.*

When we arrived at Mzoli's with the side dishes there were about 25 students and interns from Daniel's company sitting with Loyiso at tables in the back, with large plates of meat covered in foil in front of them. They greeted Naomi with excitement, and quickly began to dish their food. Naomi began the afternoon with her usual energy, dancing and provoking others to dance with her. A young woman from Wisconsin who was studying abroad at UCT and had just moved into one of Daniel's houses was excited to meet Naomi, saying that she had heard so much about her from the interns. She and Naomi talked, sipped some Bacardi Spin, and danced to the DJ into the evening.

* * *

A few weeks later, Naomi and Brilliance were married in the Eastern Cape and returned with photographs taken with their camera-wedding-present, mailed overseas from a former intern. Upon writing this, although Naomi has given up her jeans, she still sips the occasional Bacardi Spin, especially when visiting friends with Brilliance. Their marriage, like most relationships, is an ongoing negotiation of companionship and compromise.

It began to occur to me while attending Naomi's classes, and listening in on her conversations with international interns and students, that presenting 'her culture' for the gaze of others through her employment in Daniel's company, had also become a way for

her to actively construct and rethink a notion of self. As a culture-broker, she undoubtedly abstracted a more coherent, structured, and prescriptive notion of 'culture' for the cognition of her students than its practice and production *as lived*. By using herself as an example, she invited comment on '*her culture*'-as-commodity. Her conversations and qualifications given in response to the attention and questions of her students and myself point to the deeper complexity and contradictions inherent in what we might continue to call 'cultural practice.' And in interactions with the young people who attended her classes and township events, myself included, moments often emerged when difference and sameness were renegotiated, dissolving, and at times reviving, subject-positions of host and guest.

The particular ways in which Naomi's method of commoditizing '*her culture*' through her cooking, language, and lectures, did indeed shape her subjectivity through her *inter*-actions with touristic 'others.' In her attempt to transmit a more concretized understanding of 'Xhosa culture,' through resources on the Internet like Wikipedia and Youtube in constructing talking points for her classes, and in sharing the weight of her thoughts with her anthropologist-friend, she had managed to make '*her culture*,' objectified, the object of her own gaze. Perhaps from this angle, between maneuvering the contradictions and complications of everyday life and trying to make sense of the expectations of her in a way that could be easily brokered to tourist-others, gazing at an objectified notion of '*her culture*' also afforded her a particular space from which to consider her own sense of agency, in her creative quest for survival, belonging, and sense of selfhood.

Concluding Comments in Brief

In the previous chapters, I have attempted to demonstrate the various ways that *inter*-subjectivity can be understood as constructing as well as challenging touristic subject-positions of 'host' and 'guests.' Throughout the examples and discussions presented here has been the ongoing problem of representing modes of subjectivity and agency, of the power that subjugates twinned to the power of creativity and resistance. In attempting to follow what Jackson calls 'a shifting in emphasis from explanatory causes to creative effects' (1996:4), and Abu-Lughod's ethnographic precedent 'that continually undermines generalizations about cultural patterns by simultaneously recognizing their existence and showing that they cannot fully account for actual experiences' (2008:xii), I often found it more productive to sit with contradiction than try to unravel it. Taking the 'tourist gaze' as a theoretical entry point to consider how modes of subjectivity and agency might be better understood as *inter*-subjective, however, offered a way to write about the significance of surprising practices of photographic gazing (chapter 4), attempts at reconfiguring social spaces and mobility (chapter 5), and the particular experiences with 'commoditizing culture' that I had observed within the industry of township tourism (chapter 6). While research on global tourism, and the more specific modes of 'poverty' or 'pro-poor' tourism imbued with problematic associations with 'cultural essence,' seem to swing between poles of structural determinism, exploitation, and victimhood, to agency, entrepreneurial innovation, and inventiveness, the chapters above have tried to, perhaps uncomfortably, sit between the two. Working, therefore, with the notion of inter-subjectivity between the

hosts and guests of township tourism in Cape Town, South Africa, has served as a site to work productively and particularly, if also problematically, with Judith Butler's suggestion that,

... agency is the assumption of a purpose unintended by power, one that could not have been derived logically or historically, that operates in a relation of contingency and reversal to the power that makes it possible, to which it nevertheless belongs. This is, as it were, the ambivalent scene of agency... (15)

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