

An Explorative Study of Congolese “Bouncers” in Cape
Town: Constructing Masculine Identities in Liminal
Spaces



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Introduction

This thesis began with the specific intention of exploring a particular criminal phenomenon: the role that bouncers play and the extent of their involvement in drug networks around Cape Town. The literature supports the assumptions that bouncers in the industry in which they work – the “night-time economy” – may be key figures in the distribution of illegal drugs especially in terms of their consumption in nightclubs (Hadfield, 2008; Lister, Hadfield, Hobbs & Winlow, 2001; Hobbs, Hadfield, Lister & Winlow, 2003). However, in the undertaking of the research, the information that emerge largely contradicted the established conclusions in the literature. This is not to absolutely deny that bouncers may be directly involved on various levels of the drug trade. Rather, it is to suggest that the pervasive assumptions concerning bouncers and drugs inform and are informed by rather mundane discourses which draw on concerns with difference and deviance – who someone is, how they are, and what they do. A certain type of person, it is assumed, is most likely to be involved in the drug trade – in reverse, if someone is involved in the drug trade, they must be a certain type of person. Bouncers appear to fit perfectly into the assumed construct of that “certain type of person” even though the evidence gathered for this study reveals that they are *not* that certain type of person.

Here I will attempt to do justice to the characters of the men who were interviewed for this thesis. Each of the eight men that were interviewed were gentlemen: polite, respectful and kind yet they all expressed, in their appearance, the stereotypical (and required) image of “the bouncer.” This contradiction between their appearance and personality captures, in essence, the opposition created between the concept of “the bouncer” and “the gentleman.” This positing of “the bouncer”, as a singular identity encompassing the personal and professional, is how these individuals are portrayed throughout the literature. The bouncer, as a “gentleman,” is seen as a contradiction of concepts, and it is this positioning on which the discourse, as highlighted above, draws. In short, they all completely contradicted how “the bouncer” should behave and act in their broader construction. Each of these men, all migrants from other parts of Africa, had come to South Africa for a better life. While what this life consisted of differed amongst them, but none set out with the intention of being a bouncer; and all of them first got into the profession based on their appearance. What remained constant across all the individuals, moreover, was the distinct separation/split between the construction of what they *should* be qua bouncer and how they defined themselves as men.

They all embodied and performed the hegemonic bouncer masculinity; an identity that is necessary and required to be a bouncer, yet this masculinity was “left at the door,” and each of them then expressed differing, self-authentic masculinities. I hope to capture examples of this in the discussion below.

Derivative of the original goal, the research project entailed examining the complexities and connections between bouncers, masculinities and masculine identities, and organised crime networks broadly, paying attention to how these interface with the illegal drug trade. However, after conducting qualitative interviews with several bouncers, as is explored below, it became clear that there was not enough explicit evidence of any direct involvement in differing drug networks for this to be a dominant theme or to support such an argument. There is, in other words, more to the story because there is less to the story than has previously been told.

The decision to focus specifically on Congolese bouncers arose from the fact that, as a community, they are feature frequently in Cape Town’s night-time economy. Aware of how immigrants face different obstacles and hardships depending on where in Africa they come from; beyond immigrants being uniformly represented as parasitic, there are differences of opinion, while still homogenous characteristically, the generalisations fall to different geographies. The Congolese bouncers, it is assumed, are generally non-confrontational, placid in nature. They enact a particular masculinity as bouncers, which does not transcend into their personal lives. These characteristics make these individuals distinctly different to the way that British bouncers (to a large extent) and, historically, white South African bouncers and currently Nigerian bouncers in Johannesburg (to a far lesser degree) are portrayed in the literature (Shaw, 2016; Shaw & Haysom, 2016). The context of violence will subsequently be explored further on.

Much of the above resulted from a pertinent – albeit unintended – theme which arose and became central during the interviews: that of migrancy, migrants, and finding a place in contemporary South Africa. This theme becomes fundamental, as well as foundational, in terms of understanding the formation and performance of identity, the role of the bouncer as an immigrant, and the role of the immigrant bouncer in the drug trade.

The impetus of this thesis then, from which an analysis then follows, concerns the subject of bouncers, specifically immigrant bouncers, and illegal substances. While the extant literature has focused on British and white South African bouncers, the Congolese bouncers that were

interviewed often positioned themselves in contrasting ways. The discussion looks at what bouncing entails for these different groups and how they “perform” bouncing. What it means for them to be a bouncer. Included in this is a look at illegal substances and how/why, in Johannesburg, the white bouncers became involved in the illicit drug trade and how some Nigerian immigrants have been able to take over this trade, as well as why the Congolese bouncers in Cape Town do not actively get involved. Their involvement is only to the extent that they turn a blind eye to “drug” activity around them, which is still a level of involvement. Again, a fundamental reason for this is their status in South Africa, a theme which only became clear late in the research but which has in reflection become a primary signifier.

The reason that a comparative analysis arises between British bouncers and white South African bouncers¹ is twofold. The first is, what I found to be, an extensive lack of literature on bouncers outside of Britain. The lack of alternative literature is not to be used as a justification, but rather a consideration. The second, and more importantly, is the many parallels between these two groups specifically, which also shows a definite distinction between the third group – Congolese bouncers. Cognisant of the fact that these parallels, albeit useful in the South African context, are more applicable historically than currently, the literature on British bouncers may also be viewed as “distant” when considering the current subjective realities of these individuals, in different places. In Britain, and most of the rest of the world, the lines of race and class have a clear distinction; this is not the case in South Africa; race and class are often conflated into a single descriptive category.

The hypothesis is then one which argues that these Congolese bouncers do not “act” in the same manner as those presented in the literature. It is proposed that two major reasons for their different behaviors are their migrant status, and their ethnic backgrounds; the scope of this thesis only extended to explore the consequences of carrying the status/identity of immigrant.

The core focus of this thesis then became one which looked at Congolese bouncers, with the central argument centred on and around migrancy; why these Congolese men came to South Africa, what their lived experience has been, and is, in South Africa. This experience is largely influenced by an attitude of xenophobia from local South Africans, especially those who are seen to be in the same “class” as these men. The local working class men view the

¹ Again, as will be discussed in a more comprehensive manner in chapter three – the emergence of the white bouncer mafia, and the transition/move to individual immigrant bouncers.

immigrants as a “threat.” As has been noted, “a continually growing number of South Africans now regard foreigners from fellow African countries as a direct threat to their future economic well-being and as being responsible for the troubling rise in violent crime” (Adepoju, 2003: 11).

Here it is important to contextualise South Africa’s historical trajectory to better understand the current situation that immigrants find themselves in; why immigrants in South Africa are treated with immense hostility and violence. There are various theories, discussed in greater detail further in this thesis, which aim to explain such responses towards immigrants. In summary, this behaviour is seen to stem from the perception of the foreigner as a threat; to the livelihood of the local South African. This treatment appears to extend only to the African immigrants in South Africa. The explanation for this is that the majority of African immigrants into South Africa are looking for a better quality of life and better opportunities for success. This places them, economically, amongst those who are most economically disadvantaged. Thus, seen as a direct threat to their livelihoods (Harris, 2002: 169-171). This treatment, although explicitly carried out by local South Africans, is also fuelled by a derogatory discourse perpetuated and reproduced by the state. “It has become increasingly apparent that immigrants are subjected to violence not only by South African citizens, but also by various state actors” (Alfaro-Velcamp & Shaw, 2016: 984). What will be analysed in further detail in chapter four, as Alfaro-Velcamp and Shaw (2016: 985) discuss, is the process by which perpetuating a discourse which paints immigrants as criminals, some state actors/ government officials are able to remove the focus from pressing issues, such as internal corruption and other state crimes. This effectively allows for “the immigrant” to be used as a scapegoat for far deeper social ills, a convenient subject both inside and outside the imagined community of South Africa in which retribution is limited and unlikely, precisely because of their undecided status.

Crush and McDonald (2001: 2) state that “South Africa’s twentieth-century immigration policies under white minority rule” were focused on four areas: “racist policy and legislation; the exploitation of migrant labor from neighbouring countries; tough enforcement legislation; and the repudiation of international refugee conventions” (Crush & McDonald, 2001: 2). Looking to immigration policy, white governments used religious and racial criteria to determine who was granted access into South Africa, as well as the terms upon which entry was granted. “Periods of isolationism [in which all immigrants were viewed as a threat] alternated with periods of selective immigration [when whites from Europe were actively

courted]” (Crush & McDonald, 2001: 2). As a result of selective immigration, by the 1980s anyone who had a white skin was welcomed into South Africa. Legally, any potential immigrant into the country had to be “assimilable” into the white population. It could not have been more clear that people of colour were unwelcome, particularly Africans from elsewhere on the continent (Crush & McDonald, 2001: 2). “The overt racial selection of immigrants was only abandoned in the dying years of apartheid when the state allowed in selected black skilled immigrants and ‘honorary whites’ from Asia to bolster apartheid’s pernicious ‘homelands’ strategy of co-optation” (Crush & McDonald, 2001: 2).

Post-apartheid immigration policy is still highly problematic in nature; it has nevertheless made notable breaks from the policies of the past (Crush & McDonald, 2001: 4). One of these breaks concerns the selection of immigrants: the post-apartheid state has undoubtedly discarded such racist selection policies. Unfortunately, rather than replacing the policy with one which is universally inclusive, there has been little “appetite for immigration at all. The declared task of the new state was to redistribute the cake to newly enfranchised citizens, not to allow others in to take an undeserved slice” (Crush & McDonald, 2001: 4). Despite talk of inclusivity, diversity and “Afritude [in post-apartheid South Africa] official attitudes to immigration and migration have been slow to change” (Peberdy, 2001: 16). Rather, increasingly and continuously, South Africa is characterised by strong exclusionary and xenophobic discourses which focus primarily on migrants from the rest of Africa (Peberdy, 2001: 16). Most migrants are commonly seen as “‘illegal aliens fleeing an Africa in chaos” (Crush & McDonald, 2001: 7). Whether immigrants are in South Africa legally or illegally, there is no distinction in the way in which they are received by locals. “Legal immigrants are perceived to deprive locals of jobs and services while ‘illegal immigrants’ supposedly corrupt officials, cause crime and grab scarce resources for South Africa’s poor (Crush & McDonald, 2001: 7). Peberdy (2001: 16) notes how a “language of exclusion has been accompanied by vigorous attempts to control and discourage both legal and undocumented immigration and migration.” The state has taken a draconian approach to border and heartland policing, involving well-documented abuse of the human rights of non-South Africans. Considering the above attitudes of the state and society at large; as well as considering the hopes and expectations of immigrants coming into South Africa, as is detailed below, it is not difficult to understand how immigrants struggle to find a sense of belonging in South Africa.

After looking at migrancy, understanding the experience of these immigrants, from the state to the people, the focus moves to masculinity. It is here we draw a comparative analysis.

From the existing literature, the masculinities (and bouncers) that are researched are British citizens from a particular class. With this comes a masculinity that is particular to the context. These bouncers project a specific masculinity which has been defined by violence and aggression. The masculinities that the Congolese bouncers adopt can be seen to be a complete inversion of this dominant form of hegemonic masculinity. They adopt a subtle and non-disruptive form of masculinity, in their attitude and actions. However, their physical appearance fits the standard notion of masculinity. They are big men, tall, muscular and look aggressive. They are gentle giants, but ones with a reputation. The reasons for the subtle, non-aggressive, non-disruptive masculinity are linked back to their status as immigrants and the space that they occupy as such.

The core function of the entire thesis is then an analysis of certain comparisons between white, native bouncers; those found in the literature, and as articulated in the British case, and the Congolese immigrant bouncers as interviewed in contemporary South Africa. This analysis intends to understand masculine identities that are shaped largely by social structures. In relation to that, also understanding the space that immigrants occupy, while acknowledging an absence of “privilege”: the safety and security that is generally not afforded to them in the same way that it is given to local South Africans. The eco-systemic nature of their identity and lived experiences; where the individual is influenced by the microsystem, which is influenced by the macrosystem, which influences the individual. Bronfenbrenner (1977: 513) argued for a broader approach in researching human development. He proposed an approach that “focuses on the progressive accommodation, throughout the life span, between growing human organism and the changing environments in which it actually lives and grows.” This ecological environment² includes a microsystem, a mesosystem, an exosystem, and a macrosystem³. Using this framework simplistically, questioning then, how a bouncer’s place in society influences their identity, which in turn affects how they are and act out being a bouncer, and their level of involvement in illicit activities.

In providing an overview of this project it is necessary, in the first chapter, to review the literature and fields of thought in all the above-mentioned areas – immigrants in South Africa, masculinities, bouncers, and illegal substances – so as to draw out any and all links

² Ecological environment according to Bronfenbrenner (1977: 514) “is conceived topologically as a nested arrangement of structures, each contained within the next”.

³ For definitions of each of these systems, see Bronfenbrenner (1977: 514-515).

between the areas of focus. On this basis, the thesis will then, in the second chapter, outline a conceptual framework that can make sense of all four, and their relationships. A Foucauldian framework (closely linked with the (social) constructivist paradigm (Constantino, 2008: 119)), as demonstrated below, is a useful means of synthesising these previously divergently understood domains, as they all have at heart concerns with identity, power, knowledge, and indeed, violence. Moreover, such a framework is a useful means with which to contextually situate the literature and information generated by the interviews – as Foucault himself states, meaning should neither be pursued in basic structures, nor in the objectives of speaking subjects.

Rather, we must turn to the historically specific discursive relations within which particular practices (social and institutional) with their specific modalities of power and accompanying knowledges are necessarily located, and particular subjectivities constructed (cited in Jefferson, 1995: 15).

From conception to completion of this research, my personal intention has been to show the humanness of each individual who participated in this research. This thesis is centred on two separate “subjects” which evolve into a single “subject”; the immigrant and the bouncer, evolving into the immigrant bouncer. The study of immigrants, as well as the study of bouncers, appears to yield those individuals, who fall into those constructs, as simple subjects to be examined; often rendering the actual person involved subordinate to the subject. Every effort has been made to ensure that the voices of these individuals are heard; acknowledged in all their relevance; seen as human before subject.

As has been mentioned already, chapter one gives an overview of the most relevant literature that has been used throughout. Within this chapter it is evident that the literature relating to bouncers is plentiful, however, predominantly written by the same authors – S. Lister, P. Hadfield (2008), D. Hobbs and S. Winlow (2001); writing collectively (2001; 2002; 2003) and individually; as well as substantial contributions by L. Monaghan. When reading this literature, one should be aware that these authors have conducted various studies, and thus write specifically about, the night-time economy in Britain, and British bouncers. In looking at the South African environment, I draw on Shaw and Haysom’s (2016) work.

Chapter two details the methodology which was used to conduct the interviews for this thesis. The framework which has been used to guide the structure of this project, particularly the analysis of the data, is broadly seen as a Foucauldian framework; using the (social)

constructivist paradigm. The chapter begins with the literature on certain methods that were used, and then gives an account of how these methods were used in this project.

The third chapter, which is the first of the three main themes to be discussed, is concerned with bouncers and their identities individually, as well as their identities as bouncers, in their entirety. Here there is a particular focus on migrant bouncer identities and migrant bouncer masculinities; how these are internally and externally formed and performed. The chapter begins with a brief introduction to the “bouncers;” the people interviewed for this research, so as to reiterate the acknowledgement of the humanness of the participants. It also looks to determine how bouncers have gained the reputation that surrounds them, as well as the moment in which the “muscle at the door” shifted to include key “drug distributor.” This chapter can be viewed as the catalyst of this thesis, which is then analysed through the chapters which follow it.

The fourth chapter looks at migrant identity, and finding a place of belonging in South Africa. The chapter traces the trajectory of migration from the late apartheid years to the current moment in South Africa. The individuals at the heart of this chapter, and the entire thesis, are Congolese immigrants; this is an exploration of their story, using their voices. Within this chapter, using parts of each interview, it is evident that none of the participants came to South Africa with the intention of being a bouncer. Each of the eight men had their own dreams and aspirations which they believed could be achieved in South Africa.

Chapter five begins with an examination of the literature on identities in general, and then shifts to look at masculine identities, specifically the construction and performance of masculine identities, by Congolese immigrants.⁴ Within this there is the acknowledgement of a schism between their subjective identities, and their necessitated identities as bouncers. Migrant identity is a central component of this chapter, as well as the thesis in its entirety; as people who cannot shake the label migrant, they are forced to occupy a specific space; as Congolese men, they present the ideal aesthetic of a bouncer. As Congolese immigrants, they find themselves, implicitly or explicitly, manipulated into liminal spaces of “being” and “doing.”

In tying the themes together, migrant identity is the constant theme which influences the entire discourse. All chapters are informed by theory, yet show visible contradictions to the

⁴ In every instance of using the term “Congolese immigrants,” I refer only to the eight individuals interviewed for this thesis; and not to the entire population of Congolese immigrants in South Africa.

common understandings and assumption surrounding immigrants in South Africa; as well as the common assumptions and understandings surrounding bouncers, their roles, the specific type of masculinity that they do, and are required to perform. In the interview processes, the participant's narratives very seldom follow from what the literature suggests, in all themes discussed in this thesis.

The below thesis is then a product of concerns, the relationships of which have hereto rarely been touched on in the literature. These complexities and connections will be examined and analysed by drawing on current research in domains relevant to the main themes, as well as by undertaking new information generated by interviewing bouncers around the Cape Town Central Business District (CBD). Such primary, empirical information is needed in order to gain crucial and accurate insight into the lived experiences of these individuals.

Before continuing, a note on certain terminology that is used in this paper: as mentioned above, parts of this research project are concerned with the extent to which immigrant bouncers are involved in the drug trade. The concept of "the immigrant" as well as that of "the bouncer," in their most basic forms, are normatively understood as single identifications; these understandings are nuanced and simple. The same cannot be said for the concept of "drugs." For the sake of clarity, these three concepts will be defined, along with a brief explanation on the ways in which these terms are used, and the intended meaning, in this paper. Functionally defined, a bouncer is "a person employed by a nightclub or similar establishment to prevent troublemakers and other unwanted people entering or to eject them from the premises" (Oxford Dictionaries). Most commonly understood, the term "bouncer" embodies an entire identity in itself and defines a specific idea of a masculine identity. Through the qualitative data collected for this research, the term "bouncer" merely relates to a job. In no instance did any of the participants see their subjective identities being even partially informed by or related to being a bouncer, as a primary identity or as a masculine identity. The term immigrant, although by its most basic definition – "a person who comes to live permanently in a foreign country" (Oxford Dictionaries) - is a neutral term, to be an immigrant in South Africa is anything but a neutral existence. As is discussed in the chapter on migration, to be an immigrant in South Africa is to be described and treated as a criminal and a parasite on the country's economy and its people. Throughout the thesis individuals are referred to as immigrants/immigrant bouncers, to highlight a particular set of circumstances and the realities lived, by being an immigrant. Finally, although there is a common understanding of what "drugs" are, what follows is a brief explanation on the terminology, as

well as the reason for choosing to avoid, where possible, using the term “drugs.” “Drugs” according to Derrida (1993:1) is understood as both a word and a concept. In looking at the concept of drugs, one supposes an “instituted and institutional definition.” For such a definition to exist, certain requirements develop; there is a history as well as a culture, certain practices associated with the concept, assessments, norms, an entire system of intertwined dialogues, a rhetoric, whether overt or indirect” (Derrida, 1993: 1-2). There are no drugs in nature. It could be argued that there are natural elements, such as plants, roots and other materials which are used in the manufacturing of (what we commonly understand as) drugs, however, they do not appear as the final product, naturally. Thus, the concept of drugs is not a scientific concept, but is rather founded “on the basis of moral or political evaluations: it carries in itself both norm and prohibition, allowing no possibility of description or certification” (Derrida, 1993: 2). Considering Derrida’s argument, as well as in the interest of clarity, the concept of drugs to which this paper is concerned with, will be referred to as illegal substances. Thereby mitigating the variety of irrelevant substances categorised as drugs, outside of the illegal realm. Interestingly, the evidence presented here reveals that while conceptually different, a similar logic – the logic of exclusion – haunts understandings of the migrant as analytical integer.

Chapter One: Literature Review

The intended purpose of the literature chapter is to address what can be called an analytical deficit – this deficit is evident by a gap in the existing literature, relating directly to the roles and functions of bouncers in the night-time economy in contemporary South Africa. The structure of this chapter follows the structure of the “themed” chapters which will follow. The framework of the literature begins with an outline of the, existing, literature on bouncers; as is the first of the three themed chapters in this thesis. The literature then moves to look at identity in its entirety, as well as aspects of different identities. The literature on masculine identity and organised crime, the last of the literature reviewed, then feeds back into the initial literature on bouncers.

In reviewing the existing literature there has been considerable research conducted on the topic of masculine identity and identities, as well as – albeit invariably separately – on the roles and functions of bouncers in the night-time economy. In speaking to each, and both, and their relationships and performances, research has primarily been conducted in various nightclubs in Britain, by S. Lister, P. Hadfield, D. Hobbs (2001) and Simon Winlow (2001), collectively (2001; 2002; 2003) and individually with substantial contributions by Lee Monaghan (2002a; 2002b; 2002c). There has been no such research, of a similar nature, in the South African context in general nor in Cape Town specifically. In attempting to begin the conversation needed to address this analytical deficit, as well beginning a new conversation within the same realm – the world of bouncers and all that that entails – I look to the existing literature as a catalyst; adopting and adjusting literature from various sources to inform the theoretical argument throughout this thesis.

