

NEGOTIATING URBAN SPACES

Xhosa migrants' movement in and through Cape Town's
social and spatial structures, South Africa



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Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the
MA-degree in Social Anthropology
University of Bergen

June 2015

Front page photo by Thandiwe. A regular day at work

**In Memory of
Martin Malgas
01.03.1964 – 23.11.2014**

Acknowledgements

First and foremost I would like to thank the staff at The Big Issue Cape Town who so openly welcomed me into their organisation. Your hospitality was tremendous. I would like to thank Pam Jackson, the director of 'Ons Plek', for giving me in-depth information about the life of Cape Town's street girls. And to the people who I am most indebted to; the Big Issue vendors who so unconditionally opened up their hearts and let me into their lives. I would also like to thank all the amazing human beings whom I crossed paths with during my fieldwork. You have all enriched my life in more ways than I thought possible. My study would not have been possible without your help, and I am forever grateful.

To my supervisor Cecilie Ødegaard, thank you for grasping the thoughts of my often frustrated mind, your advice has been highly valued. I am positive that I would not have gotten this degree if it had not been for your guidance and ability to push me through the rough patches. I could not have asked for anyone better to help me complete this project.

To all my friends and house mates in Cape Town; thank you for being there and for giving me breaks throughout a hectic fieldwork. I wish to thank the whole MA-class of 2015 since I would not have been able to make it through this past year without the collective frustration and excitement we all shared. A special gratitude goes to my unauthorized life coach, Marte E. S. Haaland, and Kajsa Amundsen for reading my chapters and drafts. Your input has been highly appreciated. Lastly, Wesley, your support in this process has helped me more than you realise. I thank you for your editing skills, advice and comforting words when I needed them the most.

Enkosi Kakhulu

Dankie

Takk

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Glossary

There are three basic clicks in Xhosa.

- c – The sound made to express pity (tut tut) Tongue in **front**.
 q – The sound made by a cork popping Tongue in the **middle**.
 x – The sound made to get a horse go faster **Sideways** click.

(Munnik, 2006:xi)

Common South African words and slang	Xhosa Words and Phrases
Apartheid – Afrikaans meaning “apartness”	Amagunya – Deep-fried flour buns
Airtime – Money vouchers for mobile phones	Duk – Head piece
Braai- Barbeque	Entlakwamasini – ‘North of the field’
Location - Township	Goduka- Go home
Robots - Traffic lights	Ikhaya – Home
Skellem – Untrustworthy person	Impangelo – ‘Working for a wage’
Skollie – Criminal, person of unsavoury character	Inkaba – Umbilical cord
Shebeen – informal pub	Makhoti – Wife
Spaza shop - kiosk	Mqombhoti – Traditional Xhosa beer
Stokvel – savings club	Ukufihla intloko- ‘Hiding place’
Tsotsi – Thug, deviant	Umnombo – ‘Roots’

INTRODUCTION

Celiwe cried for three days when she found out her husband had left her for another woman. She stopped eating and did not let anyone into her house. When we spoke it had been two months since he left, and she told me she was fine now. Celiwe told me this when I was back in Cape Town, seven months after my fieldwork had ended. Her husband took her TV, DVDs and money before he escaped to the Eastern Cape province of South Africa. She had a resigned attitude towards his sudden disappearance. The unpredictable and precarious conditions in which Celiwe found herself involved several issues that complicated the situation. However, the fact that she suddenly became the sole provider for her family of four, not having a permanent job herself, and being let down by the person who was supposed to stand by her side, did not seem to impact her as much as I would have expected. She said there was nothing she could do about it; she had to move forward for herself and her children.

This thesis is about how female Xhosa migrants are positioned within social and spatial structures in urban South Africa, and how they manage and negotiate this positioning. Celiwe's story is not unique; rather, her reactions exemplify the everydayness of my interlocutors' (both male and female) precarious life conditions. In my interlocutors' attempts to create stability and predictability in their lives, they relied on social relationships and the resources found within their community. In order to understand the lives of the interlocutors, a broader contextualisation is necessary. My thesis will investigate both the general context of social and spatial structures in Cape Town, and individuals' personal experiences in urban city spaces.

In order to fully capture the story within this thesis, it is useful to create a foundation based on Doreen Massey's (1994) space and place theory. Within this framework women's positioning in the urban landscape can be explored on several levels with respect to the different ways in which urban spaces influence my interlocutors' lives. The dynamic between spaces, places and people is a particularly useful perspective because of the apartheid regime's systematic

segregation of people in both Cape Town and the rest of South Africa pre-1994. In this introduction, Celiwe and the other interlocutors will be described as well as the research placed within a wider framework. Before this, however, I will explain why women in Cape Town became the core of my research.

Setting the Stage

When I arrived in Cape Town for the first time in 2012, as a student at the University of Cape Town, I was warned about all the dangers “out there” and how I had to adapt my mobility and behaviour according to local standards. At the university’s introductory meeting at the university, my fellow international students and I were given information about campus security and how to navigate from campus to our house after dark. We were told to never walk alone in the evening and how poles equipped with alarms were installed along the pavement between upper and lower campus as a safety means for students if feeling unsafe. In addition, ‘neighbourhood watch’ companies had been established in several neighbourhoods. Guards patrolled the streets and if you wished, a guard would walk you back to your house. These restrictions and precautions were sometimes difficult to accept for a Norwegian student like myself. I was not used to being surrounded by high walls decorated with barbed wire and security warnings when walking through neighbourhoods in the suburbs and the city. The feeling of limited mobility, and the lack of trust and fear of violence so visually explicit in the urban landscape inspired me to explore how public spaces are experienced in Cape Town, South Africa. This research interest is also rooted in a broader concern about what it means to be a woman in the South African society – in light of the country’s high rates of violence against women, sexual harassment and notion of patriarchy (Albertyn et al, 2007; Moffett, 2008). I conducted my research over a period of six months in 2014, together with street vendors. They enabled me to *see* and explore a different side of Cape Town compared to what I had been exposed of during my first year.