Bouncers

Those who exercise control over the night-time economy are not the police – who in South Africa are arguably too few in numbers – but rather by a “force” of bouncers. Bouncers can literally be seen as the gatekeepers to a night-time economy “which is symptomatic of the cultural and economic fragmentation of post-modern society” (Winlow, 2001:100 - 101). With some deviations, the appearance of a bouncer is that of a mean looking, big, muscular man, “whose potential for violence is their principal resource” (Waddington, 2003: 625).

Inversely, by having only physical force to draw on, they may be understood as “meat heads.”

In imagining “the bouncer” in a single dimension, the tendency is to conceive him in a singular, occupational sense. However, being a bouncer is not simply an occupation, but rather it is a performance. Looking specifically at male bouncers, it is not then just a job that they carry out but also a role that they fulfil, an embodied activity narrated both through physical, spatial, and symbolic discourses. All of these are made meaningful in the local and supralocal contexts in which they occur. In “unbiased” sections of the night-time economy, there can be found nightclubs which commonly attract considerable numbers of young customers. In such an environment, the staff team are mainly involved with “crowd control” (Hadfield, 2008: 436). “Patrons are regarded as a largely homogenous mass, to be processed and screened for risk of violence or otherwise disruptive behaviour” (Hadfield, 2008: 436). The judgement of whether a patron is “fit” to enter a specialised space usually relate to signifiers of visible content. These signifiers may be displayed through body language, clothing, demeanour and/or bodily embellishment (Hobbs *et al.* 2003; McVeigh, 1997, in Hadfield, 2008: 436). Such methods are imperative to the functioning of “niche” spaces and acknowledge the magnitude to which one finds different cultural divisions in the midst of nightlife patrons which create space for “alternative scenes” (Hollands, 2002. in Hadfield, 2008: 436). Within the realm of the night-time leisure security, violence is a highly sought-after economic resource, and the ability to perform the role of “the security”, the alpha-male tasked with protection and the tools for violence, committed in the name of organisation, are critical. The one inflexible skill that a bouncer is required to possess is fighting skill. The ability to fight, to take and to “dish” the punishment is the trait, above all others upon which a doorman’s commercial value rests (Hobbs, Hadfield, Lister & Winlow, 2002: 359). This is not to say that all bouncers are somehow innately violent individuals or use violence as the first port of call in situations where safety and security are concerned, both because correlation is not causation and in relation to this study, because anecdotal evidence often points to the exact opposite. Many bouncers place great emphasis on their ability to communicate their way out of unpleasant, difficult, situations (Waddington, 2003: 625). Moreover, the decisions they take regarding the efficacy of violent and intimidating measures are not uninformed in design, intent and/or performance and are the product of personal, commercial and subcultural judgements informed through a complex interplay of societal, personal, experiential and relational knowledges, often enforced through iteration – the

bouncer “habitus”, to use a turn of phrase by Bourdieu and spoken to by Hobbs, Hadfield, Lister & Winlow (2002: 358):

... the habitus of the bouncer is manifested in ‘door lore’: a range of skills, competencies and working knowledge, which is honed by the bouncer into a practical morality (Van Maanen, 1978: 236, in Hobbs, Hadfield, Lister & Winlow, 2002: 358).

For most bouncers, their self-presentation – particularly the cultivation of an authoritatively intimidating appearance and demeanour – is of vital importance and yet individually unique and subject to change or modification. An ability to “look the part” by having an imposing physical appearance which is suggestive of potential violence is requisite to “be the part” and allows for the doorman to underline his position of dominance and authority within the space (Hobbs, Hadfield, Lister & Winlow, 2002: 357). It is in this, that the performative nature of being a bouncer is most evident.

Any individual who has visited the environment known as the nightclub will know that bouncers occupy the pivotal role of deciding who is allowed entrance into the world, and as a result, of policing those who are successful in being granted entry (Winlow, 2001: 101). Contemporary bouncers, in their very physical nature, and in opposition to conventional articulations of the “meathead”, embody both the parameters and possibilities of change through which masculinities can be defined locally (Winlow, 2001: 98). The normative central role of [the male] breadwinner is increasingly being lost and/or replaced in some sections of society which were once male dominated. In the ever changing and globalised world that people now exist in, the service sector has failed to replace jobs that were lost in the industrial labour market. This has resulted in masculinities plunging into a state of flux, especially those of the working class as employment has long been acknowledged as a key component within identity and in self-identity (Winlow, 2001: 66). One can see that from the 1980s to the present day, masculinities have had to, and have, adapted to new and constantly changing settings. Bouncers, and the performative activity of “bouncing” has it seems often been forced to find new suits. Understanding whether and how this has occurred in the context of Cape Town is, of course, a central goal of the research.

Shaw (2016) gives some insight into the adaptation of the bouncer. He documents the evolution of the “bouncer mafia” alongside, and influenced by, changes in the “protection economy” from the late 1980s to the late 2000s (Shaw, 2016), in Both Cape Town and Johannesburg. Shaw and Haysom (2016) also document the adaptation, to some extent, as

well as the transition from one “type” of bouncer to a different “type” of the bouncer, in Johannesburg. Shaw and Haysom (2016: 577) argue that

a series of prevalent factors and changes in the industry precipitated the dramatic decline of the bouncer mafia: socio-economic transition altered not only the racial profile of key areas but also changed the face of policing resulting in a weakening of the networks between bouncers and the police. The increasing recruitment of African bouncers by clubs themselves, primarily from Congo and Nigeria – who were cheaper than their white counterparts, more easily available when the former white bouncer recruitment networks dried up, and is prone to violence – facilitated a shift in control of the city’s drug trade to Nigerian criminal networks, thereby laying the foundation for a critical component of modern organised crime in Johannesburg.

This is relevant to this thesis in terms of understanding the shifting masculinities of nightclub bouncers; beginning with the move from white South African bouncers, to African (mostly Nigerian and Congolese) bouncers. As immigrants in South Africa, these bouncers (predominantly male) bring with them alternative masculine identities which are made to be adjusted by their “status” as immigrant, which are then further (consciously or subconsciously) modified with regard to their profession as an immigrant bouncer. Beyond the aspect of masculine identities and masculinities, this research speaks to the theme of bouncers and their involvement in the drug trade; approaching the subject in a unique manner; following the course of events which preceded the “arrival⁵” of illegal substances within the night-time economy.

Speaking to this, research conducted in the UK has thus indicated that the development and entrenchment of a continuously disadvantaged “underclass” has slowly but steadily eroded a desire for some to actively seek employment (Winlow, 2001: 66). In some instances, this attempt proves disappointing and futile in a country such as South Africa where the population outnumbers the available jobs substantially. Futility and a lack of desire have resulted in the promotion of favourable attitudes to “delinquency”, especially as a source of income. The money earned from a career as a bouncer is far too often not enough to adequately support one adult male. due to this, bouncers may be led to criminal enterprises as a way of maintaining a lifestyle and/or livelihood (Winlow, 2001: 103). As a result of this Winlow (2001:66) argues that,

... we thus begin to see the slow advent of criminality, not just as a means of obtaining status (although this function has endured with various modifications), or of injecting

⁵ The “arrival” of illegal substances does not suggest that they were non-existent before this period. However, it is in this moment that the drug trade boomed and went from “being in the shadows to being in your face.”

some excitement into an otherwise dull social situation (Foster, 1990), but as [an] entrepreneurial concern: a means of getting money.

Being a bouncer can be a very attractive lifestyle in the sense that forms of night-time occupation allow for the day time to be spent “leisurely”. In this way, both the day time and the night time may be dedicated to maintaining and amplifying the masculine image (Winlow, 2001: 103).

Being a bouncer does not automatically mean that one is a criminal. However, there is evidence that a link can be made as to how individuals use their physical capabilities and standing amongst their peers, along with their occupation, to benefit themselves criminally and financially (Winlow, 2001: 100). Whether elements of criminality exist, to what extent and what they mean to local bouncers will form a key aspect of narrowing down the complexities of studying masculinities.

This is especially pertinent considering that, at least from initial observations within the specific location of where this research was conducted, the majority of the bouncers are from nearby African countries, including the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) Nigeria and Morocco. In considering bouncing as an occupation, the salary received is minimal and at a stretch may be able to support an individual. A pertinent question that arises is then, do these men have families that they are responsible for supporting, and if so, do their families stay with them in South Africa or are they in their home countries? It seems unlikely that one could support a family in one household, and even more unlikely to be able to support two different households on a bouncer’s salary alone. As seen above, stated by Winlow (2001: 102 - 103), in this specific context it is not hard to see the advent of criminality as a means of making money. As a bouncer, occupying liminal spaces on levels of power, (i.e. bouncers having control over who is allowed into a club, and in certain instances being the person who is trusted by their employers to be responsible for activities in the illicit drug market on three different levels of involvement) it would appear that to get involved in the drug market in a variety of roles, could be a relatively easy, albeit risky, source of added income. Due to the illicit nature of drug markets the payment would be substantial, as one does not simply pay for the substance but also for the risks undertaken to supply the substances.

In looking at the risk element, here one can reason (relating back to earlier references of men being more likely to place themselves at risk) that if one follows the logic of previous arguments, men and masculinities are well suited to the dynamics which contribute to the

continuation of the drug trade. While women may play substantial, yet minor, roles in this system, the role of the necessity of a certain form of masculinity is prominent.

Bouncers and Illegal Substances:

According to Morris (1998), there are three levels of involvement of door supervisors (bouncers) in drug dealing:

- a) The least active role that bouncers may play is “turning a blind eye” to drug dealing activities.
- b) A more active role that bouncers may play is in the form of receiving payment, whilst not being involved in the supply of illegal substances, they are paid for allowing dealers to trade. This role may also include removing competing dealers from the space.
- c) The most active role that bouncers may play is that of a primary dealer, in which they hold illegal substances for the floor dealers who will actually sell the product. Once floor dealers have sold their product, they may obtain further contraband from the bouncer, acting in a wholesaler role.

Regardless of the level of involvement, if a bouncer is aware of illegal activities yet does nothing about such, he is still held accountable to some extent of the law. Indeed, if a bouncer is an illegal migrant, their very presence is a contravention of the law and thus their continued existence in the country is a function of their ability to remain below the gaze of those who enforce the law. Overt violence, beyond itself, is one such means of drawing unwanted attention to oneself. In the context of bouncers and illegal substances, the institution of drug networks can be seen to hold power over bouncers, as individuals who choose to become involved in the drug trade/dealing of illegal substances, as well as targets who are coerced/forced/manipulated into the dealing of and in illegal substances within drug syndicates.

As mentioned earlier, although the subject of bouncers and their involvement in the illegal drug trade is not an obvious theme in itself, the literature allows for an alternative discussion which highlights the absence of a direct relationship between bouncers and the drug trade. In this context, on the one hand, the absence of such a direct relationship speaks to the ideas and assumptions of specific identities; on the other hand, the information, that was gathered from

the interviews, speaks directly to the position that these, specific, bouncers are placed in – the silent witness.

Identity

Here the discussion shifts from one on bouncers, which carries its own specified identity, to one on different identities. Following on from the discussion directly above, on bouncers and illegal substances, we turn to look at migrant identity. In looking at the space that immigrants generally exist in, in South Africa; in particular, the space they occupy and the identities that they are required to represent as immigrant bouncers, we come to understand how embodying the identity of “the migrant” creates the perfect condition for the silent witness.

Migrant Identity

The debate surrounding immigration is possibly one of the most politically charged discourses of policy in South Africa (Adepoju, 2003: 4). With the end of the apartheid state, and independence in 1994 with the prospect of a booming economy in a newly democratic state, a floodgate was opened for immigration into South Africa from various African countries (Adepoju, 2003: 8). The “issues” of immigration has become one of growing concern for the South African government, across various platforms; affecting the country’s relationships with the region at large in fundamentally important ways (Sinclair, 1998: 339). However, there has been little acknowledgment, by the state, of the relevance of what migrants themselves have to say about how they see themselves and their roles in the country. Most often, migration has been examined through discussions of migration “as a societal response to state policies and actions, explaining migration primarily in terms of national sovereignty and security, as a phenomenon to control, contain and export” (Sinclair, 1998: 341).

Both inappropriately and inaccurately, a model such as this, excludes any conversation of migration that does not categorically define it as a security issue. This realist approach allows for a simplistic, incomplete, restricted and unsuitable framework through which one looks at migration. Reitz writes “... it disallows the consideration of human agency” (Sinclair, 1998: 341). Fortunately, there has been a shift from the realist approach, to one which now examines migration not only with regard to state policy but also in terms of social construction and growing political significance of migrants (Sinclair, 1998: 342). In regarding this shift, it must be acknowledged that identity research is vital in creating a

complete picture of “the migrant experience.” A continuous picture emerges reinforcing that perceptions of community and identity are important survival mechanisms. Conventional International Relations (IR) theory has tended to collapse the concept of identity into one single accepted idea of identification with a state or nation, therefore maintaining the idea that identities are “homogenous and inflexible” (Sinclair, 1998: 342).

In studying the construction and adoption of identity within migrant communities, a unique opportunity is offered in witnessing the impacts of various local and global pressures of immigration, exile and integration (Sinclair, 1998: 343). In researching migrant identity in South Africa, the literature is predominantly situated in the realm of International Relations theory (see Sinclair, 1998; Crush, 2001; Crush & McDonald, 2002; Neocosmos, 2008; 2010), and looks at the state policies regarding migrants. While my research is not concerned with the correlations between state policies and migrant identities through the IR lens, it is concerned with migrant identities and how these are constructed, with state policies being what they are, one of the factors that inform how identity is not only shaped, but also lived.

Charles Taylor maintains that identity is “partly shaped by recognition, or its absence, often by misrecognition of others, and so a person or group of people can suffer real damage, real distortions, if the people or society around them mirror back to them a confining or demeaning or contemptible picture of themselves” (Lebow, 2008: 477). Taylor’s argument holds prominent validity in the South African context where immigrants are blamed for heightened crime, domestic unemployment and even the spread of HIV/AIDS (Adepoju, 2003: 4). “Migrants are commonly and deliberately associated with crime, trafficking, drugs, disease, AIDS, and other social ills ... more generally, migration is commonly characterised as problematic and threatening, particularly to national security” (Adepoju, 2003: 11). The increasing incidents of xenophobia is worrisome as a growing number of South Africans regard foreigners from other African countries as a “direct threat to their future economic well-being and as responsible for the troubling rise in violent crime” (Adepoju, 2003: 11 - 12). Further, the perception is stretched further, that if the foreigners are not involved in criminal activities themselves, as a result of the economic threat that they, they are responsible for South Africans turning to crime. As Tara (2000) notes, the disturbing situation is the deliberate association of migrants and migration with criminal activity, as well as the resistance by law-enforcement agencies to apply human rights norms to all migrants.

One prominent question arises when considering the multitude of adversity that immigrants face. These adversities can be placed broadly in the category of the political and the social. Politically and socially, perceptions around migrants are far more negative than positive. Politically, one must take in to consideration policies, relating to immigrants, implemented by the state, and how these are acted upon. Socially, and more specifically personally, considering immigrants' reasons for leaving their home countries, what their hopes were and what their reality is. Lastly, bearing in mind the lack of protection, of immigrants, of some basic human rights and the violation of these rights socially, politically and structurally, the question becomes how migrants determine and form their identity in spite of, or as a result of the obstacles that they encounter.

Masculine Identity

In the Post World War II Era, the bureaucratisation and rationalisation of work, along with the decline of the family wage and women's gradual movement into the labour force, further undermined the 'breadwinner role' as a basis for male identity, resulting in a defensive insecurity amongst men (A. Tolson, 'The Limits of Masculinity' in S. Winlow, 2001: 97).

In an attempt to understand what can be learnt from a study which focuses on men and masculine identities, Tony Jefferson (1995: 10 - 31) offers valuable insight, especially in understanding the ways in which men's "psychic and social complexities" can be conceptualised (Newburn & Stanko, 1995: 5). Here it is argued that it is through a man's psychic vulnerability, as well as his individual social positioning, that complex subjective masculinities are woven (Newburn & Stanko, 1995: 5). Not limited to the individual, masculinity have further been defined as,

... a collective gender identity and not a natural attribute. It is socially constructed and fluid. There is not one universal masculinity, but many masculinities. These are 'not fixed character types but configurations of practice generated in particular situations in a changing structure of relationships' (Connell, 1995: 81, in R. Morrell, 1998: 607).

Masculinities are, in this reading, configurations of practices and performances which are realised through social (inter)action, and thus they are formed in relation to psycho-social dynamics, norms, and expectations of different cultural, social and political relationships prescribed and inscribed in societies (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005: 836). It is also important to note that those broader socio-structural parameters, such as race, economic position, and various ingroups are integral in shaping the form, defining the nature, and prescribing the performances required of and signified by the masculine. This then means,

broadly speaking, that in any one society there are various different means of understanding, prescribing, and portraying “the masculine”, each with a unique, distinctive shape and set of structures that is transformative and positional, depending on time, place, and context.

As such, masculinity is not stagnant but change over time, and in relation to the social environment – being altered by changes in society while simultaneously affecting society themselves (Morrell, 1998: 607). Contemporary bouncers then, if for no other reason than in their physicality, are a representation of changing masculinities (Winlow, 2001: 98). As will be discussed in greater detail in chapter five; Connell suggests that masculinity can broadly be divided into four categories. It is cautioned that these should not be used as strict classifications but rather better seen as a flexible lens for analysis. It is nevertheless important to provide an analytical framework, however tentative, towards which masculinity can be conceptualised, illustrated and placed. A fundamental concept for this is the utilisation of the (ever self-reflexive) concept of hegemonic masculinity – “the form of masculinity which is dominant in society” (Morrell, 1998: 607-608). Hegemonic masculinity has been separated, and isolated from other forms of masculinity (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005: 832). In its performance and embodiment, the hegemonic is both exemplified and provides a potent narrative of the pathways considered most “valuable” in being a man. As Connell and Messerschmidt (2005: 832) note, hegemonic masculinity is a construct of a specific form of masculinity which demands that men situate themselves in relation to this construct. In this relational sense, it also ideologically legitimates the subordination of all those identities deemed subordinate.

Hegemonic masculinity is then not concerned with the power in terms of having a majority dominance. It is rather a question of creating and maintaining cultural dominance. In this way, the hegemonic is able to delegitimise those values adopted by “other” forms of masculinity. This results in the creation of the “ideal” version of masculinity. Although in its initial conception, hegemony was not synonymous with violence, although it could be supported by force. It is however defined by power relations, whether inter- or intrapersonal, both individual and social.

Morrell, Jewkes and Lindegger (2012: 8) make reference to the struggle over hegemony within the African National Congress (ANC) since 1994.⁶ The most relevant point within their discussion is the attention drawn to a multiplicity of masculinities which are pertinent to

⁶ South Africa’s ruling political party

the South African context. These masculinities have been historically and socially structured along the lines of class and race, which in South Africa, are often inextricably linked (Morrell, Jewkes and Lindegger, 2012: 8). Willow (2001: 98) states that one can convincingly argue that masculinities within lower social classes have been forced to change more than most other populations within society. It is, then overwhelmingly, from these social groupings that bouncers have emerged. This demands an awareness of varying contexts upon which it can be argued that the hegemony of masculinities is prevalent and powerful (Morrell, Jewkes and Lindegger, 2012: 8). Accepting this interaction of individual performances, historic-social experiences, and the structural demands of “doing” masculinity in such a diverse and heterogenous arena are clearly complex. Not only to be, but to study.

Speaking to this, various authors have erroneously collapsed performativity into the related notion of performance, even though the two concepts actually imply two different understanding of the gendered subject. Brickell (2005: 25) suggests that performativity’s antiessentialism can be recollected, and the order of sex, gender and meaning can be queried while engaging with the work of sociologist Erving Goffman, in order to cultivate “an account of masculinities as both (inter)active and performed” (Brickell, 2005: 25). Using both Judith Butler’s writings on gender, performativity and subversion, as well as Goffman’s analyses of a range of subjects concerning masculinity, one can begin to structurally place what subversive performances of masculinities may involve (Brickell, 2005: 25). Butler argues that gender and sexuality are relationally created; “heterosexuality, for example, is constructed in contradistinction to its abject other, homosexuality” (in Brickell, 2005: 26).

The same relational construction has been seen within a field of literature where the lines of argument suggest that masculinity is placed in opposition to femininity; to be masculine is to be everything that feminine is not. “True masculinity is almost always thought to proceed from men’s bodies - to be inherent in a male body or to express something about a male body” (Connell, 1995: 45 in S.Winlow, 2001: 98). In making vigorous “maleness” explicit, being very muscular immediately maintains this.

This masculinity does not need to be spelled out through complex verbalising or accepted modes of mutually congratulatory conversation ... your very physicality is laying claim to the spirit of all that is masculine and accentuating differences from all that is [considered] feminine (Winlow, 2001: 98-99).

Antonio Gramsci’s (1971) most pivotal contribution to Marxist thought can be found in his concept of hegemony, which he argues is “about the winning and holding of power and the

formation (and destruction) of social groups in that process” (Donaldson, 1993: 644). In this sense, hegemonic masculinity is concerned with the ways in which men, as the dominant group, form and sustain their authority. The capacity to enforce a definition of the situation, to determine how events are to be understood and ways in which issues will be discussed, to articulate ideals and state a system of ethics and morals, is an essential part of creating supremacy. Hegemonic masculinity, expressed as the ideal for masculinity, allows for a position of superiority (whether that is only subjectively or generally accepted). If such superiority is then threatened the result is the threat of violence, or actual violence, displayed in a variety of ways beyond simple physical violence. Such arguments, it must be said, are frequently articulated through a Marxist lens (See Donaldson, 1993; Hearn 2004), and paint an economic picture a little difficult to use in a country such as South Africa, where socio-economic stratifications are much less well defined. This is not to say, however, that they may not be of use, but should be seen only as loosely-defined terms of reference.

This being said, in terms of organised (violent) crime statistics in South Africa, men appear to be the majority perpetrators – “the most significant fact about crime is that it is almost always committed by men” (Newburn & Stanko, 1995: 1). With women, this appears to be subtler; this ties in to identity in that masculinity is performative/enacted in front of an audience, and validated by the approval of others. Men feel more manly yielding power, through different sources. Women do not feel more womanly in the same context. They may feel more masculine/manly, being in control/ holding an element of power for a moment, within a predominantly patriarchal society. “What it is to be ‘a man’ or become ‘a man’ is something which is often reduced to that which is not female or feminine” (Goodey, 1997: 402). Such statistical correlations are however complicated by studies which have shown that men are far more likely to be arrested and far more likely to be targeted by the police. Men are also more likely to place themselves in positions of danger, especially in instances of exaggerated masculinity, adopting a “fearless façade” (Goodey, 1997: 402; see Connell, 2005: 246-248). As is argued, two of the most persistent features linked to criminal activities are age and gender. Messerschmidt (1995: 81) alerts us to the fact that “young men account for a disproportionate amount of crime in all Western industrialised societies.” This link between criminal involvement and age may be explained, in one aspect, in terms of physical development and ageing. Generally, physical abilities such as speed, aggression, strength and stamina are useful assets to be used in committing various crimes, for protection, for recruiting members/associates and for potentially enforcing contracts. Although some crimes

may be more physically demanding than others, a continuous involvement in criminal activities is most likely to result in a lifestyle which is dangerous and physically demanding. “Declining physical strength and energy with age may make crime too dangerous or unsuccessful, especially where there are younger or stronger criminal competitors who will not be intimidated ...” (Ulmer & Steffensmeier, 2014: 379).

Accordingly, Messerschmidt (1995: 81-82) also argues that schooling and youth groups have a substantial impact/influence on youth crime. He explores the way in which social action may be linked to structured constraints and possibilities, locating specifically how race, class and gendered relations within society may enable or constrain the social activity of young males, and thus, how the structured nature of various actions transmits to youth crimes. Differing social structures place men in relation to other men in ways which place them in positions of sharing structural space. As a whole, it may be claimed that young men’s daily lives are experienced from a certain position in society which then construct different ideals of hegemonic masculinity. “Thus, within the school and youth group there are patterned ways in which masculinity is represented and which depend upon structures of labour and power in class and race relations” (Messerschmidt, 1995: 81).

Butler’s performativity can then be seen, partially, as a process of making verbal claims which turn into action; this action includes creating the existence of objects by naming them. Consequently, Butler suggests that gender categories such as female/male or boy/girl, are created performatively (using linguistic statements for instance).

Continuing along the lines of Butler’s notion of performativity, hegemonic masculinity, and the dominance which this position enjoys, is only as a result of the way in which this identity is created verbally (which then makes it so). The discursive nature of the performativity of masculinity results in identity being constructed in the abstract which then proceeds, through action, into a concrete identity. The abstract construction of identity is informed, in large, by forms of socialisation. Thus, the various forms of masculinities that exist can be linked to the vastly different social settings that inform such constructions.

Masculine Identity and Organised Crime

The role of violence within illicit markets is primarily used as a resource with which to ensure compliance, however, “muscle [too] is a resource that has value beyond the confines of the night-time economy” (Waddington, 2003: 626). Therefore, many individuals who feature highly in drug dealing networks come with an established reputation for violent action (Pearson & Hobbs, 2001: 41). These reputations may have been acquired through involvement in criminal, non-drug-related activity such as robberies or aggravated burglaries, or through legitimate and semi-legitimate occupations such as club doormen or bouncers. As such, there are unavoidable connections between bouncers and “(dis)organised crime. They are seen to be unavoidable because while the appearance of a bouncer is important, it is not everything” (Waddington, 2003: 626). A reputation is even more important, because the more fearsome the reputation, the less need there, essentially, should be to engage in violence as a means of control. Moreover, these reputations are a thoroughly discursive means of articulating and performing masculine identities. “It is the threat of violence that keeps people in line” (quoted in Pearson & Hobbs, 2001: 41). The above quote is applicable in various occupations, but it could be said to be particularly relevant in the case of the work that bouncers do, with their reputation for potential violence. It is often the potential for violence that is sufficient to resolve issues, and which precedes the necessity for action.

P.A.J. Waddington (2003: 627) argues that local criminals are eager to get involved in the “security” sector for one of two reasons. The first reason being that “the door” is strategically important to the night-time economy, for whoever controls access also directs much of the illicit trade that occurs in pubs and clubs”. Of paramount influence is the selling of illegal substances that bouncers may deal directly or indirectly in, with or without the conspiracy of the owner. The second reason outlined by Waddington (2003: 627) is that “security” has become an advantageous business all alone. “Pubs and clubs on the margins of the night-time economy ... can be coerced into employing ‘security guards’ supplied by local criminal gangs” (Waddington, 2003: 627).

Looking at studies conducted in the United Kingdom specifically, the potential for violence runs intrinsically through drug networks, however, the nature and significance of such violence is often misunderstood and exaggerated (Pearson & Hobbs, Jones, Tierney & Ward, 2001: viii). Those who are involved in the distribution of illegal substances often show up with previously established reputations for the capacity to be violent. This reputation, as

mentioned above, has been earned in other areas such as “bouncing” or doormen at clubs and/ or pubs.

If one considers, briefly, the notion of the prison with its history as a “university of crime” (Pearson & Hobbs, 2001: 31), the ease with which prisoners are able to maintain old connections, as well as form new connections within both new and existing criminal networks, can be seen as a certain “system of fraternity” (Pearson & Hobbs, 2001: 31). In a similar way, it then may be useful to think of clubbing scenes as a modern day “system of fraternity” (Pearson & Hobbs, 2001: 31), considering the ease in which drug networks are facilitated within these scenes. With such evidence, it begs the question as to whether those in charge of entry into clubs, i.e. bouncers, play a role in drug networks or are involved in various capacities within the hierarchy of these networks (however loosely structured these may be). As has been stated above and will be shown further on, bouncers, whether actively or by reputation alone, have an immense capacity for violence. This together with their positioning in the club scene would appear to create an extremely beneficial relationship in terms of supply and distribution of illegal substances within clubs.

Before continuing, I urge that, from my own position, it is important to understand that identity, in as far as it has been theorised, can never be completely defined or explained theoretically. Considering too, the web of complexities that influence, inform and shape how identity is constructed; for this thesis, looking specifically at migrancy and masculinity, the best way that identity can be understood, in its multitude of forms, is by using a methodology which allows for the participants to define and explain their identities as they understand them. For this reason, a phenomenological methodology was used; “in its most comprehensive sense, it [phenomenology] refers to the totality of lived experiences that belong to a single person” (Giorgi, 1997: 236). This research is concerned with the stories and experiences of each individual, as they have, and continue to live them.

Chapter Two: Methodology

“Narrative is present in myth, legend, fable, tale, novella, epic, history, tragedy, drama, comedy, mime, painting... , stained-glass windows, cinema, comics, news items, conversations. Moreover, under this almost infinite diversity of forms, narrative is present in every age, in every place, in every society; it begins with the very history of mankind and there nowhere is nor has been a people without narrative... caring nothing for the division between good and bad literature, narrative is international, trans historical: it is simply there, like life itself” (Barthes, 1993: 251-252, in Jovchelovitch & Bauer, 2000).

The methodology that is selected and employed in a research project is fundamentally the core of the entire project. The type of methodology that is selected will then inform the way that the data is collected, analysed and understood, and ultimately gives a “voice” to the research, guiding and informing the way the research is presented, as well as the intention in which it is hoped to be received. For this research, the concern has been to move away from viewing the bouncer as a simple subject, to acknowledging the bouncer first and foremost, as a complex human. As such, the methodologies used to inform and guide this thesis were those that supported research aimed at acknowledging and understanding each individual’s subjective reality and experiences, and how these informed and influenced their daily lived experiences.

Considering the above, the collection of data for this project draws substantially on a qualitative method of research defined as phenomenological research. Phenomenological research, according to Max Van Maanen (1984: 2) is,

A search for what it means to be human. As we research the possible meaning structures of our lived experiences, we come to a fuller grasp of what it means to be in the world, as a man, a woman, a child, taking into account the sociocultural and the historical traditions which have given meaning to our ways of being in this world.

In support of the purpose of this thesis; to explore and understand the subjective lived experiences and realities of a specific group of people, that group being Congolese bouncers, the above research method is then placed within the (social) constructivist paradigm. This paradigm serves to further inform the methodologies used, as well as to guide the research process as it is one which typically emphasizes

participant observation and interviewing for data generation as the researcher aims to understand a phenomenon from the perspective of those experiencing it. The

researcher's understanding is co-constructed with that of the participants through their mutual interaction within the research setting and the dialogic interaction through researcher-initiated data generation efforts such as interviewing (Constantino, 2008:119).

Simply stated, the phenomenological research methodology informed the type of data to be collected; rich, detailed, personal narratives, while the (social) constructivist paradigm informed the ways in which such data could be collected; using semi-structured, as well as in-depth narrative interviews as the method for generating data. To analyse the data collected, the method of thematic analysis was followed rigorously.

In speaking to the research methodology, the intention was to understand how bouncers portray their identities, how they understand and portray their roles within the night-time economy, as well as understanding their perceptions of the clubs, drugs and violence within this economy. The participants were asked to select a reasonable meeting place of their choosing or agree to the one provided, and all the methods of protecting their anonymity were utilised. Support structures were made available to them where they were requested, as the various types of information collected during the course of the project were potentially sensitive and mostly descriptive in nature; personal accounts and experiences of individual's identities were fundamental to presenting a phenomenological account of their experiences, and in providing an accurate interpretation of their contexts and lives.

While much of the phenomenological research emerged from individual conversations with participants, all participants were asked a series of standard questions, with the aim of garnering the essential information which was needed to provide a basis for the study. The interviews were not recorded as the participants were not comfortable with having their voices possibly identifiable. In terms of confidentiality, each participant was given an informal information sheet briefly describing the project and the purpose of the interview. Participants were also given both a written and verbal consent form which included the details of myself, as well as the details of the Law Faculty Research Ethics Committee. In the event that they were not comfortable participating and wanted to withdraw or were unhappy with their interaction with myself, the information was provided so that they could take the necessary action.

As mentioned above, in line with both the phenomenological research method, as well as the (social) constructivist paradigm, the data was generated using, primarily, a combination of narrative, in-depth and semi-structured interviews, also elements of conversational reporting.

The combination of methods was used in an attempt to collect the most comprehensive data possible. As such, the in-depth interviews were effective in giving a human face to what may be seen as a theoretical research problem, while the semi-structured style of interviewing was to ensure that all participants were asked the same fundamental questions. The element of conversational reporting allowed for less “formal” conversation to occur in which the participants could engage in a different way.

In describing the in-depth interview, to support why this style was used, it is said to be a tool which has been designed to create a clear “picture” of the participant’s experience/perspective on the research topic. During this type of interview, the participant is considered to be the expert on the subject matter, while the interviewer is considered the “student.” The in-depth interview is rewarding to both the participant and the interviewer; the participant has the opportunity to express themselves, tell their own stories in ways that “regular” life seldom calls for and deems relevant. In turn, the interviewer has the privilege of having people, who are virtually strangers, entrust them with some insight into their personal lives (Mack, Woodsong, MacQueen, Guest & Namey, 2005: 29). For myself, the way in which this engagement was initiated was by framing questions in a neutral manner, paying close attention while listening to responses, and then asking follow up questions based on the responses of the participant (Mack, Woodsong, MacQueen, Guest & Namey, 2005: 29). The techniques that were used by myself in this context are informed by the desire to learn, as much as possible, what the participant can share on the topic.

The semi-structured, narrative interviews that were used were designed in the style outlined by Jovchelovitch and Bauer (2000: 1-13) that consists of four stages – initiation, the main narrative, questioning, and closure of the interview. This style was followed as closely as possible in this particular context as it places importance on personal accounts and offers participants a setting in which they are encouraged to draw on their own experiences and recollections. The questioning stage also allows for the researcher to engage the participants in specific aspects of their experiences, thus allowing for focus to be drawn to those elements of their narratives that feature prominently. The conversational reporting was used to build rapport with the participants, as well as to build long-lasting research relationships through which questions of identity and masculinity can be accessed (Joyce, 2004).

Looking to the narrative interviewing style as outlined in four stages by Jovchelovitch and Bauer (2000: 1–13), they note that before the process of interviewing takes place one needs

to first prepare. This involves taking doing the necessary research in order to become familiar with the area and aspects to be researched. This is not done in order to generate any preconceived assumptions or beliefs, the primary objective is to be aware of existing information on similar, if not the same, areas of study. As well as to have a general knowledge basis to be able to engage with the participants in a way that encourages them to tell their story (Jovchelovitch and Bauer, 2000: 4-5).

This element of the particular interviewing style was pertinent to this research as it is here that one can see that there is very little available information on nightclub bouncers that is specific to a South African context, and even less that refers specifically to the context of Cape Town. As has been previously mentioned, the large majority of research that has been conducted in this area of study comes from the United Kingdom. While the idea of what it is that a bouncer does, and is responsible for, may be a universally accepted and understood one (in the most general sense), in looking at more focused, specific contexts, the lived experiences shed a drastically different understanding.

Each participant, before the start of the interview, was given an informal information sheet briefly outlining the project, as well as the purpose of the interviews. As such, each person had a broad sense of why they were being interviewed. Beginning with phase one, the context was explained in more detail, also from a more personal perspective; giving my own personal reasoning behind wanting to find out their stories. Going into the second phase, the start of the narrations began with questions about how and why I was interested in the subject matter, and more specifically what my interest and intention was with each individual. I like to think that my intentions aided in building some sort of trust and encouraged participants to feel somewhat comfortable in sharing their lived experiences with me.

The Initial phase, as outlined by Jovchelovitch and Bauer (2000: 5) was concerned with explaining, in general terms, what the context of the interview was, and more broadly, what the research as a whole involved. In explaining the purpose of the interview, the researcher must be truthful and straightforward about what the objectives of the study are, as well as ensuring the understanding of any potential risks and benefits involved from their participation (Mack, Woodsong, MacQueen, Guest & Namey, 2005: 31). Although the structure of these interviews did not follow an exact, rigid movement from the first to last phase, these phases were used as guidelines for a flexible structure. In gauging the “atmosphere” in which the interview would be conducted, understanding that the initial

impression that each participant had of me would inform our engagement it appeared that the participant's first impression of me was one that they were comfortable with. Here, each participant was asked if they were comfortable being recorded and each of them declined, not wanting to have physical "evidence" of the conversations. As a result, all notes taken were written down with no details taken that could identify the participant being interviewed. This was not ideal as there may have been aspects beyond the spoken word that were not captured, such as body language, facial expressions etc. However, being aware of the absence of a physical recorder, all verbal, and as much non-verbal communication as possible, was captured.

During the Main Narration, the rule is that once the narration has started, the participant must not be interrupted until he has concluded the telling of his story. The interviewer does not make any verbal comments and should only show non-verbal signs of paying attention, listening and encouragement for the participant to continue (Jovchelovitch and Bauer, 2000: 5). It is here that each participant, in a sense, introduced themselves to me, beyond their name. During the process of the interviews, I feel that this phase had been present throughout, or rather that through the next phases, there was a return to the narration phase. After responding to a particular question or particular point of interest, a more detailed story would then follow; in some instances, this was simply a recollection of significant memories to the participant, even if not directly relevant to the interview topic.

The Questioning begins once the Main Narration has come to an end, allowing for the interviewer to ask the questions which have been prepared as well as the questions formulated through the process of active listening (Jovchelovitch and Bauer, 2000: 5). During this process exmanent questions are translated into immanent questions, using the language of the participant, in order to fill in evident gaps within the study. Exmanent questions refer to those questions that show what the interests of the researcher are, as well as their own constructions and use of language. Immanent questions are those which are formulated through the topics, themes and the accounts of events which are evident through the narration by the participant (Jovchelovitch and Bauer, 2000: 4-5). During the Questioning phase, each participant was asked the same set of standardized questions. At the outset, the questions were organised under specific areas such as biographical, masculinity and identity and being a bouncer, these categories overlapped and intersected at various points. The structure followed more as a conversation where the information relevant to each of the areas and more specifically certain questions, was sorted after the conclusion of the interview. In doing so,

the conversation was guided as to gain a response to each of the questions, but was done so in a way that allowed for a “natural” progression of conversation. In instances where there was a definite ending of narration, a new question was asked which began a new conversation, rather than producing a simple answer to a single question.

The final stage as outlined by Jovchelovitch and Bauer (2000: 7) is the Concluding Talk. This phase is concerned with the conversation that happens once the recorder has been switched off (for this thesis specifically, when the pen and paper had been put down). It is in this phase that there are often interesting discussions that occur in the form of small-talk. While there is no element of deception in the understanding that whatever is discussed may be used as data collection, the “atmosphere” becomes a slightly more relaxed as the notion that the “formal” aspects of the interview have concluded.

Phase four as outlined above, did not directly relate to this stage of my interviews as I did not have a recorder present. However, the shift from a more formal sense of interviewing to a more relaxed space was obvious. With me furiously taking down notes on everything that was said, as well as trying to capture all non-verbal communication during the previous phases, initially I only became aware of a sense of hesitation from the participants as their words were being written down. After the pen and paper had been put away and it became two people simply chatting, the participants also seemed to engage in a slightly different way. In the previous phases, participants were happy and willing to share their stories, and to be able to provide various accounts of their own experiences of being a bouncer in particular, and here they had questions of their own, pertaining to the earlier discussions, but also about myself as a person in general, and the person writing on this particular subject. What was specifically mentioned, and clearly evident through their narratives, is the extent to which the subjective nature of their realities differs from the “stereotypical”, generalised, most commonly understood and widely accepted, place, function and identity of a bouncer.

After the completion of the data collection, to ensure methodological rigour, the project uses a thematic methodology in order to provide a framework in which the methods employed by it can be successfully understood. A thematic analysis is useful as it allows one to interpret the data using a structure that emerges from, rather than is imposed on, the research. Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke’s (2006) model has been followed, primarily because it “organises and describes [the] data set in (rich) detail” (2006: 79). Accordingly, their “6 phases of thematic analysis” (Braun and Clarke, 2006: 87) structures the initial analysis: “Familiarising

yourself with your data; generating initial codes; searching for themes; reviewing themes; defining and naming themes; and producing the report” (Braun and Clarke, 2006: 87). These 6 phases have been followed closely, to ensure methodological rigour.

Thematic analysis was used after the interviews were completed, in order to detect whether there were any recurring themes/topics that appeared between the different participants. If there are common themes amongst participants (especially considering that the structure of data collection is one-on-one interviews) then one can possibly consider that, amongst a specific population, individuals may share some/many similar aspects in terms of their experiences of identity and masculinity, as well as any involvement in an illicit drug market. (As will be discussed later, in response to the area of an illicit drug market, little to no information was divulged. This may be due to an absence of knowledge on such a market/the absence of such a market in this particular area/ fear of divulging such information).

The use of thematic analysis has also drawn on an element of discursive analysis when analysing the data collected in interviews. When analysing discourse, there is one core principal that all forms of this analysis share; “...texts, particularly linguistic texts, are regarded as the primary resource for research” (Madill, 2006: 25). Used in this context, the term *text* refers to literal written notes taken to record the answers given. In the specific context of bouncers operating in liminal spaces, it is important to look at more than just the spoken word. What can be seen is of equal value as what is unspoken yet still relevant in terms of valuable meaning.

The process of selecting a research methodology, which would allow for the research to be conducted and presented with the intention of being able to give a “voice” to those who are often left “voiceless,” was a bi-directional one whereby the type of research to be gathered, and the way in which it was to be collected informed the selection of using a phenomenological methodology within a (social) constructivist paradigm; this in turn informed how the data was to be collected, as well as analysed. The methodologies and methods used in the research process, from collection to completion, were those that allowed for flexibility in their approaches, yet still ensured a certain quality and commitment to the telling, understanding and interpreting of the participants’ stories.

Chapter Three: Bouncers

Moving from the previous discussion on the methodology used for this research, the focus turns to the first of the major themes to be explored, bouncers. Considering the centrality of the concept of “the bouncer” - as the concept stands alone, the concept of the immigrant bouncer and the particular space that they occupy as such, and the particular ideas of the masculinities associated with bouncers - it is important to analyse and understand the purposes and practices of bouncers as individuals, as well as bouncing as a profession, in the context in which this study occurred. Here I outline and engage with definitional concerns and the wider literature on bouncers, especially as they interface with the criminal concerns explored within this thesis. In engaging with the wider literature and understanding it contextually within South Africa, the focus is not simply on bouncers in South Africa, and Cape Town specifically, but rather on immigrant bouncers and the distinctive realities these individuals experience.