The Big Issue

I gained access to the field through The Big Issue organisation. They create jobs for homeless, disadvantaged and unemployed people in Cape Town. It is a non-governmental organisation (NGO) and a public benefit organisation (PBO) and functions as a stepping-stone for people to enter the formal job market. The Big Issue organisation distributes *The Big Issue*, a general interest magazine, that is published monthly. They have a small editorial team and get contributions from freelance journalists and photographers (The Big Issue, n.d.). Vendors are

responsible for all sales of the magazine, and it was through participating in their lives and conversations that my fieldwork became possible.

Vendors of The Big Issue are independent salespeople who buy the magazines for 50% of the cover price of R20. The Big Issue offers guidance counselling and social support services. In addition, the vendor training and development programme grants vendors access to job and life skills training to make them better equipped to enter the formal job market. The Big Issue offers socially marginalised people an opportunity to financially support their family and extended family. Selling the magazine generates an income whilst seeking permanent employment (The Big Issue, n.d.).

Interlocutors

The majority of my interlocutors came from a specific economic and cultural background. They were Xhosa from a low socio-economic class and the majority had not graduated *matric* (finished high school). Marriage, lack of financial funding and pregnancies were common reasons for why they had not graduated. I started with ten vendors, mostly men, but as my research developed I ended up with a majority of female interlocutors. Throughout the fieldwork, interlocutors introduced me to additional 'Big Issue' vendors, other street vendors, homeless people, family members, and friends working in the city. I had weekly or daily contact with six men and thirteen women. Fifteen of these spoke Xhosa as their mother tongue and the other four spoke Afrikaans. It was difficult to develop regular interactions with street vendors who did not work for The Big Issue, due to their irregular work hours and high alcohol consumption. Regardless, these entrepreneurs, who sold pamphlets called *Funny Money*, as well as the *Cape Argus* and *Cape Times* newspapers worked at the same sites and became part of my fieldwork.

All Xhosa interlocutors, or their parents, had moved from the neighbouring province of the Eastern Cape and settled in the Cape Flats. The Cape Flats consists of townships, informal settlements and shack dwellings situated outside the city centre and suburbs. Three interlocutors stayed permanently in the city centre; living on the street. All female interlocutors, and all but three men, had children. Two women and three men were unmarried. Half of my interlocutors were the sole provider for their family and the other half had a spouse with jobs in various industries. The money generated from the magazine sales was essential to support themselves and their families. Vendors did not have a steady income, but

did have a regular income. A vendor could sell between zero and thirty magazines in a day. Sales depended on how new the edition of the magazine was. The first week of a new edition generated high sales, and as the weeks went by sales dropped. Vendors had many regular customers, and those who had worked for The Big Issue the longest were often the ones who sold the most magazines.

Research Questions

The ethnic identity of being Xhosa created a foundation of how interlocutors navigated through spaces and how and if spaces were perceived as safe. I will investigate how the mobility of Xhosa women actualises social and spatial categories and structures in urban contexts. The main argument of this research is that despite post-apartheid legislation's liberal laws, social and spatial categories continue to be embedded with hierarchical meaning, in accordance with gender, ethnicity, race and class. The meanings embedded in urban spaces influence how women relate to and experiences urban spaces. Three research questions lay the foundation of my analysis:

- How are urban spaces structured and experienced differently according to gender, ethnicity, race and class?
- In what ways do female Xhosa migrants experience and relate to 'home', work and intimate relationships in the urban context?
- How is women's mobility perceived and experienced in urban spaces?

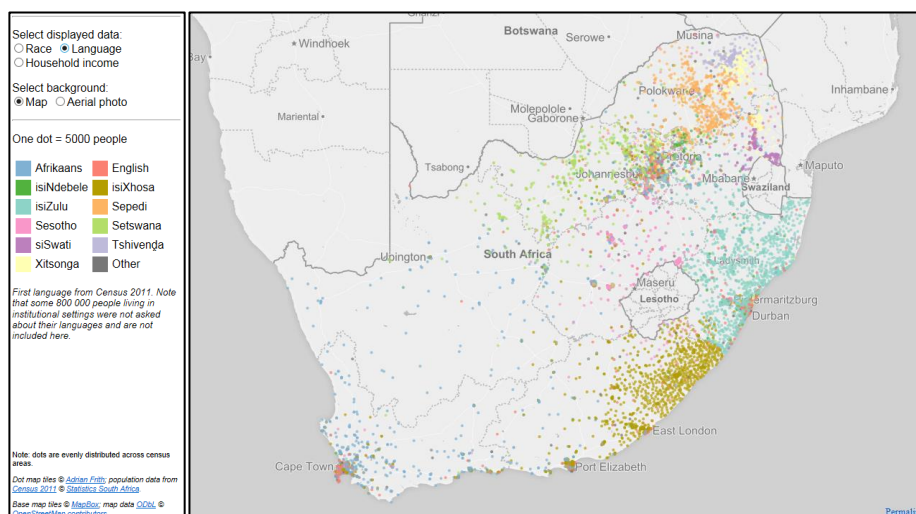
This thesis operates with a gradual change of focus and I view the content as consisting of three sections. The first part contextualises the cultural background of the interlocutors and their living situations. The middle section gives a broader overview of Cape Town and how social and spatial dynamics work in relation to race, ethnicity, gender and class. The last part investigates women's experience in urban spaces and the gendering of the spaces through the discourse of mistrust and how this mistrust is negotiated and expressed in intimate relationships. I hope to give insight into the world of female street vendors who live in a post-apartheid city that continues to negotiate its past, its present and its future.