Before engaging in the theoretical components of this chapter and the subsequent discussions; in reaffirming the intention to provide a “human” side to bouncers, as individuals, and ideas pertaining to these individuals, who are normatively considered in a manner of being a subject to be explored, the following discussion seeks to humanise the subject and introduce the individual. In using parts of different personal narratives, the participants move from abstract subjects to complex individuals. For the purposes of anonymity, the individuals are referred to as B1 through to B8. At this point one could argue that by reducing these individuals to numbers and letters is in itself dehumanising. In seriously considering this reduction I turn to Shakespeare (2011: 71-73), “What’s in a name? that which we call a rose by any other name would still smell as sweet.” Here I put forward the notion of a dual benefit: anonymity is the function of removing the participant’s names and not their identity, while also allowing for each individual to be riden of an imposed identity – immigrant, bouncer – and to be seen as a subjective being comprising of multiple facets which make up each identity. The “parts⁷” of these individuals allow for a small insight into some of what makes these people who they are. Everybody has their own story, which shapes and informs who they have been, who they are, and who they become. Each individual, specifically referring to the participants in this research, is a person, before any

⁷ Parts of the individual refer to their ideas, opinions, appearances, lived experiences, beliefs and histories. All of which inform who they are; who they see themselves to be.

name is given to them, or any label is adopted or imposed upon them; aware of the fact that every label carries with it various assumptions, good and bad.⁸

B1 was part of a basketball league, in the DRC, that came to South Africa in the hopes of growing the league. He said that he felt that there was more potential to “be noticed as a good player” in South Africa. However, the league was poorly funded and eventually dissolved. B1 was not looking to become a bouncer. He said that he was introduced into the profession by a friend in the business; “there was a shortage of people and he asked if I could help.” Through the course of the interview, the questions posed, and the answers given, one is able to get to know a little bit about the person; how they interpret and understand issues in different contexts, and how they respond to different situations, speaks to more than simple actions.

B1 was very aware of certain assumptions around bouncers. He said that he knew what people thought of him, “before they ever actually engage with me” (B1 interview, 2016), because of his height and build. From my interaction with B1, he appeared to be a friendly, welcoming person. This general disposition, he noted, is carried through into how he performs his job. He commented that the most important act of being a bouncer was to “make friends with the customers” (B1 interview. 2016).

In terms of what skills B1 thought were necessary to be a good bouncer, he spoke of specific actions that he would take in specific situations. The skills that he mentions are all underpinned by a consciousness. Regardless of whether he was at a venue where, as he said, “exclusive places tell you what to do and how to do it” (B1 interview, 2016), or at a venue which left the “bouncing” up to the bouncer’s discretion, his actions were motivated by his own moral compass. For B1, violence made him uncomfortable, but he acknowledged that it was sometimes necessary, and an inevitable part of performing his job well.

He demonstrated an awareness of people, beyond face-value. After noting certain skills that are learned through experience; “finding out from friends [and] customers who people are, if they have a reputation” (B1 interview, 2016), watching people’s body language and looking at how they are dressed; he seemed to engage with, and respond to each customer on an

⁸ Speaking about these individuals, I recognise that this is my perception of them, and the specific context, an interview, to some extent may have informed their engagement with me. I am simply commenting on the people that I was fortunate enough to meet, and engage with, in this research process.

individual level. Even on busy nights, he would make a point of interacting with each person for the briefest of moments.

B1 is an intimidating looking man, yet beyond his “ideally masculine” aesthetic, does not seem to “fit” into the construct of “the aggressive bouncer.” He appears to be a kind, gentle man who moved to South Africa to follow a dream. As a result of circumstances, he made the best of his situation. He says that “being a doorman is just a job, not part of my identity” (B1 interview, 2016). This sentiment captures the notion of the distinction between the performed masculinity and the lived masculinity, that each of the individuals, interviewed for this project, seems to experience. This distinction between the performed and the lived masculinities, specifically of immigrant Congolese bouncers, is discussed in following chapters.

The interview with B2 was less “relaxed” than the interview with B1. Upon arrival, I was presented with a tall, albeit not as muscular, stern looking individual. The context of this interview was different to all the rest as it, unintentionally, took place once B2 had already started his shift. I stood slightly to the side of him and wrote as he spoke, and worked. Initially I thought that this situation was far from ideal in terms of being able to get what I needed from the interview, conversely, it was great being able to watch B2 work as we had a conversation. The fact that it was relatively early in the evening meant that the place was not yet busy; there was genuine engagement on both sides, while I was able to, also, see an aspect of B2 as a bouncer.

As mentioned, aesthetically, B2 looked like any other bouncer in the area; tall, relatively muscular, simply, not overly friendly looking. From the moment I introduced myself to him, the perception of the “aggressive” bouncer disappeared. He was extremely welcoming and expressed a keen interest in understanding why I, personally, was interested in what he had to say. This mutual interest, and respect, in understanding the significance of the conversation, uniquely shaped the process.

B2, as with B1, came to South Africa following a passion for basketball, as well as wanting to study. He too was involved with a basketball league which was unsuccessful. He was introduced to the bouncing profession by friends who said that he would make a good bouncer because of his height. He noted that “it is very tiring, but I enjoy it” (B2 interview, 2016). In his response to what it meant to be a good bouncer, B2 said that there are two types of bouncers; the one kind is “aggressive... [they are] just violent, it’s not right” (B2

interview, 2016). The other kind, like himself, believe that their priority is to look after the customers. B2 also believed that as a bouncer, there are additional responsibilities. “the bouncer is the first person you see, so I think you’re also a host” (B2 interview, 2016).

B2 is a “family man” (B2 interview, 2016), with a wife, who he met in South Africa, and two children; “they are my life” (B2 interview, 2016). Having a family has made him more understanding, which he says helps at work as “you need to understand the customers, and the staff” (B2 interview, 2016). While he noted that there is an aspect of physicality that is necessary for the job, he thinks that it is more important for a bouncer to be able to learn from different experiences. “If you like to fight then that’s how you’re going to approach any situations. If you’re like that you probably won’t learn, want to learn, the various ways you can handle situations without needing any aggression” (B2 interview, 2016). For B2 trust was an important factor for him as a bouncer. He felt that, as a bouncer, you needed management to trust your decisions, and you needed to trust that managers trusted you. Without that mutual trust, it is difficult to be confident in the way “you do things, worrying that you might get into trouble [from management] for not doing something the right way” (B2 interview). He also noted that if managers don’t respect their bouncers then the customers won’t respect the bouncers either. Following from this point I asked him what he thought the general perception of bouncers was, according to the public; “lots of people think [that] bouncers are low life, just there to fight. I’d say about 80% [of] people look down on bouncers,” commenting, again, that in some places it started with management looking down on the bouncers, stating “they will squeeze you like a cockroach” (B2 interview, 2016) which undermines their authority in the face of the customer. B2 was disappointed with the idea that people have of bouncers. He said that some customers who were regular visitors, of the establishment he was currently working at, had gotten to know him a little and thought he was a great guy, but that was a different perception from who he seen as, as a bouncer (B2 interview, 2016).

B2 also stated that being a bouncer was simply a job to him, and not a part of his identity; “this is just a job, not my career, but it helps [with money]” (B2 interview, 2016). He does other work too; coaching and mechanical work. He said that his dream career is to be a mechanic with his own shop.

This interview again highlighted the multi-dimensional nature of these individuals, as well as the complexities surrounding the normative construct of “the bouncer,” perceived as a one-

dimensional individual who is seldom explored beyond his function as a bouncer. I can't help but reflect on the discourse of the people, in different professions, ones which would commonly be categorised as "middle-class." In an article, Morse and Weiss⁹ (1955: 194) claim that "middle class occupations differ from the working-class ones on a variety of dimensions." They argue that the substantial differences are evident not only with regard to the "types" of people employed in a job, but also with regards to the actual matter of the jobs themselves. "The middle class occupations more frequently emphasize verbal and conceptual skills, while the working class occupations more frequently emphasize skilled use of the body (Morse & Weiss, 1955: 194). The occupations which they consider to be "middle class" are those such as managers and sales people, while those considered as working class included "semi-skilled; unskilled; and service" (Morse & Weiss, 1955: 195), as well as foremen, machine-operators and crafts and trades. The point here is that considering "middle class" occupations, and who fills those positions, the person is not diminished to existing solely as whatever function they are performing. There is a distinction, or acknowledgement, between who the person may be, and the job that they perform. This same acknowledgement appears to be absent from thought of the general observer, when it comes to the occupation of bouncing. This same sentiment, of the multi-dimensional nature of people who are bouncers, is echoed by B5 who said "I'm lots of things, sometimes a bouncer, sometimes a repairman, and sometimes I play football... people are never only one thing in life" (B5 interview, 2016).

B8 was the only individual who saw being a bouncer as a part of his identity; "being a bouncer is part of who I am. [It's] something I love doing. But being a bouncer isn't just one thing like a doctor or a lawyer. You learn a lot of different things" (B8 interview, 2016).

When questioning this further, I said that doctors and lawyers know a lot too, his response was that they did know a lot, but that a doctor will know a variety of skills relating directly to medicine, and a lawyer with the law, but that a bouncer learns skills that can't be taught, that you can only learn by experiencing different people and situations, and being able to think about how the best way is to solve different issues.

⁹ Although this article may be thoroughly outdated, I use it to emphasize the point that as much as society has evolved, certain discourses and areas of thought appear to be "stuck" in the past. The distinctions that Morse and Weiss (1955) use to describe middle and working class occupations, as well as their comment on the distinction in the "type" of person that is selected for a "middle class" and "working class" occupation, and finally the, thinly veiled insulting, note on the distinction between mental and physical work encompassing "middle class" and "working class" occupations respectively, is an echo of certain discourses and constructs present currently.

The above personal narratives, and those throughout the chapters, serve to draw attention to certain contrasts that arise between the theory and practice of being a bouncer and the profession of bouncing. Here there is an argument to be made that much of the existing literature appears to explore and engage with bouncers, as a single identity, rather than engaging in the idea that “bouncer” as an identity is not, in itself, an entire isolated identity. Mindful of the specific context in which this research takes place; the specific participants, as well as the historical and contemporary social and political climate of South Africa, this research on bouncers does not argue a point of universality. Rather, the discussion intends to highlight that there is no universality; outside of a common understanding of the concept of a bouncer, the identity is entirely context dependent.

Most commonly understood, bouncers are those “selected” individuals who are paid by nightclub owners to perform various duties. These (“official”) duties include: managing access and exit control, protecting VIPs and other customers of the nightclub, ensuring nightclub policies are enforced, and implementing a warning of force, or the use of force in order to ensure compliance by threatening to remove, or removing drunken, disorderly, unsuitable, intimidating or violent customers¹⁰ (Rigakos, 2008: 7). Furthermore, according to Rigakos (2008: 7), “they help produce the nightclub insofar as they act as guarantors of the social makeup, ambience, and aesthetic.” According to Swords (2013: 4), bouncers have stereotypically been defined as being large, strong men who have a propensity towards violence. Winlow, Hobbs, Lister and Hadfield (2003: 165) agree that

... the most pervasive stereotypical view of bouncers is of a bunch of bow-tied, muscle-bound, simian thugs, devoid of social skills, oozing aggression and itching to deploy staggeringly proficient violence on anyone whom they deem to have violated their archaic and incomprehensible code of reason and ethics... [however] bouncers are not, for the most part, the creatures of this stereotypical image.

This initial view is especially inaccurate when situating these views against the Congolese bouncers who were part of this project. Following a trajectory of a period of South African history and the emergence of “bouncer mafias”, the stereotypical image described by Winlow, Hobbs, Lister and Hadfield (2003: 165) is largely inaccurate with the majority of bouncers. The former image may be more accurate in describing the “force” behind bouncers.

¹⁰As will be discussed later in the chapter, the above duties are only one side of the entire picture. As well as the official duties set out by nightclub owners, many bouncers are faced with, or forced into performing unofficial duties, by powerful external forces.

As will become evident throughout this thesis, the discussion on bouncers cannot be separated from a discussion of masculinities and masculine identities, especially concerning violence and the potential thereof; “the role of the bouncer has been defined by power, control, toughness and violence – all traits that would be considered masculine” (Swords, 2013: 4). However, the focus of this chapter, rather than on identity and masculinity as the emphasis relating specifically to bouncers, is an emphasis on bouncers in their entirety, with a relational aspect of masculinities, the inner workings, the explicit and implicit expectations and duties, as well as some of the assumptions and actual realities of and around bouncers, as individuals, and in the private security profession of “bouncing.” In particular, situating violence in a different context giving an alternate account of the reputation of violence that surrounds these individuals in this particular profession. This contextualisation aims to highlight how, for British bouncers, violence and aggression are a show of masculinity. In South Africa, and especially Cape Town, this show of violence is external and multi-layered, especially when considering the specific context of immigrant bouncers.

Bouncers, one can argue, are the “face of” intimidation and violence, and not the actual “muscle” behind it. Within resituating the context of violence, the chapter moves to look at a particular aspect of the pervasive theme of organised crime, commonly associated with bouncers, in South Africa particularly – the extent of their involvement in the illicit drug trade. These discussions are situated uniquely in a South African context, looking particularly at Cape Town and Johannesburg, while being cognisant of the context within which this research takes place; remembering that the specific research participants for this project are Congolese immigrants struggling to find a place of belonging, burdened with various risks and threats, from a societal to a structural level.

As the concern of this thesis explores nightclub bouncers in liminal spaces; subsequently we see how many of the spaces that immigrant bouncers occupy, are liminal in nature, it is important to engage with the first of these spaces, which is the nightclub, in various aspects.

Within the nightclub setting, customers recognise the significance of “the image”; of muscles, of tattoos and of shaved heads, individually as well as collectively. These customers also learn to interpret the descriptors of intimidation that provide order in environments which are typically “steeped in intoxication and an escape from daytime regulation” (Swords, 2013: 3). As a consequence of this, being a bouncer allows for a construction of hyper-masculine identity to be established and reinforced (Swords, 2013: 3). Goffman (1969)

argues that “from body language to the cut of their clothes to the way they smoke their cigarettes, these men present their behaviour for display and their bodies become tools of ‘impressing management’” (in Winlow, Hobbs, Lister & Hadfield, 2001: 541). Bouncers, being tasked with the “dirty work” of controlling behaviours within clubs, are frequently accused of being a “law unto themselves.” As a result, highlighting various corresponding criminological matters regarding their occupation (Lister, Hadfield, Hobbs & Winlow, 2002: 20). This suggests firstly, their prominent level of personal discretion, and secondly, “the sovereignty of self-serving processes of accountability” (Lister, Hadfield, Hobbs & Winlow, 2002: 20). Both of these issues simultaneously allow and oblige bouncers to pursue alternatives of private, rather than public, systems of justice.

As documented by Lister, Hadfield, Hobbs & Winlow (2002: 20), in terms of the training bouncers are obliged to undergo, the actual training arrangements vary significantly across “autonomous, municipal licensing districts.” Due to the fact that courses are required to be recognised by local authorities, the organisation of the training also varies. Some organise their own training, or outsource to training bodies, while others seem to set up an internal “approval list, mostly comprising of educational colleges and private companies” (ibid). This highly localised structure of training splinters the market on the supply side which ultimately results in a wide variety in the costs of courses, as well as a massive fluctuation in the duration of courses – between five hours and five days, with the majority providing twelve hours. Such variety leads to major inconsistencies within the design, delivery, and consequently the quality of different courses (ibid). Notably, the courses are usually chosen and paid for by the bouncers themselves. The bouncers who were interviewed in the authors’ recent research suggested that formal training was merely an obligation and in no way increased their earning potential, having little to no direct impact on their actual work (ibid).

Furthermore, marketing training as the cornerstone of the drive to professionalise the trade, completely ignores the actual issue at hand – that the complaints around bouncers generally focus on their behaviour, and not their lack of knowledge. It is then perhaps worrisome that training courses focus almost exclusively on knowledge as opposed to skill-based learning (Lister, Hadfield, Hobbs & Winlow, 2002: 20-21). Accommodating variety, most courses cover first-aid, fire safety, licensing, civil and criminal law, and social conduct – delivered in a classroom environment without any formal assessment. Although to have knowledge of emergency procedures is imperative, it is all too generic and far removed from the central concerns surrounding the problematic activities of bouncers (Lister, Hadfield, Hobbs &

Winlow, 2002: 21). “Whilst training allows interest groups to promote ‘their’ bouncers as ‘fully trained,’ realistically” (Lister, Hadfield, Hobbs & Winlow, 2002: 21), most of the courses at best, leave them nominally, symbolically trained.

The argument around formal training, as outlined above, highlights the obvious shortfalls of a training style which is entirely focused on theoretical knowledge with no room for practical implementation, and no practical training in itself. However, in contrast to the subsequent discussion, an area of interest, which is beyond the scope of this thesis, is whether some form of training, even only theoretical, is more beneficial than no training at all, and for whom it might benefit?

Looking to the participants of this thesis, many describe that there is no formal training whatsoever. There was no evidence of any kind of a recruitment process, with all participants being introduced to the profession through friends or acquaintances. B1 (interview, 2016) commented that when he first started as a bouncer, there were trials and tests that potential bouncers had to pass to determine if they could handle the job. He said that “now days it’s about size, fighting ability, but no control.” He was introduced to the “bouncing” profession in 2005 when a friend in the business asked if he could help him as there was a shortage of men to work on the door. He was introduced to Pro Security, who he says “controlled 70% of town.” He was originally posted at “a difficult venue” for a month trial, and after good reports, he was made permanent. “Back in the day, the requirements to be a bouncer. You had an interview. Then they would send people to test you [difficult customers], provoke you to see how you behave. You did need to have fighting skills, and there was a strict dress code, but size didn’t matter” (B1 interview, 2016). Here he chuckled and said that he didn’t know if that was entirely true, considering his own size, and the size of the other bouncers he knows.

B2 (interview, 2016) says that although Pro Security no longer exists, there are four or five smaller companies that still exist to “supply” bouncers. He stated that there are many venues that choose to “cut out the middle man” and will find their own door security. “Being a good bouncer comes from experience” (B2 interview, 2016). There is no training on how to be a good bouncer. He noted that he felt it was very important for managers to trust a bouncer’s decision, elaborating on the fact that he felt at least “80% of people look down on bouncers, in some places it starts with management. They will squeeze you like a cockroach.” If management looks down on the bouncer, undermining his authority, then the customers will disrespect him from the beginning, and that is problematic and generally leads to trouble.

B3 (interview, 2016) started out working in security, and then moved to “door security”, working as a bouncer. He stated that any training he had, came from his original security job, which helped somewhat in being a bouncer, but the way in which you need to deal with people is different, and that learning only comes with experience. B1 (interview, 2016) also noted how at “exclusive places they will tell you what to do and how to do it.” Generally, that is the sum total of the extent of training that bouncers receive. Certain places are very specific in what they want handled, and how it should be done. Further than that, there appears to be no “formal” training courses, neither available, nor required.

In considering the existing literature, as well as the interviews conducted for this thesis, there is little doubt that bouncers shoulder a substantial amount of responsibility at the door. While a large part of the job, in terms of admittance, as well as dealing with issues that may arise with customers inside the club, is and should be left up to the discretion of the individual bouncer; as well as being ineffective, it is also implausible to implement a set of standardised responses and reactions, accounting for an innumerable variety of situations, which a bouncer should employ, there is an argument to be made for some form of training. While all the bouncers interviewed said that the experience is invaluable, a framework from within which they can work, providing support structures, would be highly beneficial.

Occupational licensing, as analysed by Lister, Hadfield, Hobbs and Winlow (2002: 20-21), has two “end-point requirements of the licencing process: criminal records vetting and training course attendance.” While their article focuses solely on the training requirement, the process of criminal records vetting is a relevant point to this thesis; not specifically relating to criminal records, but rather more broadly, relating to issues of legality. In knowing that all the bouncers interviewed for this project are Congolese immigrants, the question of whether they are documented or undocumented residents of South Africa is relevant. Although there was no direct question, of their documentation status, posed in the interviews, it was brought up in the conversation in a way that allowed for a negative response; without this negative response intimating that they are “illegal immigrants.” The question was phrased to determine whether prospective employers asked whether or not these participants were documented immigrants. Of the eight participants interviewed, only two of them justified that they were “legal citizens in South Africa,” while one participant simply stated that he had a valid passport. The majority of participants simply responded “no.”

According to Lister, Hadfield, Hobbs and Winlow (2001: 365), across all the various sectors of the private security industry, door security is the one area which is most frequently seen to be in need of effective regulation. While the concerns over low salaries and poor standards of employment as well as training, affect the entire private security industry, it is door security which is most intently linked with serious elements of crime. Concerns relating to specific elements of the “door trade” began to manifest in the late 1980s with the rise of a new commercial dance culture which increased the prospects for crime firms to move into the private security sector (Lister, Hadfield, Hobbs & Winlow, 2001: 365). According to Hobbs (1995), “controlling the door at ‘raves’ allowed pivotal control over the supply of drugs upon which these events and this ‘culture’ flourished (in Lister, Hadfield, Hobbs & Winlow, 2001: 365).

Furthermore, the swift emergence of many local criminal networks, into the security “business”, brought with it an increased number of criminal histories, and, as a result, reputations, into an occupation which was said, by its very nature, to make use of hiring men of local infamy (Lister, Hadfield, Hobbs & Winlow, 2001: 365).

Bouncers and the Economy of “Drugs”¹¹

Shifting the focus to South Africa, looking at “the development of extortion rackets and violence associated with drug markets in the night-time club industry in Johannesburg and Cape Town ... reflects both on the nature of South Africa’s ongoing political, economic and social transition as well as the country’s changing criminal economy” (Shaw, 2016: 2). As Shaw (2016: 2) further notes, in understanding the evolution of “mafia¹² type private security groups”, it is vital to recognise the nature of “protection economies” which are constructed around clubs; the places where illicit substances are sold. In vastly different contexts, with the rise of criminal elements moving into the private security sector in England in the late 1980s (Lister, Hadfield, Hobbs & Winlow, 2001: 365), so South Africa, specifically Johannesburg and Cape Town, experienced an evolution in “mafia type private security groups” (Shaw, 2016: 2). Shaw (2016) and Shaw and Haysom (2016) look at the event of the “bouncer mafia” comparing and contrasting the inception to the ultimate decline, in

¹¹ “Drugs” – Illegal Substances

¹² The term “mafia” is used to describe a “particular form of organised crime group which seeks to use violence, or the threat thereof, as a business strategy in its own right.