Cape Town, South Africa

South Africa has been a democratic republic for more than 20 years. The apartheid regime was formally abolished in 1994 but the legacy of apartheid is still visible in contemporary society. The apartheid regime built a landscape based on inclusion and exclusion and these

racial segregation policies continue to influence the power structures and social formations in post-apartheid South Africa (Shepherd & Murray, 2007:7). The official national statistics of 2014 divide the estimated population of 54 million into four groups: African (80,2%), Coloured (8,8%), Asian/Indian (2,5%) and White (8,4%) (Statistics South Africa, 2014:7), which indicates that racial categories are still part of South Africans lived reality.

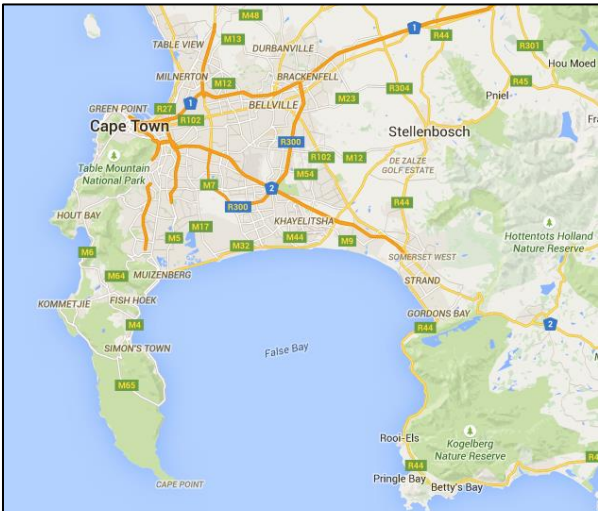
Christianity and Islam are the two dominant religions in Cape Town. Muslims constitute approximately ten percent of the national population and it is estimated that 46 percent of South African Muslims live in Cape Town (Bangstad & Fataar, 2010:818). The majority of my interlocutors defined themselves as Christian and Christianity is the largest religion in South Africa (Stewart, 2010:119).



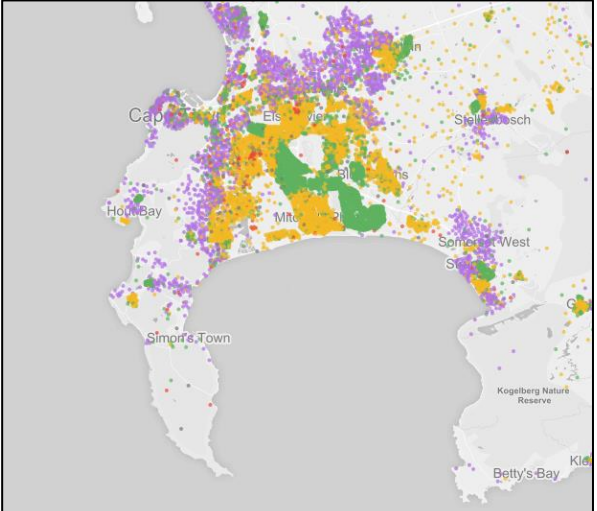
Map 1: South Africa, The distribution of population according to language.
 By Adrian Frith. Population data from Census 2011, Statistics
 Screenshots from: <http://dotmap.adrianfrith.com/>

Cape Town is the oldest city in South Africa and was the first city to call itself a metropolis. The European establishment settled at the Cape in 1652 and used the area as a trading post between Europe and Asia (Leraand, 2014). Cape Town is the legislative capital of South Africa and is situated in the Western Cape Province. The Western Cape Government Provincial Treasury (2012) estimated that 3.7 million people populated Cape Town in 2011. The Western Cape is the only province in South Africa where black Africans are a minority. The majority are Coloured (42.4%), while Africans (38.6%), Indian/Asians (1.4%) and Whites (15.7%) are minorities (Western Cape Government Provincial Treasury, 2012:2). The black African population is continuously growing as more people migrate from rural areas

and immigrants from other African countries settle in the Cape Flats. There are major socio-economic differences between the inhabitants of the city. The rich live along the coastline, on the hillside of the mountains and in the southern suburbs, while the poor live in less attractive suburbs and in townships with only a glimpse of Table Mountain in the distance (Shepherd & Murray, 2007:6; Robins, 2007:41). The map below best illustrates the demarcated areas of Cape Town.



Map 2: The Cape Peninsula, City Centre and Cape Flats
Screenshot from Google Maps: <https://goo.gl/maps/j10cD>



Map 3: Population distributed by race. Green: Black African, Yellow: Coloured, Red: Indian Asian, Purple: White.
By Adrian Firth.
Population data from Census 2011, Statistics South Africa
Screenshot from: <http://dotmap.adrianfrith.com/>

Apartheid Policies

The city centre of Cape Town was classified as a ‘white’s-only area’ during the apartheid regime. The African population could enter this ‘white space’ temporarily if they were labourers and as long as they carried the correct identification documents verifying their access. The Population Registration Act of 1950 was put in place to eliminate ambiguities about racial categories, and give each citizen a concrete classification that would define that person’s place – economically, politically and socially (Posel, 2001:60). Those classified as ‘White’ were considered full citizens, while those classified as ‘Coloured’ (and ‘Indian’) were partial citizens. The ‘Africans’ were placed at the bottom of this social structure and were generally considered tribal subjects (Erasmus, 2008:171-172), who belonged in ‘native’ reserves called Bantustans (Shepherd & Murray, 2007:6)¹.

¹ Mainly rural areas with scarce resources.

In South Africa, 'race' was considered a mix of biology, class and culture, and the way the categorisation was implemented made 'race' real both materially and non-materially (Erasmus, 2008:172). The government's Group Areas Act of 1950 divided the city's residential areas on the basis of this categorisation. The Act forced the African population to move from their homes and into Bantustans and townships; the Coloureds were forced into townships, while the Whites settled in the city centres, suburbs, and on beaches and farms. Murray and Shepherd (2007) argue that this segregation made it easier for the white minority to control all areas in society (Shepherd & Murray, 2007:6). The White population in Cape Town was more secluded from Africans during apartheid compared to other cities, because the government placed the Coloured population between White and African areas. Coloured communities thus functioned as a buffer zone (Lemanski, et al., 2008:141). The apartheid government's strategy of influx control included measures to control the flow of Black Africans coming from the rural areas to urban areas to work (Singleton, 2014:168). One of these measures was the 'Coloured Labour Preference Policy' of 1954. This was put in place to make it easier for the Coloured population to find work in Cape Town, without having to compete with African workers from the Eastern Cape and other provinces. Influx control did not work as the government had planned because Africans continued to move to the city and several illegal squatter camps emerged (Ngxabi, 2003:27).

During apartheid, African men were allowed to go to the cities to work but their wives and children were restricted and had to stay in their designated Bantustan. Women were considered property of their husbands until 1953 and marital rape was only formally criminalised as late as 1992 (Albertyn, et al., 2007:296-297). The government controlled the size of the Black Africans' houses and therefore also their right to privacy and access to land. Judith L. Singleton (2014) argues that women were denied a chance to develop their own sense of self because rights to housing required a working male to be part of the household (Singleton, 2014:170). Only a registered tenant had access to electricity and it was only men who were allowed to be registered tenants. These policies made women dependent on men. Singleton argues that, "in this sense, the apartheid government reshaped the social order in the interest of men" (Singleton, 2014:171).

The complex patterns of internal migration during apartheid have consequences for the spatial distribution of the population today (Kok, et al., 2003:34-35). The Cape Flats keep growing with both national and international migrants, and the demographic layout is very similar to

the layout that was structured by the apartheid government, as the ‘racial map’ on page six indicates. Some of the reasons why this racially segregated landscape continues are a combination of neoliberal policies and the white fear of black criminality (Robins, 2007:28; Singleton, 2014:177). Singleton says the neoliberal policies have encouraged privatisation in all industries. This has affected housing for the poor because private companies have little interest in serving people without getting a profit (Singleton, 2014:177). Charlotte Lemanski (2004) explains that the fear of difference is generated by an underlying assumption of poor Africans and Coloureds as criminals, termed *swart gevaar* and *skollie menace* during apartheid (Lemanski, 2004:109). Steven Robins (2007) argues that the “multimillion-rand surveillance and security sector ensures that middle-class neighbourhoods and shopping malls are defended against what is perceived to be a dangerous underclass ‘other’” (Robins, 2007:28).

Post-Apartheid South Africa

The strong segregation and dehumanisation that the population experienced through the apartheid government’s rule impacted the creation of South Africa’s new constitution. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) is regarded as one of the most liberal constitutions in the world. The Constitution states that everybody has the same rights regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, sexuality and political view (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 1996, Bill of Rights, sections 9). The Constitution secures the freedom and security of the person and rights to adequate housing (ibid., Bill of Rights, sections 12 and 26). The country’s eleven official languages is also an indicator of how the new democratic republic embraces South African diversity (ibid., Founding Provisions, section 6).

Despite the new legal framework, the already “normalised” inequality continues to affect citizens in various ways. Zimitri Erasmus (2008) exemplifies this inequality by explaining how wealthy black South Africans can escape the effects of race because of their social position. While poor and working-class black people experience the brutal and material effects of race on a daily basis. Their wages are ranked by race and black citizens remain the majority of poor residents in South Africa (Erasmus, 2008:172).

Fiona Ross’ (2010) monograph *Raw Life, New Hope: Decency, housing and everyday life in a post-apartheid community* depicts a community centred in the outer perimeter of the city of Cape Town. The constant uncertainties about work, health and family show the rawness of

their everyday life. Capitalism, global economy and massive population movements have also affected the people who live in poor communities and not just the massive development in the cities. The people in the community are dependent on each other when the government forgets them (2010). The monograph depicts the complex and contradictory ways of life of the people who live on the margins of society. The community Ross worked in was called The Park and started as an informal settlement because of the lack of housing for Coloureds and Africans all over South Africa. After many years the residents of The Park eventually won rights to formal housing and at the turn of the millennium many of the residents moved into real houses in The Village (Ross 2010:2). However, the new housing did not only bring prosperity and better life conditions.