Johannesburg, and centralization, in Cape Town. They follow the trajectory of the rise and fall, analysing different actors involved throughout, looking at the role that bouncers have played in the entire movement, particularly the role and function of immigrant bouncers. This thesis discusses this trajectory with the purpose of offering an alternative view of the violence and criminality that often surrounds bouncers, as well as using it to further comment on the physical and symbolic space that the participants of this project hold, as Congolese immigrants.

In looking at the specific conditions which are required for the growth of organised crime, and specifically the development of “mafia type protection rackets,” Shaw (2016: 3) turns to Varese (2011: 191) who argues that mafia are effectively fixed “because the service they provide is inherently local. They ensure selective access to resources in a given territory. In order to do so, they build a long-term relationship with the place in which they operate as well as with the people, office holders and the police ... As a rule, political (and criminal) reputations are local and are the product of costly investments.” There is now a significant body of literature which identifies a primary function of mafia groups is the provision of protection (Shaw, 2016: 3). Thus, mafia rackets primarily gain their profits from “selling” protection as a service. Consequently, it has been concluded that mafia groups are, in principal, “entrepreneurs of violence”¹³ (Volkov, 2002). In order for mafia groups to develop and maintain their depths of control, Shaw (2016: 3) argues that there are certain conditions that must exist. To this end it is argued that there are four key conditions that must exist simultaneously for such establishment and growth.

The first condition is that there be a sudden increase in a local market which is not governed by the state, which may ultimately lead to an increased demand for criminal protection. This sudden market change is most evident and necessary where the commodity is illegal, such as illegal substances (Shaw, 2016: 3). The second condition for the development of mafia groups is the necessity of an available network of individuals with the tendency and capacity to engage in violence, as well as an environment in which recruitment is possible. This often results in individuals being drawn from similar communities. A third set of conditions necessitates that state institutions are compromised or weak, unable to effectively combat

¹³ Goga and Goredema (2014) note that “violent entrepreneurs” is a term used by Volkov (2002) to describe individuals who “sell” violence. These individuals use both physical violence as well as coercion to meet their ends. Physical violence is the immediately visible use of force, while coercion can be “saved.” In order for coercion to be a successful tool, it requires violence as a “memory or potentiality.” Each use of force, violence and coercion, are equally important commodities for violent entrepreneurs.

emerging criminal networks (Shaw, 2016: 3-4). The final condition to be present in facilitating the development of mafia groups is “the absence of any *other* force in place to regulate or protect the emerging criminal network” (Shaw, 2016: 4). One could likely argue that in order for the above four mentioned conditions to act simultaneously, there needs to be substantial disruptions in prevalent social, political or economic conditions. South Africa is a perfect example of an environment where all four conditions exist at once. Shaw (2016: 4) notes that “in South Africa, this criminal opportunity was created by the inter-linkage between the national political transition, important shifts and a growth in the night-time economy, and changing drug markets in both Johannesburg and Cape Town.” Although the conditions stated above were similar for both cities, the nature of the local conditions and environment in which these conditions existed were central in “shaping the drugs market, the resulting manifestation of organised crime and mafia groups, and consequently, the way the phenomenon has unfolded in both cities” (Shaw, 2016:4).

In the direct aftermath of apartheid, according to Pinnock (1984 in Shaw, 2016: 4):

the closest thing to a mafia already in place in South Africa was a virulent set of youth gangs in Cape Town. Drawn from mixed race communities who had been forcibly removed from a series of settlements around the peninsular and settled in housing along the Cape Flats away from “white” Cape Town, the formation of gangs had in part been a response to the extreme social disruption and dislocation in that process.

Steinberg (2004 in Shaw, 2016: 4) further notes that the so-called “coloured gangs” – characterised by individuals experiencing high unemployment levels, as well as a rejection from mainstream society and confined to the margins of the formal city – were “both a refuge and a response to apartheid policies of exclusion.” In contrast, while Johannesburg too had “coloured gangs” for similar reasons as mentioned above, this city had a significant white working-class culture; to a greater degree than Cape Town (Shaw, 2016: 5). Although long changed, the neighbourhoods, in which these concentrations of working-class and poor whites were situated, were rough places in which a tendency for violence was a defining feature of masculinity. By the late 1980’s, in corresponding movements, various sections within the “coloured gangs” in Cape Town were recruited by state actors in order to “disrupt liberation politics” (Shaw, 2016: 5), while in Johannesburg, in the white working-class areas, young men were recruited into the apartheid police or military. “Their role was more formal and institutionalised than the Cape ‘gangsters’ but the objective was the same: the use of violence to bolster the apartheid state” (Shaw, 2016: 5). As the end of apartheid drew near, both cities had large groups of men, “potential entrepreneurs of violence” (Shaw, 2016: 5),

who were ready to be recruited, with no one to sell their services to (yet) apart from the state itself, who had essentially trained them in their commodity. With the entry of illicit drugs into South Africa, the market for violence as a commodity opened up. “On the eve of democracy, in the late 1980’s and early 1990s, a variety of drugs began to flood into the country – first ecstasy and later cocaine and heroin.” (Shaw, 2016: 5). In both Johannesburg and Cape Town, the merging of various drug markets was governed by extensive violence, albeit in vastly different ways. Shaw (2016: 5) notes that the distinction was partly due to differing geographies. Where Johannesburg saw largely dispersed development, with a decline of the inner city resulting in a scattering of businesses and “entertainment hubs to different nodes across the metropolitan area;” Cape Town experienced a far larger concentrated urban settlement, managing to maintain a relatively vibrant inner city.

The event of violence, although there are patterns of similarity, differs substantially between the two cities. In Johannesburg, violence was mainly focused between competing bouncer groups, all of whom were drawn from a single demographic – the urban, white, lower- and working- middle class, yet functioned in geographically scattered areas of the city. The only direct competition arose when one group sought to take over control of territory of another group. In contrast to this, in Cape Town, violence has become an inherent element of the city’s criminal economy and geography, with the vast majority of victims hailing from a marginalised underclass concentrated on the Cape Flats. As noted,

From the onset, control of drug trafficking and its distribution was centred almost exclusively amongst the poor marginalised communities on the Cape Flats by the Cape Town gangs¹⁴ themselves. This quickly transformed the nature of the criminal economy in the city: several powerful and violent gangs emerged with strong forms of geographic control, relating to their management of drug distribution (Shaw, 2016: 6).

The nightlife in post-apartheid South Africa changed drastically, not only with the number of entertainment venues increasing but also the ways in which people chose to engage in the nightlife took on different scopes “as recreational drugs became more accessible and acceptable” (Shaw & Haysom, 2016: 581).

¹⁴ Gastrow (1998 in Kinnes, 2000: 4) defines (criminal) gangs as consisting “of an organised group of members which has a sense of cohesion, is generally territorially bound, which creates an atmosphere of fear and intimidation in the community and whose members engage in gang-focused criminal activity either individually or collectively.” While Kinnes (2000: 5) contends that this definition is inadequate and contends that “gangs define themselves in relation to their social world and that this world engenders the loyalty, brotherhood and universality of their beliefs. The structure of the gang is open to change as the gang progresses in a world of changing criminality.”

In the inner city of Cape Town, initial control over the club scene first appears in the late 1980s. A network of white bouncers formed around the clubs, following a similar pattern to that of Johannesburg. Due to uncertainty within the inner city, as well as the inability of the formal police service to abate the sense of insecurity, the opportunity to develop a formal system of bouncer control was available. The development of this system was itself connected to the combining of gangs on the Cape Flats (Shaw, 2016: 6). Here we see the emergence of two, similarly operating, geographically different, operations functioning in two different zones – “the central business district, and the entertainment venues some 30 kilometres to the north” (Shaw, 2016: 6). As the city “expanded” after the end of apartheid in 1994, there too was an expansion in the amount of entertainment venues, which were mostly but not exclusively situated along a single street – Long Street. Long Street’s clubs and bars were, and still are, a lively attraction for locals and foreigners alike.

As a result of the expansion and popularity, bouncers were increasingly seen working the door at clubs. Particular to the inner city, “a mafia system of protection developed from the 1990s under the control of a businessman originally from the Cape Flats” himself (Shaw, 2016: 6). Under his control, entertainment venues were approached by Pro-Access Security, a security company who would “volunteer” to provide them with security, for a fee. Any venue which turned down this offer was targeted with their business being trashed and staff assaulted. This soon became the norm and left little room for any venue to avoid “protection payments” as well as “company aligned bouncers” (Shaw, 2016: 6). In this vein, control over club security also meant control over the sale of illicit substances. “This business model was a ‘triangle’ consisting of the provision of private security, linked to extortion and violence, linked to the sale of drugs” (Shaw, 2016: 6). A violent group of men were seen as the “front end of the extortion business;” (Shaw, 2016: 6) commonly known as enforcers who only made an entrance when the function of violence was required to maintain control. The same function and performance could be seen by a competing operation in the northern suburbs of Cape Town; that of a security company named Professional Protection Services. Both these operations drew their enforcers from different Cape Flats gangs (Shaw, 2016: 6).

It is important to note that, in the specific context of Cape Town, within the extortion economy “the provision of ‘muscle’ existed at two different levels” (Shaw, 2016: 6). At the first level, the “face” of business - at the door - Congolese bouncers were increasingly employed by “security companies” for various reasons, one of which was that they demanded less money than the original set of white bouncers. Many of these Congolese men were

refugees from a war-torn Congo, and were recruited through martial arts, basketball, or boxing networks (Shaw, 2016: 6). Khalil Goga, a criminal researcher at the Institute of Security Studies, notes that there is a “disproportionate representation” (up to 85%) of Congolese bouncers in Cape Town. He adds that this is most likely a consequence of three core components: in no particular order, firstly the fact that the DRC immigrant population within South Africa is one of the largest immigrant populations. Secondly is the existence of “strong diaspora kinship networks” (Goga in de Greef, 2015). Finally, a consequence resulting from the extensive history of political and military conflict in the DRC. “Across the world soldiers, fighters and police are often involved in protection businesses. Many of those involved in protection need to have a level of skill in terms of violence, and the military often provides that” (Goga in de Greef, 2015).

At the door, these men are perfect for their purpose; they are generally very largely built, yet rarely prone to explicit violence. This is captured in almost every interview conducted for this thesis. The Congolese bouncers who were interviewed all acknowledged that they possessed the potential for violence, however, commonly agreed that it should be used only when absolutely necessary, as a last resort (Bouncer interviews, 2016). At the second level, in terms of hierarchy, a level above the bouncers, is a group of enforcers, gangs strongly linked with connections to the Cape Flats (Shaw, 2016: 6). As Shaw (2016: 6) notes, “protection rackets at the centre relied on muscle from the periphery for the selected application of violence.”

Shaw (2016: 7) articulately concludes the discussion of Cape Town’s path to violence in saying that

... the characteristics of the Cape Town protection mafia can be described as: locally controlled, highly centralised with control of some 300 clubs within the city; two layered, with a Congolese front-end and a link to a Cape Flats gang...that provides the enforcement ‘muscle’ needed in the extortion business.” Further is “evidence that the wider network has important control of the wholesale drug business.

Bringing the above discussion into reality; Joe-Louis Kanyona - “a 32 year old Congolese resident of Cape Town” was hired as a doorman at an establishment Long Street, in December 2014. On the 20th June 2015 he was approached by four men and stabbed to death (de Greef, 2015). Kanyona’s murder has reportedly been associated with “extortion rackets that, criminal researchers say, have controlled nightlife in central Cape Town for more than two decades” (de Greef, 2015). These extortion rackets attempt to force club owners to pay

for sourced bouncers and other “‘protection’ services from Mafia-like private security firms” (De Greef, 2015). The owner of the establishment, Randalf Jorberg, reported that since opening in 2013, he has repeatedly refused to sign up for such protection services with a company that is currently believed to “represent the syndicate” (de Greef, 2015). Shortly after the attack on Kanyona, Jorberg was quoted saying that he didn’t believe that there was any value in working with them “if the only purpose...is to protect me from a threat that they cause themselves...” (de Greef, 2015). Another business owner, further down Long Street, has been outspoken the same issue, stating that extortion was a major problem for his business – “if you don’t go along with them you’re inviting trouble. I’ve been paying the monthly fee because it keeps my staff and customers safe” (Davidson in de Greef, 2015).

To reaffirm that, contextually, Cape Town’s extortion economy exists on two levels; at the “door” we find the Congolese bouncer, who is the “face” of violence, and on a level above bouncers there exists the enforcers of violence; enforcers in the form of gangs from the Cape Flats (Shaw, 2016: 6). The specific context of Cape Town’s night-time economy being what it is; the night-time economy, at least the underbelly of it, is run by gangs, is a direct determinant of the extent of the level or involvement, of bouncers, in violent practices. The bouncers are not required to (generally) be violent in action, only appearance; with violence being enforced by “muscle on the periphery” (Shaw, 2016: 7). This contexts creates a specific niche for bouncers in which their role of violence is minimised. Considering the nature of these bouncers, that their appearance is physically intimidating, yet their behaviour is relatively passive and non-confrontational, the application of violence removed from them, is where they fall into this niche. To contrast this with Nigerian bouncers in Johannesburg, contextually, as well as geographically/spatially, the night-time economy operates differently. There is no externalisation of violence.

In looking briefly to the event of violence in Johannesburg, and how this both mirrors, and substantially differentiates from the process in Cape Town; the intention is to show the trajectory of how each city has become host to a type of mafia protection. The motivation for including the discussion on Johannesburg’s pathway to violence, specifically the end result, is to show diverging processes as a result of differing spatial fractures within each city, as well as a distinctly different level of greed for power and control (independently, and as a consequence of a fracture of space) has led to the current situation in South Africa; with regards, generally, to African immigrants - the stereotypes which surround them and

behaviours and attitudes of South African society, police and government; and more specifically regarding immigrant bouncers and the reputation that surrounds them.

The point of emergence of the “bouncer mafia” is the same in both Cape Town and Johannesburg. In both cities, there existed the conditions, stated above, required for the establishment and growth of a mafia type organisation (Shaw & Haysom, 2016: 592). However, after this moment, the processes diverge. To the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s, the white “bouncer mafia” in Johannesburg had merged into an array of “registered security companies” (Shaw, 2016: 7), who held control over access to clubs in Johannesburg, specifically those where drugs were sold. “Before the days of mobile phones, nightclubs became the venue for selling the drugs, and those who controlled the doors also were often well positioned to control the burgeoning drug trade” (Shaw, 2016: 7). The former bouncer networks, which were merged into various security companies, swiftly moved to protect their control of the drug trade. The extensive economic development in and of Johannesburg resulted in geographically scattered regions for the night-time economy, specifically entertainment, which allowed various groups of bouncers to emerge and combine control locally (Shaw, 2016: 7). Affiliated with social and economic changes of various areas in Johannesburg, “in the mid 1990s the nightclub scene moved into new area, markets and forms of recreation” (Shaw & Haysom, 2016: 585). Particularly, the distribution of illegal substances was a significant drive of the changes in the night-time economy. This in turn formed the way in which security was delivered. “It was around the late 1990s that the term ‘mafia’ came to be applied to these increasingly organised sets of muscle, whose services were contracted out for private security, predominantly for night-time business” (Shaw & Haysom, 2016: 585). The most significant, single, group of bouncers to emerge, and maintain a majority control over the Johannesburg nightclub drug market, “registered as the company “Elite” (Shaw, 2016: 7). This group was significantly more violent than previous groups and highly driven by profit, and eventually, were heavy users of the illegal substances they were selling. “The rule of Elite was driven by violence, some racial prejudice, and widespread extortion at clubs across Johannesburg” (Shaw, 2016: 7). This group maintained control from the late 1990s, up until the early 2000s when their control began to slip as a result of greed and their disregard for boundaries. As has been noted, the main power of mafia groups is local, critical to the maintenance of control for such groups is the power of local connections and influence. As a result of the widening of the territory controlled by Elite, the bouncer

mafia realised that “their zone of influence and threat of violence was stretched too thinly to be persuasive in an industry dominated by heavies” (Shaw, 2016: 8).

Around the same time that Elite held control over most of the nightclubs in Johannesburg, the late 1990s to the early 2000s, Johannesburg’s drug market saw a significant new “player” enter the market: “Nigerian criminal networks” (Shaw, 2016: 8). Whilst the Nigerian networks were moving into Johannesburg, bouncer crews were struggling to recruit new members; those that they did manage to recruit demanded higher wages. Consequently, Africans, primarily a growing group of Nigerians, were increasingly recruited to perform the same job, at a lower cost (Shaw, 2016: 8). This change had two distinct consequences: firstly, the new bouncers were distinctively less violent than their previous colleagues. The second consequence was that the new recruits “provided an on-the-ground network for the Nigerian drug dealers to enter the club market themselves” (Shaw, 2016: 8). This shift in control, coupled with an increased police awareness around the unparalleled levels of extreme violence from Elite, saw the ultimate termination of the company. The demise of Elite resulted in an immense sense of relief experienced by many club owners, who now were free to enter into different security companies of their choice, as well as entering into contracts with individual Nigerian bouncers (Shaw, 2016: 8). All of this has led to an important shift in the control of the drug market within Johannesburg.

The system of protection and drug distribution within Cape Town and Johannesburg is varied. In Johannesburg, the control centrally “belongs” to a network of Nigerian dealers whose operations are geographically dispersed, following the dispersed trends of the clubs in the city (Shaw, 2016: 8), in which these Nigerian bouncers offer a casual space, and set of contacts, in which the sale of illegal substances can occur (Shaw, 2016: 8). Considering the change of control coupled with the demise of the one company who held the majority of territorial control over clubs within Johannesburg, why then did the Nigerians not take over in the same capacity, in the role of the violent entrepreneur, as the former white “bouncer mafia”? Shaw (2016: 8) answers this using information gathered from conversations with individuals within and with ties to the network; from conversations, it appeared that “these were less locally rooted, more vulnerable and easily identifiable and likely to be targeted quickly by the police if they behaved violently (Shaw, 2016: 8). This motivation by the Nigerian bouncers, for not taking over the part of the violent entrepreneur, is echoed by their Congolese counterparts in Cape Town. Although for the Congolese bouncers, the threat

appears to have another, more serious dimension; the threat of being targeted by notoriously violent gangs, should they encroach on “gang territory.” Further,

Contextual factors are important in determining how such violent entrepreneurs take control, whether this can be sustained, and how control may be superseded. In the case of Johannesburg, the white bouncer mafia lost ground because it had neither the manpower nor recruits to sustain itself – it entered into a compromise with Nigerian criminal networks and effectively ceded control. In Cape Town, a more centralised system developed based on the geographic concentration of entertainment venues and the link to a specific set of violent entrepreneurs from the Cape Flats...capable of drawing new recruits and projecting violence where required, ensuring a more sustainable model. In both cases a set of ‘agreements’ around geographic turf was essential for stability and growth (Shaw, 2016: 10).

The Nigerian networks seized control of the drug market, without espousing the principles of violence that the former white bouncers employed. They were able to “quietly” infiltrate the drug market without the use of excessive violence, in part as a result of the demise of Elite, but also because of the international connections and support that they had. It is unlikely that the Congolese counterparts in Cape Town would have succeeded in similar attempts, largely due to their lack of those connections. The Congolese bouncers in Cape Town then remain the “face” of intimidation but their control does not span very far. The same can be said for Nigerian drug networks in Cape Town. They have been allowed to sell illegal substances to consumers. This permission is given by Cape Town’s gang mafia.

Shifting the focus back to the current project, considering the literature put forward by Shaw (2016) and Shaw and Haysom (2016), the argument here suggests that one can identify how the discourse, concerning certain elements, around immigrants comes to be the accepted reality by local South Africans. Relating this to the chapter on migrants finding a place in South Africa, one can see how the discourse surrounding the criminality of immigrants may have emerged, partially, through the visible arrival of Nigerian criminal networks in Johannesburg. It appears to be “common knowledge” that if one is looking to buy illegal substances around clubs, you should go to the “Nigerians.” When asked about their level of involvement in the drug trade, B2 (interview, 2016) commented that in general, some bouncers may be involved in selling, but it is not a “typical bouncer thing.” He followed this by stating that “you can buy drugs from the Nigerians like they’re Nik-Naks, on Long Street.” While B3 stated that he “didn’t know any bouncers who sell drugs” (B3 interview, 2016), he didn’t comment on whether or not there were illegal substances sold within the

club he worked at; B4 echoed the same sentiments. B1 (interview, 2016) acknowledged that some bouncers may “deal” undercover; “sometimes a safety measure – safer to buy from doormen”, but more often than not if they (the bouncers) were involved, it was from “instructions from the top.” He did however mention that it was important for the bouncers to know who the dealers are. B5 (interview, 2016) simply noted that he did not “get involved in things like drugs; [it’s] not legal to do that.” From the interviews, non-responses and responses from the participants of this research, as well as the arguments put forward by Shaw (2016), one can conclude that liminal spaces which Congolese bouncers occupy is a useful one for organised crime outfits.¹⁵ These bouncers are both silent witnesses; due to their status as immigrants, it would not benefit them to get the police involved if they do witness the sale of illegal substances as this may draw attention to themselves. In light of this, considering the general discourse surrounding the attitudes of the South African Police Service (SAPS) towards immigrants, even if they are documented, the risk of trouble with the police is not worth it. Simultaneously, some of these bouncers may also be benefactors of such illegal activities.