Vanessa Watson (2007) argues that the way formal housing has been planned and acted out in the townships has not built social capital for the dwellers, instead “formal housing units is breaking social and family networks” (Watson, 2007:71). The South African government’s urban planning and development approach has been rooted in a Western political and social theory. It conceptualises the individual as an independent being and morality is not seen as a collective construct but a result of individuals’ preferences (2007:70-71). Watson proposes that we need to look at political interventions and nature of responses together since dwellers “adjust their everyday lives to embrace, reject or hybridise the technical and managerial systems which continually attempt to create order and predictability in urban environments” (Watson, 2007:77). I wish to draw this argument further, as I do not think it is only applicable in townships. The general strategy of housing and development planning in South Africa, is constructing an environment of continuous social and spatial tension.

Architecture of Fear

Academics argue that there is a new apartheid emerging as segregation is recreated through architecture and the fear of ‘others’ (Robins, 2007; Lemanski, 2004; Baker, 2002).

“After Apartheid, the ‘black townships’ of Cape Town have become even more segregated and disconnected from the white middle-class parts of the city. In a context of rising levels of crime and violence, the townships are perceived by middle-class suburban residents to be even more dangerous and ‘unruly’ than they were under apartheid” (Robins, 2007:26).

Lemanski (2004) explains how urban residents build their houses and spatial surroundings on the basis of fear-of-crime and that these constructions have an impact on their social lives.

The data she collected implied that, in 1998, the Western Cape had one of the highest crime and fear-of-crime rates in the country. The white middle-class feared the city centre areas, in contrast to the black or coloured residents who feared their home and immediate surroundings (Lemanski, 2004:106). According to Lemanski, people do not feel responsible for what happens outside their home and this lack of social order creates an even more dangerous public space (2004:107).

This social and spatial segregation is not particular to South Africa; similar tendencies are found in cities across the globe. Theresa P.R. Caldeira (2000) argues that “the circulation of these discourses of fear and the proliferation of practices of segregation invariably intertwine with other processes of social transformation” (2000:1). Caldeira shows, in her monograph, *City of Walls*, how Sao Paulo is highly segregated and the public areas become the unsafe, whilst private enclaves symbolise safety (2000:2). The increase of violent crime in Sao Paulo has resulted in the building of high walls as a strategy for protection:

“Both symbolically and materially, these strategies operate by marking differences, imposing partitions and distances, building walls, multiplying rules of avoidance and exclusion, and restricting movement. ... The everyday narratives, commentaries, conversations, and jokes that have crime and fear as their subject counteract fear, and the experiences of being a victim of crime and simultaneously make fear circulate and proliferate” (Caldeira, 2000:2).

Caldeira terms it ‘talk of crime’, and argues that how you talk about places as dangerous influences people to act accordingly (2000:2). The same tendencies were observed in Cape Town during this research and the discourse made the public spaces even more dangerous as people hesitated to walk around, and being warned about this made it even more dangerous, especially for women.

Women

Historically, women’s experiences were overlooked in global human rights policies. This changed during the 1990s when protection of women’s rights became implemented in human rights laws. South African feminists used this global trend as an advantage to advocate for the constitutional protection of women’s freedom and security of the person when the 1996 South African constitution was written (Albertyn, et al., 2007:297). Feminists and others viewed explicit constitutional laws as necessary because women were, amongst other issues, the property of their husbands up until 1953 (2007:296). Several academics argue that men experience women’s rights and autonomy in South Africa negatively. Men feel disempowered

and struggle to negotiate their masculinity and role in the household. The increase of domestic violence is also linked to women's rights (Albertyn, et al., 2007; Dworkin, et al., 2012; Moffett, 2006). Men sometimes consider themselves owners of their wife and children and use this to legitimise the use of violence against women, despite the laws that are set in place to give women psychological and bodily autonomy (Albertyn, et al., 2007:301). Albertyn, et al. also consider violence against women as a form of social control for men to "promote hierarchical gender relations" (2007:305). The risk of sexual assault becomes a powerful symbolic function in shaping women's movement in public spaces, it influences their clothing and social interactions (Albertyn, et al., 2007:306). While Albertyn, et al.'s article was written eight years ago, the findings of my research indicate that the same hierarchical dynamics exist today. A woman moving freely in a public space continues to be perceived as "matter out of place" (Douglas, 1979), because her "natural" environment is in the home.

Another issue that has affected women's physical and bodily mobility is the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Suzanne Leclerc-Madlala (2001) wrote an article in which she addresses the issue of virginity testing of girls in South Africa. Her article "locates the growing popularity of virginity testing within a gendered meaning-making process consistent with commonly held beliefs that the epidemic is the result of women being sexually 'out of control'" (Leclerc-Madlala, 2001:533). Her article writes that blaming women for the spread of HIV infection is a general theme throughout Africa (2001:546). Liv Haram's research in Tanzania reveals how the Meru conceptualised the increase of HIV as a 'women's epidemic'. Women were blamed for the epidemic because when they left Meru society they did not only cross the spatial borders, but also moral borders – women crossed the norms of female conduct (Haram, 2001:53). Leclerc-Madlala continues to argue that the way in which disease and HIV is understood is derived from existing frameworks that associate women with being dirty and impure (Leclerc-Madlala, 2001:542). Male sexual activity is controlled through the control of women's bodies, thus enacting gender inequality (2001:547-548).

Doreen Massey's (1994) argument that the naturalisation of gender characteristics has given women limitations on their social mobility in space and limitations on identity becomes evident in these studies (Massey, 1994:179). I chose to include these studies as an introduction to how women and men are attributed different and unequal characteristics based on gender. These gendered expectations will influence not only social categories but also

spatial categories. Henrietta Moore (1994) writes that, in the context of punishing women; “women are in fact *universal* in their *particularity*” (Moore, 1994:17). Meaning that women across the globe are not the same but that how they have suffered crime is based on their particular gender, and this suffering has been inserted by men (1994:17). This thesis will explore gendering characteristics to illustrate how those characteristics influenced the various ways my interlocutors experienced urban spaces and places.

Chapter Overview

The first chapter introduced the interlocutors, research questions and personal interests for conducting this particular study. The chapter was completed with a short historical overview to contextualise Cape Town and to place the research in a wider framework.

Chapter two presents the theoretical framework, methodological approach, challenges in the field and ethical concerns considered significant to underline.

Chapter three gives a thorough presentation of the main interlocutors’ social and ethnic position in the diverse social landscape in Cape Town. The ethnic identity of being Xhosa influence people’s negotiation and experience of urban spaces.

Chapter four explores various levels of social interaction in the city and how its residents negotiate social and spatial processes. The empirical data presented views both general and individual levels of how the city is experienced and perceived.

Chapter five explores social and spatial dynamics from the perspective of mistrust. The aim is to give a concrete way of understanding how the contestation, creation and management of space are influenced by the *discourse of mistrust* and vice versa.

Chapter six investigates the discourse of mistrust on a macro level by unfolding gendered relations and expectations in the context of women’s spatial and social mobility.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

THEORY

Space and Place

Henri Lefebvre critiqued geographers and other academics for taking the spatial for granted. According to Lefebvre, spaces are fundamentally social and inhabit cultural meaning, and this makes spaces dynamic and changeable (Shields, 2004:210). Space and place theory is a useful foundation for this analysis since people are always connected with spaces and places. However, Lefebvre is first and foremost interested in class structures and how class visibility influences the spatial (Shields, 2004:208, 211), hence the *production* of place, whilst for example Doreen Massey sees more clearly the mutual relationship between the spatial and the social (Massey, 1994). Massey argues in her book, *Space, Place and Gender*, that space is the product of social relations in as much as social relations constitute that space (1994:120-121), meaning that the social and the spatial exist in a dialectic relationship.

Jürgen Habermas has been an important academic in conceptualising the public sphere and his approach can in many ways be used to explore the social and political public sphere in Cape Town. Habermas views the public sphere as a discursive space where private people come together as a public, set aside from the sphere of public authority and the sphere of private life (Outhwaite, 1996:25-26) and in South Africa, the public sphere has become a site for plurality where opinions about issues of general concern can be discussed without influence from the government. Open discussions against government policies were strictly illegal during apartheid as the government tried to control the flow of information. Despite the government's criminalisation of the opposition, in some cases labelling them as terrorists, the opposition won their rights to a free and open public sphere. This dynamic dialogue has continued into post-apartheid society, twenty years after the demise of the regime. All citizens have legal access to public spaces and have the same opportunities to enter general discourses. The blooming art, comedy and performance communities, which I will elaborate on in chapter 3, are clear expressions of dynamic discourses taking place in the public sphere.

However, the problem with Habermas' theory is that he focuses primarily on the discursive sphere and does not include the material and spatial dimensions. The current study, therefore, focuses mainly on Doreen Massey's approach as it connects the discursive with both social and spatial dimensions (Massey, 1994). In addition, Nancy Fraser criticises Habermas for not including how a person's social position (gender, race, class, ethnicity or sexuality) influences the debate between, supposedly, equal citizens (Fraser, 1990:63-66). In practice, inclusiveness in the public sphere is limited, since not all social layers have the same access to, and authority over, public discourses (Fraser, 1990:65). There existed no legal restrictions on who could sojourn in the public locations in which I the fieldwork of this study was conducted, but there were differences in who sojourned where and how people acted in various public spaces. On these grounds I find Massey's space and place theory the most useful theoretical foundation of my analysis.

A central argument for Massey is that space itself cannot be understood as something permanent – space is as fluent and dynamic as social relations. If we reduce it to something static we take out the life and power dynamics that are part of space (Massey, 2005:30, 55). She argues that “social relations always have a spatial form and spatial content” (Massey, 1994:168). You cannot make space a closed-off dimension because it is part of influencing and making possible particular social phenomena.

Massey goes on to say that spaces and places are two different concepts that overlap. She proposes space as a four-dimensional ‘space-time’ that coexists with social interrelations on all geographical scales “from the intimacy of the household to the wide space of transglobal connections” (1994:168). Space is a multiplicity, and it is in this sphere that the production and restructuring of diversity and conflicting interests happens. She proposes that “if time unfolds change then space unfolds as interaction”, thus time and space are of equal importance (Massey, 2005:61). Place, on the other hand, “is formed out of the particular set of social relations which interact at a particular location” (Massey, 1994:168). This means that ‘place’ can be a specific location where particular sets of social interactions meet and this attributes specific characteristics to that place at a given time. Places have an inherent ability to be given several identities depending on the particularities that occur, since some social interrelations can go beyond the particular place (1994:168-169).