The existing literature, when placed in contrast to the subjective experiences of the individuals involved in this research, brings to light a significant gap in the research. While there is no question about the relevance and importance of the existing literature, in many instances it contradicts the realities faced in South Africa, the realities of bouncers in various areas of South Africa’s night-time economy, and does not address any of the realities of immigrant bouncers. It is through this absence of (relatable) literature that this thesis has been driven.

As previously stated, the research question for this paper was initially concerned with understanding how bouncers created and performed, their, masculine identities in the liminal spaces of the night-time economy, specifically the nightclub. The research question then expanded and shifted through the interview process as a result of the participants. Considering the immigrant status of all of the participants, the question could not ignore the additional complexities within identity, and masculinities, as they pertain to immigrants. As is mentioned above, South Africans have a distinct, problematic, attitude towards and treatment of African immigrants. Consequently, the liminal spaces that these bouncers occupy moved beyond their occupation within the realm of the night-time economy, to

¹⁵ Either external to the club itself, in terms of gangs intimidating bouncers directly; or within the club, if management, or owners are involved.

individuals navigating liminal spaces in a various areas of their daily lives; in relation to constructions of identity and performances of masculinity.

While there is ample literature on migration and immigrants in South Africa, as well as literature on xenophobia, there is no literature that speaks directly to the unique space that immigrant bouncers occupy in South Africa. Considering the stereotypes around bouncers in general and their assumed connections to the criminal world, combined with the opinions of local South Africans, towards immigrants from other African countries; largely positioning immigrants as criminals, immigrant bouncers exist, and are placed, in unique spaces. The concern with migrancy and masculinity arises from this space. Bouncers, by profession, are required to perform a particular type of masculinity; a dominant form of hegemonic masculinity. For those bouncers who do not carry the label of immigrant, they are “free” to embody this form of masculinity in all spheres of their lives, whether they choose to or not is a separate matter. However, for immigrant bouncers, the status of immigrant, with the potential risks in their day to day lives, dictates that the “show” of a dominant masculinity is one which is embodied only aesthetically, and is restricted to the performance of their profession – an occupational masculinity. The immigrant, in the South African context, is most commonly viewed as an “other” thereby deeming his masculinity subordinate to that of the local South African, regardless of the actual form that this masculinity takes.

As such, the above chapter is the springboard for analysis. The discussion that follows will aim to analyse, through a chapter on migration, and another on identity and its different components, how these men construct and perform, almost, opposing identities between their day lives and night lives; also, how these particular men, as immigrants, have come to occupy the particular “bouncer space” in which they have been placed.

Chapter Four: Migration and Finding a Place

Controls on human mobility and efforts to undermine them continue to shape South Africa's politics, economy and society. Despite the need for improved policy responses to human mobility, reform is hindered by lack of capacity, misinformation, and anti-migrant sentiments within and outside of government (Landau & Segatti, 2009).

This chapter, on migration, and finding a place as an immigrant within South African society, will briefly look at migrancy in general. It will trace migration from the later apartheid years to the current situation that migrants experience in South Africa. Within the general discussion, the focus will be particularly on Congolese immigrants, as they are, in different capacities the focus of this thesis. The purpose of looking at statistical data on immigration in South Africa, is used to highlight the fact that, in terms of actual numbers alone, the accusations that immigrants are a considerable threat to the livelihood (amongst other things) of locals, is, if not unfounded, somewhat exaggerated. If such a threat does exist, it is not in the simple fact of identity as an immigrant. Rather, in terms of work, most immigrants are argued to have a stronger work ethic; they are willing to accept whatever work they can get, and they will work as hard as necessary in those positions. Their move is motivated as much by the prospect of more opportunities for a better life economically, as well as, in many instances, a flight from general and political violence in a "war-ravaged" economy (Steinberg, 2005: 26). This conclusion points to a need for a change in the discourse which surrounds immigrants, both by state and non-state actors and individuals. The chapter on migrancy is important in and of itself, but is also the foundation upon which the thesis falls. "Immigrant" as an exclusive or partial identity, determines how those carrying such a label create, shift and perform their identities in different contexts. In looking at the space that Congolese migrants occupy in South Africa; their lived experiences as dictated (to various extents) by the state, the economy, the media, and society, allow for a deeper understanding and analysis of how the identities (specifically masculinities) of these immigrants are shaped, informed and presented, within the liminal spaces they occupy.

In looking specifically at Congolese immigrants, during the late apartheid years, South Africa was seen as a pariah state among the community of African nations, with very few diplomatic ties or trade links on the continent (Steinberg, 2005: 23). During this time, there was limited diplomatic and trade contact with "Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal, Rwanda, Gabon and Mobutu Sese

Seko¹⁶'s Zaire" (Steinberg, 2005: 23) (now, the Democratic Republic of Congo). In 1988, Zaire was South Africa's second largest trading partner on the continent. In the context of such economic and political ties, South Africa enjoyed a limited amount of elite emigration from Zaire. Antoine Bouillon (2001: 40) observed that in addition to the businessmen and politicians who were part of the Mobutist movement, and who came to South Africa with a view to exploring the potential of the country, and the engineers who were sent on assignments to the mines, dozens of Zairean medical doctors and academics found employment in the country." Influential migration from Zaire to South Africa continued through the 1990's, particularly in the period around the fall of Mobutu in 1997¹⁷, South Africa was a sanctuary for Mobutuists (Steinberg, 2005: 23-24). It has been documented, albeit poorly, in the early 1990's the nature of Congolese migration to South Africa changed somewhat abruptly. In the broadest sense, one could possibly characterise the migration as "middle-class flight, partly from economic uncertainty, but also from political instability and violence" (Steinberg, 2005: 24). Steinberg (2005: iv) succinctly summarises this point stating that,

Forced migration to South Africa from the DRC appears to be a predominantly young, urban, male and middle-class phenomenon. Nearly one in two forced migrants from the DRC have some tertiary education and fewer than one in 20 was unemployed in the DRC. While many no doubt fled in the face of persecution, and others in the face of violent instability, still others left because the DRC is increasingly unable to sustain a middle-class existence. If the motives of many were indeed to retrieve a middle-class existence, the majority have failed categorically to do so.

Lekogo (2006: 207) sets out to establish and attempt to understand why "Francophone Africans" migrate to South Africa¹⁸. His work is of particular importance as he questions why Francophone Africans choose to settle in Cape Town rather than anywhere else in South Africa. The general answer put forward, as to why South Africa, mirrors what other authors such as Steinberg, 2005, have argued. A predominant reason for Francophone Africans migrating to South Africa rather than Europe, is the fact that it is substantially more difficult, if not impossible, for these migrants to gain entry into a European country. Thus, with the end of apartheid, and what appeared to be a place of promising opportunities, South Africa was

¹⁶ Mobutu Sese Seko was a military dictator and the president of Zaire from 1965. He ruled for 32 years before being ousted in a coup in 1997 (Encyclopaedia Britannica).

¹⁷ President Mobutu changed the country's name to Zaire in 1971. After overthrowing Mobutu in 1997, Laurent Desire Kabila changed the name back to Democratic Republic of the Congo (www.oxfordbibliographies.com)

¹⁸ "Francophone Africa consists, on the one hand, of mostly former French colonies part of whose population uses French in communications, and on the other, of governments who adopted French as the official language, or both..." (Lekogo, 2006: 207-208). The DRC is one of the 26 Francophone countries in Africa.

the best, achievable, destination. “In essence, South Africa has the characteristics that allow it to offer a legitimate alternative to France” (Lekogo, 2006: 212).

The question of why Cape Town does not have one distinct definitive answer. According to interviews conducted by Lekogo (2006: 214-217), he mentions that many Francophone migrants initially go to Johannesburg upon arriving in South Africa, and then move on to Cape Town for differing reasons. This choice, of Johannesburg first, might be justified by the fact that outside of South Africa, Johannesburg is the most recognised city. However, “once in Johannesburg, the migrants discover some unanticipated realities, such as unemployment and accommodation problems and these force them to look elsewhere for opportunities” (Lekogo, 2006: 214). In determining the choice of a second location, influences include contacts established in Johannesburg, networks established back home, family or individual initiatives, as well as safety concerns. “Francophone Africans settle in Cape Town because they were not able to succeed in Johannesburg, and also because Cape Town is safer” (Lekogo, 2006: 218).

The literature shows that many Congolese middle-class migrants appear to have chosen South Africa for one of two reasons: firstly, for many immigrants the preferred destination was North America and Western Europe. However, due to the tightening of immigration policies in these areas, that option became invalid, thus, South Africa was the “next best”, being the most developed economy in the sub-Saharan region. Secondly, because of a residue of the apartheid regime’s close ties with Mobutu, entry into South Africa took the form of free, visa-less access, “until April 1993 at any rate, when South Africa began to introduce hefty visa fees for Zairians” (Steinberg, 2005: 24).

Beginning in 1990, South Africa saw a period of unparalleled political changes. The most notable of these were, and somewhat continue to be, constitutional reforms, as well as space which allowed for political debate. In terms of the position that migrants held within South African society, these political changes helped to create a paradox (Landau & Segatti, 2009: 28). Despite the formation of a legal framework which theoretically guaranteed international migrants more rights than they had ever had, migrants remained, and still do remain, “remarkably vulnerable to socio-economic exclusion, harassment from police, and violence at the hands of state agents and citizens” (Landau & Segatti, 2009: 28-29). The constitutional rights concerning migrants in South Africa are not entirely clear within the legislation. It would appear that non-South African’s residing within the country are meant to be relatively

protected by the Bill of Rights. In the 1999 White Paper on International Migration states that the extent to which conditions of being an “alien” – legal or illegal – could allow government to provide “them” with a lesser degree of Constitutional protection, still needs to be determined (White Paper on International Migration, 1999: 13). The language used in this document, as well as the sentiment expressed above, is largely problematic, and reminiscent of the language used during apartheid. The “us/them” dichotomy, the use of the term “alien”, and the loophole created for allowing a lesser degree of rights to immigrants does not create an image of fairness and equality for all who live in South Africa. However, in spite of the above statement, the White Paper is clear in stating that “even though the Bill of Rights contains a limitation clause ... [it] may not be invoked to prevent a class of people, however identified, from enjoying the total use and benefits of a given constitutional right ...” (Harris, 2001: 16). The above two statements appear to fundamentally contradict one another; the research on migration and immigrants appears to support the conclusion that the state most often acts in accordance with the former statement, allowing government to allow a lesser degree of rights to immigrants. Only incredibly recently, 24 June 2016, has the Department of Home Affairs published a Green Paper on International Migration which argues for the replacement of South Africa’s current policies on immigrants and migration; a call for one which is in line with the development of an African agenda (Government Gazette 40088, 24 June 2016). Exactly what an African agenda entails, is still to be determined. The hope is that a reformed policy will have a positive impact on the experiences and realities of African immigrants in South Africa.

Within the White Paper on International Migration (1999: 16) there are certain distinct representations of, who in the Paper are called, “illegal aliens” which portray these individuals as competing for scarce resources in spite of the fact that millions of South Africans are living in poverty; they are also portrayed as competing for, already scarce, public resources such as medical care, schooling, housing, infrastructure and land. “Illegal aliens” are portrayed as weakening the state and its institutions by corrupting government officials, thereby smearing South Africa’s image both locally and internationally (Harris, 2001: 20). These representations of “illegal aliens”, simply stated, show these individuals as competing “unfairly and undeservedly with South Africans for resources that they are not entitled to” (Harris, 2001: 21).

In 1994 South Africa became a new nation. “Born out of democratic elections and inaugurated as the ‘Rainbow Nation; by Nelson Mandela, this ‘new South Africa’ represents

a fundamental shift in the social, political and geographical landscapes of the past” (Harris, 2002: 169). Unity is said to have replaced segregation, equality has largely replaced constituted racism and democracy appears to have replaced apartheid, at least according to the law (Harris, 2002: 169). Despite the transition from apartheid (where prejudice and violence were the foundations upon which society was structured) to democracy, prejudice and violence still stain contemporary South Africa (Harris, 2002: 169). However excellent the shift in political power has been, this shift has also brought about a variety of new prejudiced practices and victims. One such victim, which is the focus of this thesis, is the foreign “other.” Evolving beside a new state dialogue, “the Foreigner stands as a site where identity, racism and violent practice are reproduced” (Harris, 2002: 169). After 1994, all African immigrants were stereotyped and vilified in progressively offensive language. Crush and Ramachandran (2010: 214) argue that this is a “post-independence phenomenon” which is undoubtedly linked with the project of nation-building, which includes “the construction of new national identities and idioms on inclusion and exclusion” (Peberdy, 2001; 2009 in Crush & Ramachandran, 2010: 214).

It is generally argued that debates in political theory and international relations, as well as in specific fields of study, such as political science, politics and philosophy, commonly accept the assumption that an identity cannot be formed without the coinciding creation and negative stereotyping of an abject “other” (Lebow, 2008: 473-475). In contemporary times, intellectuals as well as politicians have consistently created and/or exploited the “us/them” dichotomy to achieve certain political agendas (Lebow, 2008: 475).

In South Africa, one cannot accuse the state of publicly expressing such a dichotomy, however, with such a distinction extensive across various sectors of the country; media, social, economic, spatial, it can also be argued that they have not done anything to dissuade this. “Evidences abound to show that Africa and African foreigners have, for long, and consistently, been represented negatively and xenophobically by the state, the media and the public” (Oloyede, 2008: 112). This is particularly disappointing behaviour of the state, especially when considering the preamble to the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa states that “We, the people of South Africa, recognise the injustices of our past; respect those who suffered for injustice and freedom in our land; respect those who have worked to build and develop our country; and believe that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, united by our diversity” (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa). Furthermore, many in the media and within government itself have accepted and perpetuated a “powerful and

pejorative public immigration discourse that prioritizes control over management, expulsion over admission [and] exclusion over inclusion” (Crush, 2001: 105). This sentiment was captured explicitly in a speech given by South Africa’s, then, Minister of Home Affairs, Mangosuthu Buthelezi, where he stated that,

... the [migration situation in South Africa] has been further aggravated by the influx of illegal aliens from neighbouring countries in particular, where conditions of economic deprivation and depression occur and who are consequently prepared to work for meagre wages. With whatever empathy and understanding one may judge the underlying reasons and motivation why people are compelled to leave their fatherland and to seek refuge here, the interests of the RSA and her citizens and legal residents must be our first and foremost consideration (Peberdy, 2001: 15).

The above sentiment expressed by the former Minister of Home Affairs, is not a unique one. This sentiment is pervasive in the discourse which surrounds the state of migration and immigrants within South Africa. It is this discourse, embedded in South African society, as well as what can be viewed as the failure of the state to consider its most vulnerable citizens, which gives rise to the hostile situation that immigrants find themselves in.

The research supports the argument that there is a prevailing culture of violence in South Africa; violence appears to have become a legitimate, and relatively normal, way of solving problems (Harris, 2001: 6). This is especially true for those who fall into the most (economically) disadvantaged sector of South Africa’s population, as they too lack the support, and security, of and from state institutions.

The figures, repeatedly, of “illegal aliens” are regularly exaggerated, and all are uniformly categorised as a threat to fundamental economic and social rights of South Africans (Crush, 2001: 105). One very significant and damaging result of this is extensive xenophobic attacks on immigrants in South Africa. The dictionary definition of xenophobia¹⁹ is misleading when placed in the South African context. Here xenophobia cannot simply be restricted to an attitude of fear or dislike of foreigners, one must include the practice of xenophobia, “it results in intense tension and violence by South Africans towards immigrants” (Tshitereke, 1999: 4). Furthermore, Harris (2002: 170) urges that more specifically, violent practices which comprise xenophobia need to be additionally refined in order to include its specific target. South Africans are not uniformly xenophobic, not all foreigners are equally

¹⁹ Xenophobia- defined as “dislike of or prejudice against people from other countries” (Oxford Dictionaries)

victimised. “Rather, black foreigners, particularly those from [other African countries] comprise the majority of victims” (Harris, 2002: 170).

Whether documented or not, the “African foreigner” is most commonly treated as an individual belonging to the homogenous category of “illegal alien” (Harris, 2001: 5). Harris (2001: 5) argues that racism, despite the “new” democratic and equal South Africa, is still a central component of South Africa’s immigration legislation and practices. There is a xenophobic discourse which dominates and dictates the treatment of and towards “illegal aliens” which forms the foundation for conflict, violence and antagonism between South African citizens and African foreigners (Harris, 2001: 5).

Importantly, an element which serves to reproduce, and reaffirm, the notion of immigrants as criminals, is the corruption and xenophobia which stains the interface between South African officials and foreigners. The most relevant institutions “guilty” of corruption include the South African Police Service (SAPS), the South African National Defence Force and the Department of Home Affairs (Harris, 2001: 5). Those individuals who enter the country illegally, as well as those with legal documents, are subject to corruption and extortion from South African officials.

Although there are various explanations and hypotheses for xenophobia, the most relevant theory, relating to this research, is that of the scapegoating hypothesis. This hypothesis places xenophobia within the context of social change and transition. Anger towards migrants is described as a consequence of limited resources, such as housing, education, healthcare and employment, together with the local population having high expectations of a better future. Tshitereke (1999: 4) maintains that,

In the post-apartheid epoch, while people’s expectations have been heightened, a realisation that delivery is not immediate has meant that discontent and indignation are at their peak. People are more conscious of their deprivation than ever before... this is the ideal situation for a phenomenon like xenophobia to take root and flourish. South Africa’s political transition to democracy has exposed the unequal distribution of resources and wealth in the country.

Rather than placing the blame on the state- a somewhat elusive, inaccessible target- people create an accessible target to blame for the perpetual poverty and deprivation that they experience. The scapegoat theory suggests that migrants are often the scapegoat (Harris, 2002: 170). One can argue that migrants become a physical representation of a dire social situation. In this same vein of argument, the state can also be accused of scapegoating the

“other.” Although never directly, the discourse perpetuated by the state against immigrants serves to divert attention and hostility away from itself for its continuous failure to deliver on promises of freedom from deprivation, equality, a better livelihood, and an overall better quality of life. The reality should be a discourse which acknowledges both that “immigrants are heterogenous and include highly skilled professionals and other informal sector operatives” (Adepoju, 2003: 4), as well as the fact that migrants occupy both highly skilled and lowly skilled jobs that the local population is unable or unwilling to do (Adepoju, 2003: 4). Both of which play a vital role in the function of the economy. Rather, framing the “foreign other” as parasitic on a country’s economy and social programme (Adepoju, 2003: 11) allows for the impression that the state is in fact delivering, in some capacity, of promises made. However, immigrants stand in the way of the locals experiencing the realisation of such promises, and as such, enjoying the benefits.

Drawing slightly on another theory of xenophobia, the biocultural hypothesis, which offers an explanation as to why, within South Africa, not all migrants are viewed and treated in the same way, it “offers an explanation for the asymmetrical targeting of African foreigners by South Africans” (Harris, 2002: 172). The biocultural hypothesis contextualises xenophobia in the framework of visible “otherness” and difference; that is in terms of “physical biological factors and cultural differences exhibited by African foreigners in the country” (Harris, 2002: 172). Reiterating Morris’ suggestion, looking particularly at Nigerian and Congolese immigrants, because of their physical attributes, their general style, and inability to speak one of South Africa’s indigenous languages, they are quite effortlessly identifiable as “other.” Local residents are then able to easily identify and scapegoat them (Harris, 2002: 172).

In considering the actual estimated figures of migrants coming into South Africa, the latest release by Statistics South Africa – “Documented Immigrants in South Africa, 2014” – provides useful information that allows quantitative data to inform ways in which qualitative data may be diversely interpreted. The data that is collected is done so across various categories, such as nationality, types of permits and age structure, of recipients of permanent and temporary residence permits granted in 2014 (Stats SA, 2015: 50). The data collected on the recipients was made available by the “permit administrative system maintained by the Department of Home Affairs” (Stats SA, 2015: 50). This statistical analysis is useful in generating an idea of the number of immigrants entering South Africa, however, one must be cognisant of the fact that these numbers only reflect those individuals who have acquired some form of legal residence. Crush and Ramachandran (2010: 214) also caution that one

must consider that the “language of xenophobia is one of hyperbole.” An obvious example of this is the tendency to exaggerate the number of migrants entering a country. In a context of prevalent resentment and hostility towards immigrants, migration statistics are very seldom neutral, accurate, measures (Crush & Ramachandran, 2010: 214). This exaggeration contributes powerfully to the idea that “national territory is under siege from the outside” (Crush & Ramachandran, 2010: 214).

In 2014, the total number of documented immigrants in South Africa was 73 352, this should not be interpreted as the total number of immigrants in South Africa in the contemporary (Stats SA, 2015: 52). This number does not account for those individuals who have entered the country illegally, as well as those whose temporary residence permits had concluded.

With regards to the temporary residence permits granted for 2014, a total of 69 216 permits were issued. Of these, 23 037 (33.3%) permits were issued to recipients from the SADC sub-region of Africa (Stats Sa, 2015: 19). Of the 23 037 permits issued, 1614 (4.4%) of those were issued to individuals from the DRC. During this same time period, 4136 permanent residence permits were issued, and 276 (6.7%) of these were issued to recipients from the DRC (Stats SA, 2015: 38). Thus, roughly, 2.58% of the 73 352 permits issued in 2014 went to Congolese immigrants. Accordingly, in a population of 54 million in 2014 (estimated mid-year population for 2014, by Stats SA), documented Congolese immigrants made up a likely 1 393 200 of the population. Again, one must reiterate that this is not an absolute figure and it does not account for the number of undocumented immigrants living in South Africa.