Massey argues that space must be integrated in time, with the concept 'space-time'. This is because it is only through experiencing something that we are able to hold a place still, if only for limited time (1994:2-3). Massey links power (and therefore also politics) to the spatial. She explains that only by conceptualising space as a dynamic dimension in social life does its direct relations to the social and to power become visible and important: "Thinking in terms of stretched-out social relations confronts an important aspect of the spatiality of power itself" (Massey, 1994:4). Massey suggests that we take a look at specific situations with both a being-in-the-world approach and at the same time understand the bigger picture, which mean we must include history, development and changes. Therefore, we cannot look at, for example, the inner city alone. It must be situated in the wider geographical context. In this way we can see places as processes because places tie social interactions together at specific times, and these are not motionless interactions. Places become just as dynamic as the social relations (1994:155).

According to Massey, people's 'senses of the place' will vary, even within a community where a population has similar interests, like religion, heritage and ethnicity (1994:178). This is because individuals have different social positions within that community and Massey argues that the probability of a woman's and a man's experience of a place will surely be different (1994:153-154). Massey's main argument is that geography and gender are interconnected and influence each other. The ways they are connected impact a person's mobility or lack of mobility. This gendering of places and spaces influences *and* reflects how gender is constructed and understood. This gendering happens in several ways and varies among cultures and over time (1994:186). According to Massey, it is not only necessary to show geographical and gender variations but also to analyse how they are socially constructed so that we can turn away from believing that men and women's characteristics are "natural" (1994:178).

Defining Trust

Trust or rather lack of trust became a central theme in my research. Interlocutors would often warn me and say I could not trust anyone and that they did not trust anyone either, but what they said was not reflected in their actions. Harald Grimen (2009) elaborates the difficulties in defining trust in his book, *Hva er Tillit* (2009). Trust is such an important phenomenon in every society, but what it is and how it is played out may have many local interpretations.

Grimen is sceptical in defining trust. He believes the definitions becomes too narrow and does not grasp the whole understanding of what trust is (2009:23).

This current research focuses on a combination of three approaches I find most useful for my analysis. The main focus is on Daniel and Knudsen's approach in *Mistrusting Refugees* (1995), and from there on I add sections from Grimen's approach in *Hva er tillit* (2009), and Margit Ystanes' *Precarious Trust* (2011). These academics argue that trust is something we have been taught and that the capacity to trust is given to a person by the society that person lives in, and that trust is part of shaping social relations in various ways (Grimen 2009, Daniel & Knudsen 1995, Ystanes 2011). The whole cultured society is part of creating trust, but trust is also created between individuals. Daniel and Knudsen (1995) understand trust as something placed in our subconscious mind, which opens up the context and makes notions of trust applicable in all contexts. Their understanding of trust is closely related to Bourdieu and Heidegger's perspectives, as something that exists within us:

“By “trust”, we do not intend a largely conscious state of awareness, something akin to belief, but rather its opposite: something more akin to what the French anthropologist Pierre Bourdieu called “habitus” or what Martin Heidegger called “being-in-the-world”” (Daniel & Knudsen, 1995:1).

The concept of trust exists without speaking about it and without symbolic representations. It is taken for granted (Ystanes, 2011:68). Although other academics argue that mistrust can be an important value in many societies, Daniel and Knudsen see an important division between the experience of trust and mistrust. The difference is that mistrust pushes itself to the surface; you become aware of it, which can be noticed in the way one speaks of it, and this awareness creates barriers for the mistrust to be part of a person's unconsciousness. That is why mistrust, according to Daniel and Knudsen, cannot be part of “being-in-the-world” (Daniel & Knudsen, 1995:2). Regardless, in the real world, no matter you social position, trust must coexist with mistrust (1995:1).

Ystanes (2011) also speaks of the silence of trust and how it is seldom spoken about: it is a taken-for-granted phenomenon which exists within us (Ystanes, 2011:68). Her interlocutors in Petén and Guatemala City would never elaborate or explain to her why trust (*confianza*) was important when she asked them. Regardless of this, her field notes were filled with discussions of mistrust (*desconfianza*) (2011:69-70). The way Ystanes experienced trust in Guatemala is similar to how I experienced it during my fieldwork. It was rarely explained

explicitly what trust was, but interlocutors continuously stated that I could not trust anybody. The fact that interlocutors gave warnings about trusting others implies that it was part of their consciousness. They were verbally explicit about not trusting others yet continued to borrow money from each other, which is a great indicator of trust. *Trust* was something they just did, while *mistrust* was something they talked about. In order to contextualise mistrust, *the discourse of mistrust* will be explored. I use mistrust as part of the discourse instead of trust because mistrust is a conscious state of awareness and can be discussed in a discourse.

The Power of Discourse

An analysis of trust without including power is shallow and naïve, according to Grimen (Grimen, 2009:53). In light of South Africa's historical hierarchical social dynamics, power is a mechanism worth investigating. Michel Foucault (1994) proposes that 'the *how* of power' is a triangle of power, right and truth (1994:210). Foucault explains:

“There are manifold relations of power which permeate, characterize, and constitute the social body, and these relations of power cannot themselves be established, consolidated, nor implemented without the production, accumulation, circulation, and functioning of a discourse. There can be no possible exercise of power without a certain economy of discourses of truth which operates through and on the basis of this association. We are subjected to the production of truth through power and we cannot exercise power except through the production of truth” (Foucault, 1994:210-211).