As mentioned above, these numbers alone do not provide sufficient reasoning to justify the extent of xenophobia towards African migrants in South Africa. This, however, is the reality of the lived experiences of many immigrants.

One of the aims of this thesis is to acknowledge the individual behind the theory and the numbers. Here, immigrants are more than a group of people moving from one country to another. In this thesis, each immigrant is a person, each with their own story to tell. As such, to quote Steinberg (2005: 27) to “put some flesh on the bones of this [literature]”, individual experiences and stories are essential. The eight Congolese participants interviewed for this thesis all came to South Africa, and are currently in Cape Town. One of the participants mentioned specifically that he had been in Johannesburg first and then decided to move to Cape Town. Two of the other participants knew people who were already in Cape Town, and one participant has a brother who had moved to Cape Town before him. All of them arriving

with the hope of something better, something different from what they had left behind in the DRC.

B1 and B2 came to South Africa following a passion. They were part of a basketball league that came to South Africa in the hopes of playing professionally. South Africa was not the final destination for playing professional basketball, there was just “a better chance of moving up in South Africa than back home” (B1 interview, 2016). However, as a result of “no funding [and] poor money” alternative plans had to be made to earn a living. While B4 said that there were simply “more chances to be successful in South Africa (B4 interview, 2016) and B5 expressed the same sentiments, stating “[I] just wanted to come here. [It’s] just better here. When things are hard, you must look for better” (B5 interview, 2016). B3 (interview, 2016) did not give a reason for coming to South Africa, he just said “I’m here. [Been] here long enough [that] now it’s my home.” This was particularly interesting as he was the only participant who did not give a reason for moving. During the interview it was apparent that the reason did not matter. The past is the past, and his present and future are in South Africa, and specifically in Cape Town. B6 and B8 said that they knew people who were in Cape Town already so it was “better to go somewhere where there are people [you know], rather than being here alone” (B8 interview, 2016). The last participant was the only one who mentioned having family in Cape town. B7 (interview, 2016) moved to Cape Town because his brother had moved here before him.

Economic instability, political conflict and war are some of the fundamental reasons for which individuals migrate. For the Congolese immigrants involved in this research, the motivation was potential; moving from an unstable home, economically and politically, with the expectation of something better in South Africa. However, once in South Africa, for migrants in general, political violence and conflict continue to exercise a strong effect on immigrants; shaping their identities and informing how they understand themselves, and exist in that understanding, in South Africa (Harris, 2001: 6).

Individuals choose to come to South Africa for a variety of reasons; on a macro-level, the state of their country; on a micro-level, personal choices. South Africa appears to be an inviting destination, with its “international image of democracy and freedom” (Harris, 2001: 7). Many of these individuals come with the expectation of finding acceptance and tolerance, to enjoy protection and opportunities. This expectation ultimately leads to disappointment,

“largely through their experience of crime, violence and limited opportunities for employment, education and health-care” (Harris, 2001: 7).

Despite varying specific reasons for moving to Cape Town, each of the participants shared the same reason for leaving the DRC. South Africa held the promise of potential, potential for a better life. One can argue that regardless of what brought them here, and whether their moves were motivated by realistic expectations or not, none of them came to Cape Town with the intention of being a bouncer, yet this is their current reality. At this point, in looking at migrants finding a place in South Africa, the above data does not speak to a physical spatial place, but more to a place of belonging in shared aspects of identity (as bouncers), as well as the shared place of birth. However, these factors do not translate into a sense of belonging; a sense of security and stability in a place that is not overly welcoming, by the state at large, and by the local population who occupy the same spaces as these individuals.

For the participants involved in the research for this thesis, finding a place involves a sense of belonging, from the micro level to the macro level; a sense of belonging in one respect does not guarantee belonging in any other respect. The experience of foreignness begins the moment people leave their homes, it is not isolated to the moment they arrive in South Africa (Harris, 2001: 7).

With this sense of “misplacement” or of not belonging, the discussion moves, finally, to an analysis of identity; the concept of what identity is, as well as a particular look at migrant identity(ies) and various masculinities and masculine identities. In the following chapter, identity, in its various aspects of discussion, is separate from an individual’s personality, or intrinsic character. Identity refers to how an individual constructs a character of and for themselves. Considering the unstable, unstructured nature of the realities for immigrants in South Africa, how are these identities shaped, formed and enacted?

Chapter Five: Identity and Masculinities

In an attempt to understand the relevance of a study which has a focus on masculine identities,²⁰ Tony Jefferson (1995: 10-31) offers valuable insights in the way of understanding the ways in which men's "psychic and social complexities" may be conceptualised (Newburn & Stanko, 1995: 5). In the existing literature masculinity has been defined as shared gender identity and not a natural characteristic. Throughout this thesis there is no single definition of masculinity that is adopted, but rather an acknowledgement that masculinity, and masculinities, are extensively subjective and continuously (re)constructed in the face of various internal and external processes. Connell (1995: 81) argues that masculinity is socially constructed and flexible. "There is not one universal masculinity but many masculinities. These are 'not fixed character types but configurations of practice generated in particular situations in a changing structure of relationships'" (Morrell, 1998: 607). The focus of this chapter is on the construction of the identity of bouncers, and specifically, the shaping of different masculinities. Initial attention is given to a discussion on general ideas of masculinity(ies) in terms of their construction and performance. This thesis uses aspects of identity, which can be seen as fixed categories; those that have been argued to be "fixed 'essentialist' (pre-political) singular categories" (Somers, 1994: 605) – race, sex and nationality. These are simplistic components of the multitude of factors which make up one's identity, however, for our purpose, they are relevant as simple, yet important, foundations from which the creation of an identity stems. As well as analysing identity in terms of singular categories, this research acknowledges that there exists "inexhaustible pieces of the identity puzzle" that are constructed, as well as, evidently, fluid and multiple; one such "piece," or component, of identity, for which the focus of this chapter shifts to masculinity.

The majority of the available literature on bouncers used in this thesis speaks to the perspectives of white, British bouncers. As individuals enjoying (at the very least) the same national identity, and experiencing²¹ the security that this brings, their embodiment and performances of masculinities form and inform aspects of their identity, outside of their

²⁰ In this thesis, when speaking of masculinity, masculinities and masculine identity, it is only in relation to men; acknowledging that women too can construct, perform and embody different masculinities.

²¹ I would argue here that this "experience" is not conscious. The security that British bouncers enjoy, from a social to state level, is entirely natural. This security is afforded to them by virtue of their birth as British citizens. Thus, they are not constrained in their masculine identities to the same extent as immigrant bouncers in South Africa.

occupation. In contrast to this, using a specific body of literature which looks at bouncers in Johannesburg and Cape Town, from the late 1980s to the early 2000s (Shaw, 2016: 577); as well as the research conducted for this project, it becomes apparent that the embodiment and performance of masculinities for immigrant bouncers, and particularly the Congolese bouncers who participated in this research, is removed (through choice or force) from their identities as individuals. The particular masculinity required and embodied as a bouncer, is “left at the door” once they leave work.

Although the emphasis of this chapter is not on bouncers in their entirety, it is on the identity of these specific individuals, and how, in their specific occupation, masculinities are defined and performed. Thus, it is important to note that this chapter looks at particular masculinities, informed by, constructed and performed in specific liminal spaces.²² Mindful of the fact that Congolese migrants occupy a liminal space on varying levels, this chapter looks to highlight how their identities appear (from the literature) to shift considerably when faced with the discrepancy in the expectations of what moving to South Africa will mean, and the reality (for most) of what this existence actually is. From the interviews conducted for this research, we learn what it means for each of these eight individuals to be a man, as well as briefly commenting on their responses as to whether women can be bouncers or not. Again, this is not directly concerned with bouncers, as that is the focus of the next chapter; it does however speak to ideas of masculinity, and what is believed to be appropriate gendered work.

Identity

Brubaker and Cooper (2000: 1) refer to the writing of George Orwell in which he says that “if [the purpose of] language is to be ‘an instrument for expressing and not for concealing or preventing thought’...one must ‘let the meaning choose the word, and not the other way about.’” Concerning identity, Brubaker and Cooper (2000: 1) argue that humanities and social sciences studies have yielded to the term “identity.” The result of this surrendering has

²² Liminal, as defined by Oxford Dictionaries, is “relating to a transitional or initial stage of process” or “occupying a position at, or on both sides of, a boundary or threshold.” For the purposes of this thesis, liminal refers to: a) with reference to nightclubs – the “opposition to strict culturalist interpretations of social phenomena. The night time economy commodifies space and establishes created environments, spaces that are designed to exploit the potential of multiple audiences in a plethora of consumer options” (Hobbs, Lister, Hadfield, Winlow & Hall, 2000: 711), and b) in relation to migrant individuals, in the context of South Africa – the physical space that they occupy in trying to find a place here, as well as the conceptual space that they occupy in terms of finding/forming an identity, both without having a firm sense of belonging.

both political and intellectual costs. They maintain that three lines of argument: that identity leans toward meaning too much when it is understood in a strong sense. It doesn't mean enough when understood in a weak sense, or it means nothing at all due to the utter ambiguity of the word (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000: 1). The argument follows, that in specifying that identities are multiple, fluid and constructed (in order to avoid a charge of "essentialism") "leaves us without a rationale for talking about 'identities' at all and ill-equipped to examine the 'hard' dynamics and essentialist claims of contemporary identity politics" (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000: 1):

If identity is everywhere, it is nowhere. If it is fluid, how can we understand the ways in which self-understandings may harden, congeal or crystallize? If it is constructed, how can we understand the sometimes coercive force of external identification? If it is multiple, how do we understand the terrible singularity that is often striven for – and sometimes realized – by politicians seeking to transform mere categories into unitary and exclusive groups? How can we understand the power and pathos of identity politics? (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000: 1).

For purposes of clarity, in this thesis identity is understood as "constructed through a complex interplay of cognitive, affective, and social interaction processes, occurring within particular cultural and local contexts" (Vignoles, Regalia, Manzi, Golledge & Scabini, 2006: 309). In acknowledging the validity in the above argument by Brubaker and Cooper (2000), in an attempt to briefly answer the question of how to understand the contradictions of the fluidity, construction and multiplicity of identity, I put forward the argument that Brubaker and Cooper (2000), I believe are responsible for collapsing the above three components, each into rigid, mutually exclusive categories. The fluidity of identity does in fact allow that some self-understandings may become and are fixed; this does not inevitably result in the conclusion that other understandings, of the self, do not shift, change or are discarded and replaced entirely. The fluidity of identity is also inherently linked to the construction of identity. The construction of identity encompasses both those coercive forces of external identification, as well as internal understandings, ideas and motivations of and for the self. Identity does not become void of multiplicity if/when "terrible singularity" is imposed on people, or when that singularity is indeed striven for (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000: 1). Singularity in one aspect does not negate the multiple features which shape and influence identity in its totality.

The argument I put forward is largely informed by two elements. Firstly, the discussions in the previous chapter, which acknowledge the processes of coercive forces of external

identification, as well as the singularity of identification. This refers specifically to the discourse perpetuated by the state and media. The identification of an immigrant, although by definition a neutral term, is a highly loaded term, which brings to the fore a very specific type of imagery and assumed knowing. Black, African foreigners are prescribed the singular identity of migrant, within which ideas of character are imbued – the “other”, the criminal, the threat. Lastly, the argument is informed by personal narratives of the Congolese immigrants who were interviewed for this thesis. Their own understandings, constructions and performances of various identities is the crux of this project:

For the immigrant, identity negotiation is a continual process of situating oneself - of defining the self in relation to other people and other groups, all taking place under [a] larger societal umbrella. [There is also] a recognition that immigrants come from somewhere with some things... with a set of expectations about what the new country will provide and how one will establish a life for oneself (Deaux, 2006: 7).

In contextualising how identities shift and are reconstructed by both internal and external forces, studies carried out on Congolese migrants show that “Congolese migration to South Africa is primarily middle class, young and male” (Steinberg, 2005: 26). The age claim is supported by the most recent release by Statistics South Africa, on the number of documented immigrants in South Africa for 2014. This release captures only documented immigrants; the average age of the 1890 documented Congolese immigrants, entering South Africa in 2014, was between the ages of 19 and 28 (Stats SA, 2015: 35 & 49). Steinberg (2005: 26) suggests that in observing that migration to South Africa is male, young and middle class, the implication is that the intention behind coming to South Africa is motivated by two factors; “that the disintegration of the DRC’s education system and the falling away of prospects for a professional career are perhaps as important as the immediate dangers of war.” He furthermore notes the potential for bitter disappointment to most, if these are indeed the factors driving the decision to migrate (Steinberg, 2005: 26). “While 4% of Congolese migrants were unemployed in the DRC, 29% are unemployed in South Africa. A further 50% are in work they describe as unskilled- street vending, cutting hair, washing and guarding cars – while just 4% are in what they regard as skilled work” (Steinberg, 2005: 26). There can be little doubt that moving between (constructed) categories of class and social positioning, in and of itself alters a factor of identity which is determined by the economic and social class that a person belongs to; as well as self-reflexive ideas of the self, dependant on those aspects that one considers to make up their identity- that the disappointment in the reality of the idea

of a better life in South Africa, will have an impact on how one sees themselves, individually, and in relation to others.

Masculine Identity and Masculinities

Connell and Messerschmidt (2005:836) conceptualise masculinity as a configuration of practices and performances which are realised through societal (inter)action, and thus are generated in relation to psycho-social subtleties, norms and expectations of different political, cultural, and social relationships prescribed and inscribed in societies. Accordingly, it is important to note that there are broader socio-structural frameworks, such as race, economic position, and various ingroups, which are fundamental in shaping the form, defining the nature and prescribing the performances required of and implied by the masculine. This then implies, broadly speaking, that in any single society there are a variety of ways of understanding, prescribing and portraying what is understood as “the masculine,” each with a uniquely distinctive form and set of structures that is transformative and positional, depending on time, place and context. Masculinity is therefore not stagnant but changes over time, as well as changing in relation to the social environment - being altered by changes in society while simultaneously affecting society themselves (Morrell, 1998: 607).

Connell proposes four “types” of masculinities, perhaps best seen as broad analytical lenses and not a classificatory schedule: the dominant, the complicit, the oppositional and the submissive. Here it has been cautioned that it is both unhelpful and challenging to simply classify or label an individual man as belonging strictly to one or the other “type.” It is nevertheless important to provide an analytical framework, however tentative, towards which masculinity can be conceptualised, illustrated and placed. A key vehicle for this is the deployment of the (ever self-reflexive) concept of hegemonic masculinity – “the form of masculinity which is dominant in society” (Morrell, 1998: 607-608). Hegemonic masculinity has been distinguished from other forms of masculinity, and is especially useful in contrasting those performances deemed subaltern or subordinated (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005: 832). While hegemonic masculinity, in its conception, should certainly not be assumed to be “normal” in a statistical sense, understanding both the academic and colloquial makes normative the prescriptions concerning the differences between the hegemonic and subordinate (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005: 832). As Connell and Messerschmidt (2005: 832) note, hegemonic masculinity is that which requires “all other men

to position themselves in relation to it, and it ideologically legitimated global subordination of [assumed inferior masculinities, as well as] women to men.

Hegemonic masculinity is then not a question of dominance as it relates to numbers, but rather a question of the relations of cultural dominance. What becomes the hegemonic, subordinates or silences other forms of masculinity, situating these “other” forms in relation to itself in such a way that the values espoused by the “other” masculinities do not hold legitimacy. (Before continuing with this discussion, it is relevant to highlight how this particular point mirrors the position of the migrant, in relation to the South African local. In terms of their place within South African society, and the practice of xenophobia a constant threat, the South African is dominant, while silencing the immigrant. The immigrant “other,” when situated in relation to the South African, will never be able to transgress from the subordinate to the dominant; as individuals and communities, it is unlikely that they will hold, social, legitimacy).

Thus resulting in the creation of an “ideal” version of masculinity, of how men should behave and how it is assumed that “real” men do behave, often articulated characteristically as the cultural norm (Morrell, 1998: 608). As such, the notion of hegemonic masculinity allows one way of explaining the intricacies of masculine identity – although there are several different masculinities that exist within a single space, there is one particular version that holds supremacy, giving power and privilege to those men who adopt this version (Morrell, 1998: 608). In its earliest formulations, hegemony did not mean violence, although it could be backed up by force; it meant a dominance defined by power relations, whether inter- or intrapersonal, both social and individual (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005: 832). Currently, hegemony, still, does not mean violence, however, intrinsic to hegemonic masculinity is the capacity for violence. As will be shown further in this chapter, in contrast to much of the existing literature on bouncers and masculinities, for the Congolese bouncers that were interviewed, aggression and violence were said to be all but absent in their daily lives, and only employed as an absolute last resort in their jobs. Whereas with local British bouncers, the environment they work in is overwhelmingly inundated with intoxication, aggression and egoism which determines an environment in which physical violence is “a tool of the trade” (Hobbs, Hadfield, Lister & Winlow, 2002: 359). “The various control strategies utilized by door staff all have violence, either in its potential... or its actuality at their root” (Hobbs, Hadfield, Lister & Winlow, 2002: 359). Hobbs, Lister, Hadfield & Winlow (2003: 149) note how, at times, “short, sharp applications of rough justice are often justified as a means of

avoiding escalation.” They argue that this is not fighting, but rather evidence of physical control. What may appear to be “cold” violence is often a calculated decision.

Morrell, Jewkes and Lindegger (2012: 8) refer to the struggle over hegemony within the African National Congress²³ (ANC) since 1994. They state that when this struggle is viewed through a masculinities lens, what is refracted is a multiplicity of masculinities pertinent to the South African context, and which are structured – as a function of both history and social structures – along the lines of class and race (which are somewhat defined by one another), and that distinct disputes and compositions of hegemonic masculinities have emerged in the definition of the South African man (Morrell, Jewkes & Lindegger: 2012: 8). Pyke (1996: 528) highlights that class based masculinities offer men various “mechanisms of interpersonal power that, when practiced, (re)constitute and validate dominant and subordinate masculinities.” Foucault (1990) maintains that specific structures of domination produce and reproduce certain discourses which are perceived as knowledge and truth, which are detrimental to the “subordinate,” thus (re)producing power relations (Pyke, 1996: 529). Looking through the masculinities lens also shows a division between “a masculinity which dominates at a national level, the repository of greatest power, and masculinities that enjoy popular support in communities at the grassroots” (Morrell, Jewkes & Lindegger, 2012: 8). This commands an attentiveness of the varying levels, or contexts, upon which one can argue that the hegemony of masculinities, especially in terms of expressing cultural values as well as the disconnect between these values and the performance of particular types of power, is widespread and dominant (Morrell, Jewkes & Lindegger, 2012: 8). Understanding the interplay of historico-social precursors, individual performances, and the structural mandates associated with “doing” masculinity in such a diverse and heterogenous arena are complex. Not only to be, but to study.

South Africa has a very specific politics and history; thus, it is best to acknowledge that deeply rooted urban and rural, and race and class realities have given themselves to the identification of hegemonic masculinities embedded in particular concrete social settings (Morrell, Jewkes & Lindegger, 2012: 14-15). Evident in some of the literature on class based masculinities, or literature that incorporates a discussion on class based masculinities (Pyke, 1996; Luyt, 2003; Morrell, 2007; Morrell, Jewkes & Lindegger, 2012), the focus is between different classes, mainly the middle-class and the working-class, and how these masculinities

²³ South Africa’s ruling political party

are constructed and performed in relation to, and opposed to, one another. In this thesis, there is no distinction between classes. The focus is on different masculinities within the working class; the complex nature of this arises in that various dominant masculinities of the South African working class men, are dominant in relation to various “subordinate” masculinities of the Congolese working class men, and women in general, yet “subordinate” in relation to different South African hegemonic masculinities.

Butler (1990) argues that gender and sexuality are relationally created; “heterosexuality, for example, is constructed in contradistinction to its abject other, homosexuality” (in Brickell, 2005: 26). The same relational construction is evident in within the literature where the lines of argument suggest that masculinity is placed in opposition to femininity. To be masculine is to be everything that feminine is not. Putting aside such simplistic dialect, to be (ideally) masculine is to be in a position of control, to be in a position of dominance over those thought to show an inferior masculinity, and certainly femininity. Indeed, in varying instances, an inferior masculinity is either equated with femininity, or seen as being feminine. If femininity is concerned with being emotional, emotionally supportive, “soft”, non-violent, complacent, and in need of a protector, using relational construction, masculinity then espouses the rational and unemotional, tough, carries within them the potential for violence and aggression, and the ideal protector of the “inferior.” Hegemonic masculinity, expressed as the ideal form of masculinity, holding a position of superiority thus incorporates the threat of violence, or the actual act of violence, if this superiority is threatened. Masculinity is performative/enacted in front of an audience, and validated by the approval of others. Many men feel more manly yielding power, through different sources, but only if this power is publicly acknowledged and validated; most evidently through aggression.

Usefully, Butler’s theory on performativity can be defined, partially, as verbal assertions that perform actions. These include calling into being the objects which they name. thus, Butler (1996: 112) states that “performativity is ‘the discursive mode by which ontological effects are installed’” (in Brickell, 2005: 26). Consequently, Butler suggests that gender categories - male/female, woman/man, boy/girl – are produced performatively (using linguistic declarations). In the concluding comments, Brickell (2005: 39) states that

Performances are always performed by someone(s), although those ones’ selves are reflexively constructed with reference to others and to the symbolic resources provided by the surrounding culture and social structures. The capacity for action

does not depend on a self that is already fully existent, so our sense of ourselves as gendered in particular ways is both constituted and constituting simultaneously.

Thus, the performativity of masculinity is predominantly as a result of a pervading discourse which allows and disallows the construction of various identities. It is also within this that the social construction of hegemonic masculinity can be placed. The notion of hegemonic masculinity, and the dominance of this position, is as a result of the way in which the identity is created verbally (which then makes it so). Furthermore, the discursive nature of the performativity of masculinity results in identity being constructed in the abstract which then proceeds into the lived experiences of individuals. The subconscious, or abstract, creation of identity is largely informed by the various forms of socialisation that an individual may experience. Consequently, the various forms of masculinities that exist, particularly in South Africa, can be linked to the vastly different social settings that inform such constructions. The settings range from the structural institutional level, such as race and class, to the family level which involves cultural values and traditions, to the individual level involving personal and isolated elements.

In what are normatively seen as “masculinist” occupations, in the view that masculinities are enacted/performed; the occupation of being a bouncer, one can argue, is not simply a job to be carried out, but also involves some level of performance. Looking specifically at male bouncers, the performative nature of “bouncing” is an embodied activity recounted through spatial, physical and symbolic discourses. All of these performances are made meaningful in the local and supralocal environments in which they occur. Within the context of night-time leisure security, violence, or at the very least the capacity to be violent, appears to be a highly sought after economic resource, and the ability to “perform the role of security,” the alphamale tasked with protection as well as being the tool for violence committed in the name of the organisation, is critical. The one inflexible skill that a bouncer is required to have is the ability to fight. According to Hobbs, Hadfield, Lister and Winlow (2002: 359) “the ability to fight, to take and to ‘dish’ the ‘punishment’, is the attribute, above all others, upon which a doorman’s commercial value rests.” Thus, within the relational construct of women being passive and non-violent and men being violent and aggressive, there is then a gendered construction of competency and/or capabilities amongst bouncers “within the context of their potentially violent work” (Monaghan, 2002a: 334).

For the participants involved in this research, masculinity is a non-entity for these men. There are no variations of different types of men; for them, it came down to being a man, or not

being a man. What it means to be masculine is the same as it what it means for each of them to be a man. In answering the question – what does it mean for you to be a man? – the answers vary in the response, but fundamentally are rooted in the same concept. The answers given suggest that although not every male is a man; for some this is a choice, a process of becoming, for others it is by virtue of birth, the root concept is that only those born male have the potential to become men. For B1 (interview, 2016) – you are born either male or female. For him, being a man is “how you carry yourself as a person. This is your identity.” B2’s response was that “you are born a boy and grow up to be a man.” When questioned further as to whether being a man was then simply a fact of ageing, he answered “no, it’s about growing up and becoming a responsible man,” additionally clarifying that “some people find a male or female omen, [a female omen if you are male and a male omen if you are female] then you have gays and lesbians” (B2 interview, 2016). B3 rather emphatically answered that for him, being a man meant “nothing, because I am a man. It’s just who you are” (B3 interview, 2016). In attempting to get him to elaborate on his response, he stated that being a man is just what he is, but not all that he is (B3 interview, 2016). B4 (interview, 2016) was humble in his response, while acknowledging that “you grow up into a man” he went on to say “my father showed me how to be a man. [He was a] good example, work hard and take care of your family.” Quoting his father, “don’t act out, just be a good man.” B5 (interview, 2016) shared the same opinion as other participants, stating “you’re born a boy and grow [up into] a man. It’s the same with girls [growing up into women]. Just born that way.” B6 (interview, 2016), in a different response, echoes the same sentiments. “I am a man” – but what does that mean? “I don’t know. I just am a man. There are things that I will do because I am a man. Women things I won’t do because I am a man.” B7 was potentially the most reflective in his answer to this question. “you are not born a man; you are born a boy or girl. You must decide to be a man.” In answering what it means to decide to be a man, as well as what it means to be a man, he replied that “[you] get to a point and you must decide which way to go. To be a man you must decide. You want to be successful, be able to look after your family. Have respect for your elders.” And if you go the other way? “Then you are not deciding to be a man.” This was noted as being distinctly different from deciding not to be a man. “But you can decide again.” (B7 interview, 2016). B8 believed that “to be a man I must be a provider for my family. I try to protect them from hardships in life.” He further clarified that “not everyone is a man, but everyone can be.” That is, every boy has the potential to be a man. “As a man you have responsibilities and you must accept them” (B8 interview, 2016).

These responses, isolated, indicate the complexities in simply attempting to describe what it means to be a man. Amongst all participants there was the notion that, linguistically, boys grown up into men. However, the construct of what it means, subjectively, to be a man, even for those who attributed the “status” to virtue of birth, characterise this in relation to inherent qualities that they themselves possess. For these individuals, “man” is the foundation of their identity, with other aspects of their entire identity stemming from who they are, what they like, what they do (and should do), as men. Masculinity appears almost as a consequence of being a man. When the above responses are read in conjunction with further questions – on how these men became bouncers, whether or not women could be good bouncers, what qualities are needed to be a good bouncer, and if these are the same qualities that make a man – the “consequence” of masculinity is reinforced. The following responses highlight the notion of gendered occupations, emphasising, aesthetically, how these men embody the “ideal” masculinity symbolising their potential for violence. Simultaneously, contradicting the idea of the “aggressive masculine male” (pertaining specifically to bouncers), with gentlemen who are opposed to any form of violence, unless it is absolutely necessary. The questions on identity/masculinity, women and bouncers, are inextricably linked. The beliefs about what it means to be a man feed into the beliefs around women in the constructed “masculine”/male occupation of being a bouncer. These beliefs in turn shape what it means for them to be a bouncer, which is reflected back onto notions of being a man.

Of the eight participants, B3 was the only one who stated explicitly that women could be good bouncers. He said that “women can be bouncers. Bouncers are not meant to fight. Meant to use your brain” (B3 interview, 2016). B4, and B6 were of the opinion that women could not be bouncers; that being a bouncer is a man’s job. B4 justified his response by claiming that “you need to be bigger than most of the clients. Or be able to fight well. Women aren’t both” (B4 interview, 2016). While B6 simply stated that he had never seen a woman bouncer, and it’s a man’s job. The remainder of the participants were of the impression that women would not be good bouncers, but suggested that they could be useful in specifically dealing with female customers. B2’s response was that “women can search other women. You need women to search other women. Women cannot be bouncers. You need to be strong and physical” (B2 interview, 2016). B6 answered with “[you] need to be a man to be a good bouncer. If they (women) can be as strong as a man... Maybe a man and a woman together. Then the woman can deal with the women” (B6 interview, 2016). B8 (interview, 2016) was thoughtful in his response, stating that “it’s probably better if a woman

bouncer is in charge of dealing with other women. I'm good with all people but if there's trouble then a woman bouncer is better" (speaking of trouble with women/between women).

He did clarify that it wasn't necessary to have women bouncers; that he was very capable of dealing with everyone himself, "but if they are, why not."

Regarding how these men became bouncers, each one referred to their aesthetic attributes. Many were introduced to the profession by friends who thought that they would be good bouncers because of the way they looked. Congolese men in general, have a more defined, larger build (naturally) than many South African men. Simply stated, they look aggressive and intimidating, "not someone you would want to cause trouble with." Although each of the participants said that they possessed "fighting" skills, none of them appeared to express a violent nature. The potential for violence exists, and although that has been argued to be the attribute above all others on which a bouncer's commercial value rests (Hobbs, Hadfield, Lister & Winlow, 2002: 359), all the participants expressed that violence was the last resort, and even that those bouncers who were generally aggressive, were considered to be bad bouncers. B8 argued that he didn't think that bouncers who got aggressive with people easily, should be bouncers. He suggested that they should perhaps rather be policemen (B8 interview, 2016). According to the participants, to be a good bouncer involves, above all else, genuine "people skills." This is the ability to read people, to interpret body language, and general attitudes. B2 remarked that there are two different kinds of bouncers. The one kind is aggressive, "just violent, not right." The other kind looks after customers. "The bouncer is the first person you see, also [the] host. [Your venue] will lose business if [you are] aggressive" (B2 interview, 2016).

Without it being explicitly stated, as mentioned above, to be a bouncer requires a very specific performance of masculinity. This is a constructed masculinity that is appropriate and deemed necessary to be a bouncer. The standard across all contexts and environments is that bouncers "need to look the part." The point of distinction between the Congolese bouncers and local bouncers referred to in the literature is that there appears to be an enactment of an external construction of masculinity, which is embodied by the Congolese bouncers, only in the work environment. Being a bouncer did not form part of their identities. It was a job, a way to make money; for some their only job, and for others merely a stepping stone in pursuit of their goals. A job that they were deemed suitable for, initially, on appearance alone. At work there is an element of security that these men do not enjoy in their daily lives.

They are required to situate themselves as dominant and in control, while patrons of the clubs are subordinate. They alone determine who is granted or denied entry into a space. However, drawing reference from the previous chapter, as immigrants (and all that that entails in terms of finding and belonging) that sense of security is left at the door, so to speak. Due to their status in the country (also explored in the previous chapter), they are completely non-confrontational, inconspicuous in their own lives. In relating this back to the dominant and subordinate/subaltern masculinities, it is not even a question of immigrants being seen as having subordinate identities, rather, they are seen as parasitic entities that do not belong, and as such, should be removed.

Turning to masculinities as characterised by British, local, bouncers, Monaghan (2002c: 506) notes in respect to his research participants, as well as his ethnographic immersion in bodybuilding gyms, “commercial gyms, often serving as informal recruitment sites for doorstaff, were invaluable in allowing me access to this subterranean occupation.” The fact that many bouncers are men who are focused on bodybuilding, in the pursuit of an “ideal” type of masculine body, is indicative of a different construct of the embodiment of masculinity. Doorwork which is decisively and critically structured around the regulation of “consuming bodies” (Monaghan, 2002c: 509). “Britain’s liminal night-time economy encourages the carnivalesque, mild transgression, effervescent sociality and sensual forms of embodiment among drinkers and (typically, large male) doorstaff are paid to privately police these potentially ‘unruly’ bodies.” Monaghan (2002b: 407) also argues that one should critically acknowledge that “male coded violence is circumscribed. Doorstaff, as reflexive body-subjects, exhibit agency; they are not over-determined by the political economy of masculinity.” The same can be said for the Congolese bouncers in that they are not over-determined by the political economy of masculinity, however, their enactment of masculinities, outside of the work space, are largely constrained by both the political economy, as well as the social economy within which they exist.

Tomkins (2003: 6) argues that “work is crucial to the maintenance of the masculine identity.” He justifies this in saying that according to Western definitions, masculinity is indistinguishably linked with definitions of work. Through certain values, priorities and characteristics that mark physical strength, competitiveness, mechanical expertise, ambition, and above all, domination, especially in the workplace, men are “taught” to aspire to these values “as a measurement of manhood.” The performance of hegemonic masculinity, before all else, is a human activity. It is argued to be a social, and not a biological, product of human

activity that is personified by individual men in their regular set of social relations. “As a collective process this is supported by social structure” (Monaghan, 2002b: 407). Monaghan (2002a, 2002b & 2002c) repeatedly makes note of the fact that for most bouncers (within the realm of his research) acts of violence in the nightclub space, carried out by the bouncer, is exhilarating and adds a thrill to an otherwise mundane, monotonous work evening; from his research participants, there was no sense of anxiety around needing to deal with conflict physically.

“In all honesty the vast majority, 95 percent of people who will work as a doorman have been involved in fights and trouble, because really, they’re the sorts of people who will do the door... you can’t put someone on who is frightened to death of a fight...” (Darren, in Winlow, Hobbs, Lister & Hadfield, 2001: 539). For those actively seeking employment as a bouncer, you do so while conveying an absolute belief that you can do the job required (Winlow, Hobbs, Lister & Hadfield, 2001: 539). This speaks largely to specific masculinities as they exist internally within a person, and are not constructed for the specific role of being a bouncer. As this masculinity exists or is lived, individuals believe that they will be good bouncers. This again is in contrast to the Congolese bouncers; none of who actively sought out to become bouncers in South Africa, and all of whom were recruited because of the bodily capital they possess.

Thus, one can argue that “local” men have the freedom to enact and embody various masculinities in any way that they choose. In terms of a hegemonic masculinity, aside from the violent crime and other potentially illegal displays of masculinity, there are few consequences for their performances of masculinity. Internal/external identity then becomes the distinction – for Congolese bouncers, this specific performance of an aggressive, dominant masculinity is just the job. It is an external constructed masculinity, or that is all that they allow it to be. For them, there is a permanent threat, various risks, involved in being overtly masculine, as it is understood in terms of aggression and potentially violent. The identity of immigrant, with subjective meaning that holds, as it is enforced on them, overshadows their own experience of an expressed masculine identity outside of the work environment. Whereas for the local bouncer this is an internal identity. They are able to, and do enjoy this version of masculinity in their everyday lives.

It is at this point that we can then direct the argument back to chapter three. The attempt in this thesis has been that each chapter may stand alone, informatively, yet are all connected,

and somewhat cyclical in nature. The pervasive theme throughout the chapters has been that of “the immigrant” – as a human, and as a bouncer – and how embodying this identity informs the ways in which their personal and professional masculinities (as separate identities) are constructed and performed. This essentially has led to an exploration of how the eight immigrant bouncers, who participated in this research, are forced to constantly redefine how they present themselves, and act, within the liminal spaces in which they exist.

Conclusion

As has been discussed in the introduction, the original intention of this research was to explore a particular criminal phenomenon; the role and extent of involvement that nightclub bouncers, specifically in Cape Town, have in drug networks. Incorporated in this was how these bouncers construct and perform their (masculine) identities within the liminal spaces of the nightclub, considering the initial assumptions on the various areas of liminality that exist within these “single” spaces; how identities are performed in relation to different “actors” and contexts within this space. The topic was primarily informed by, and through, a personal interest in an area that has been well documented and researched elsewhere, but lacks the same depth of research in a South African context. To highlight one important point, considering how the research evolved; the initial assumption of the involvement of these individuals in criminal activity was not informed by their status as immigrants²⁴, but rather as a result of their identities as bouncers; the general perception of bouncers, as well as personal experiences.

Again, the decision to interview Congolese bouncers arose from the fact that as a migrant group, they are predominant in Cape Town, and as bouncers, very predominant within the spaces of the night-time economy. Considering, from experience, their physically aggressive appearance, and their kind, non-aggressive, non-confrontational characters, this group of men/ bouncers, were the ideal research participants. As discussed in the literature, in the context of Cape Town’s night-time economy, the application of physical violence is external to the role of the bouncer (Shaw, 2016: 6). In terms of the comparative analysis that ensued, the spaces that these individuals occupy as bouncers, was one that heavily contrasted what was evident in the literature, on both British bouncers and, historically, white local bouncers. With the identity of bouncer, as well as immigrant, these individuals are constantly navigating constructions of identity and masculinity within the liminal spaces in which they exist.

Through the process of interviewing the participants, and at the conclusion of the interviews, the study evolved into a more complex area of research which looked less to an explicit (voluntary) involvement, in any capacity, in the drug trade, and became centred around the

²⁴ I feel it is important to make this distinction here, especially considering the pervasive discourse, as discussed above, which denotes immigrants (of all kinds) as criminal.

“issue²⁵” of migrancy and immigrants in South Africa, finding a place of belonging and “finding”/ creating an identity in a foreign place; especially the unique complexities of immigrant bouncers in South Africa. Thus, the final product of this thesis looks at three key themes: bouncers, immigrants and identity; a study of immigrant nightclub bouncers in Cape Town, and how they construct their identities in the liminal spaces of the nightclub.

Although there is a multitude of research on migrancy, and immigrants (legal, “illegal”, xenophobia) in general, as well as research on specific immigrant communities, in South Africa, the distinctive realm of “the immigrant bouncer” is one of minimal research.

The “immigrant bouncer”, in South Africa, exists in different realities. His identity, and of specific relevance to this research – his form of masculinity – is one which is divided, by necessity, between his day and night life. Migrants have, and continue to be, demonised and dehumanised; as such they spend “an inordinate amount of time (and resources) trying to stay below the radar, ‘fitting in’ and adopting local cultural practices, enduring verbal slights and insults in silence” (Crush & Ramachandran, 2010: 223). This results in these individuals subordinating their own masculinities in their efforts to “stay below the radar.” This existence is in complete contrast to the occupational masculinity that is deemed necessary by the profession that they work in. “The image of ... bouncers relies on the construction and projection of a dominant masculine image of overwhelming power and fighting prowess” (Tomkins, 2003: 17).

In the night-time economy, the bouncer is required to be visible; there is no question of his presence at the door. Although, one can argue, that for these individuals, their “bouncer identity” is absent from their daily lives, from the research it is evident that that “migrant identity” is not absent in their night lives. The relationship between the bouncer and the patrons of an establishment is a relatively straightforward one; the bouncer has authority, and any question of this authority holds consequences. The relationship between the bouncer and his employer (and/or other actors involved in the night-time economy) is a slightly more complex one. There is the expectation of the role of the bouncer, but also the potential for manipulation of the immigrant, which may lead to various degrees of involvement in criminal activities; “the deportation system itself encourages South African employers to take advantage of migrants” (Crush & Ramachandran, 2010: 223).

²⁵ In contrast to the “immigrant issue”, as it is portrayed by the state, here the “issue” is concerned with the experiences of immigrants in South Africa. Their negative realities are the issue.

The core engagement of the entire thesis is then an analysis of certain comparisons between white, native bouncers, as found in the literature, and as articulated in the British case, and the Congolese immigrant bouncers as interviewed in contemporary South Africa. This analysis highlights distinct areas of research: masculine identities that are shaped largely by social structures; the space that immigrants occupy, the safety and security that is generally not afforded to them in the same way that it is given to local South Africans; the eco-systemic nature of their identity and lived experiences; how their place in society influences their identity, which in turn affects how they are and act out being a bouncer, and their level of involvement in illicit activities.

Looking to the original hypothesis, the Congolese bouncers do not “act” in the same manner as those who are presented in the literature. Considering the various elements of this thesis, one can draw a correlation between these individuals’ status as immigrants, and the constraints that this status places on identity construction and performances of masculinity. This is not to say that an immigrant status is exclusively what determines such constructions, however, the relational impact is undeniable. Reflecting on preconceived notions and assumptions surrounding immigrants, and bouncers, as well as the xenophobic climate in South Africa, the immigrant bouncer exists in a unique reality.

The intention with this research, has been to disrupt normative assumptions surrounding both bouncers, and immigrants; to show them as people. As well as to provide an alternative contextualisation, not justification, as to how South Africans, from the social, structural and institutional levels, have formed and determined their understandings of certain immigrants in South Africa. Those immigrants who appear to pose the biggest “threat” to the most vulnerable sectors of South African society, have been, strategically, placed in this position; using targeted and specific narratives to reproduce and reinforce the current discourse surround the “issue of immigrants.” With this “mentality” in mind, the methods of research were selected with the objective of telling the “stories” and creating a space in which the voices of these individuals could be heard. While the theory in this thesis has structured and informed the project, it is the individuals involved who are at the heart of the project.

Looking to areas of additional research; concerning masculinity, one question which was not in the scope of this project but may have significant contributions is to examine the constructions of masculinity within the DRC. As Morrell (2007: 607) notes, “masculinity is a collective gender identity and not a natural attribute. It is socially constructed and fluid.”

Thus, gendered behaviours, behaviours of masculinity, are modified by context, are performed in multiple spaces, “and find unique definition as a result of their specific cultural and ideological location in time” and space (Luyt, 2002: 17). A comparative analysis of, potential, differences in the normative concepts of what masculinity means and is, as well as the constructions of masculinities, between South Africa and the DRC could broaden understandings of the ways in which identity and masculinities are re-constructed and “assimilated” by immigrants in South Africa. This would allow for a different questioning of the impact that this may have on their lived experiences. It is also relevant to consider the fact that Congolese/African masculinities may fundamentally differ from British/European masculinities; the construction and performance of these. These, potential, contextual differences may partially account for the discrepancies, even contradictions, noted above – between the literature and the data collected from participants.

Due to time constraints, this research project did not allow for a large sample size, which is, I believe, both a strength and weakness of this research. The eight participants who were interviewed, were instrumental to the shaping of this project; and it is through their stories that the research unfolded. As a result of the small sample size, there was enough time for each interview to be given the attention it, and the individual, deserved. This resulted in an in-depth and richly detailed contribution of data. However, although some generalisations can be made from the data collected, this research then most specifically speaks to the experiences of these eight men. Within a longer time period, more “voices” could be added to this particular conversation.

Additionally, adding to the “voices” of this paper, to gain a far deeper, comprehensive understanding, as well as a tool for validity, further components of data collection should be employed. This includes interviewing nightclub owners, attempting to understand why, if intentional, they choose to hire Congolese men (as opposed to South African men).

Furthermore, participant observation of the bouncers at work, would provide an even more in-depth look at their enactment of constructed masculinities, as well as serving to validate their accounts of themselves in their work surroundings.

I urge the reader to consider this thesis (the way that the existing research has been used in combination with the interviews) as an alternative discussion. A discussion which disrupts the existing conversations and constructions surrounding both immigrants and bouncers. A discussion which offers an alternative view of the history and processes involved in creating

the current conceptions that exist around these individuals. In doing so, there exists potential; the potential for a different reality, a reality which is more inclusive of the “other.”

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