Foucault explains how we either challenge or reinforce public statements. These accepted statements work together and construct a discourse in a particular way. Foucault's definition of discourse covers all forms of communication: talk, speech, exchange, discussion, language, *and* the non-verbal communication through the way we act and behave in society (Hall, 1992:291). The knowledge a discourse produces is shaped by language, but it cannot be separated from practice because it is through practice that we produce meaning. Stuart Hall (1992) explains Foucault in simple terms: “since all social practices entail meaning, all practices have a discursive aspect” (Hall, 1992:291). This dynamic creates a flow of commonly accepted knowledge through time, which is the discourse. In addition, the discourse sets boundaries of what knowledge is included and produces certain types of knowledge. Statements in a discourse are embedded in power. Foucault speaks about how we seek to speak the truth, but that power influences what people consider to be true or false (1992:292-293). All social relations are therefore also power relations and spatial categories are part of determining who has the power to define “truths” (1992:295). This power, in most

cases, belongs to those with authority and Henriette Moore (1994) argues that “the power to define reality is an economic and political power” (Moore, 1994:5).

In a discourse, we construct images of ourselves as if it was something coherent and with Foucault’s open-ended definition we can understand identity in ways we might not be fully conscious of. I will argue that the *discourse of mistrust* interlocutors are part of is embedded in an understanding that women and men inhabit different, and unequal, characteristics. This became evident in the way the interlocutors spoke about women and men. Their statements indicated unequal power relations, and would perhaps have been labelled as “mental slavery” by Bob Marley. I say this because there are no legal policies that categorise women and men on a hierarchical scale but how people actually categorised each other implied unequal social positions.

An important element of any discourse is that it is not a closed system. It is dynamic and draws on knowledge from other discourses and together the elements create their own set of meanings (Hall, 1992:292). I will show how mistrust is connected with race, class, gender and history, and how these elements together create a specific discourse on mistrust. The particular way a discourse speaks about and understands the world does not necessarily have to depict the “truth” but the “facts” of the discourse is experienced as the truth (Hall, 1992:293). I will argue that racial and sexual categories are not just imposed on people, my interlocutors acted out these “truths” because they were true to them. Henrietta Moore (1994) explains how the experience of gender is influenced by the discourse that takes place, because people consist of various subject positions and what subject position a person take is influenced by several axes of difference:

“Discourses are structured through difference, and thus women and men take up different subject positions within the same discourse, or rather, the same discourse positions them as subjects in different ways. All the major axes of difference, race, class, ethnicity, sexuality and religion, intersect with gender in ways which proffer a multiplicity of subject positions within any discourse” (Moore, 1994:57).

Intersectionality

Henrietta Moore’s conceptualisation of how a person inhabits several subject positions leads me to the concept of intersectionality. Intersections of gender, race, ethnicity and class are important to unpack in order to understand the complexity of social dynamics in the

multicultural and multi-ethnic spaces of Cape Town. It will give greater insight in the multiple identities interlocutors juggle on a daily basis and how public discourses are biased since the power of defining “truths” are results of the specific social processes.

Kimberly Crenshaw (1990) found it necessary to investigate the intersections of race and gender when investigating violence against women in the United States (1990:1242). She critiqued identity politics for “frequently conflate[ing] or ignore[ing] intragroup differences” (Crenshaw, 1990:1242). She focused on women of colour and how this intersectional identity made them marginalised, because discourses only focused on one characteristic or the other. Her argument was that “ignoring difference within groups contributes to tension among groups” (1990:1242). Instead of ignoring differences, I will rather clarify some analytical concepts related to intersectionality that are useful in the South African context and they were important in interlocutors’ own social categorisations.

In this study class is defined on the basis of a person’s economic and financial situation. Some vendors referred to themselves as poor, but differentiated themselves clearly from homeless people. The term ‘lower-working class’ is used to define interlocutors who live in the Cape Flats and interlocutors living on the street as ‘homeless’. In the case of South Africa, class and race are closely linked as a consequence of the colonial influence and apartheid regime, and these inequalities continue to intersect in complex ways (Erasmus, 2008). Apartheid’s racial classifications are used in this study when speaking about race, since these four categories of African, Coloured, Indian and White, continue to be used in official statistics and in the everyday language (see p.7). The term ‘black’ is used to refer to all non-whites, whom were all discriminated during apartheid. It is important to underline, that when my interlocutors say ‘black’ they refer to Africans (and foreign Africans), and not Indians or Coloureds.

I find it important to include ethnicity because it was something interlocutors constantly referred to, in the way they said ‘black’ or African when speaking about Xhosa customs. Jean Comaroff and John Comaroff (2008) explain how ethnic identities “account for both the past and the present predicament of those who bear them, thus coming to appear as an autonomous principle of social determination” (2008:81). Interlocutors were clear on differentiating themselves from other ethnic groups in South Africa, and the way many female interlocutors presented themselves in their workspace reflected their ethnic background.

Interlocutors were always comparing women and men, and that has characterised the collected data to a large degree. I find Henrietta Moore's (1994) approach on understanding gender the most useful in my analysis. She argues that we must "strive towards an understanding of embodied subjectivity" and not necessarily try too hard to make sense of gender and sexual difference because they are conceptualised in so many various ways globally (Moore, 1994:27). Her approach does not see gender as only performative (Butler), instead, she argues that gender must be understood within the specific gender relations in that particular space. Gender only exists in relation to other forms of difference, and difference is also a relational concept (1994:26-27). She proposes the term 'subject positions' and that a person negotiates between several subject positions. From the perspective of post-structuralists we can therefore see gender as fluid, changeable and dynamic – it is not fixed as one subject position (Moore, 1994:4). These multiple masculinities and femininities are determined from other social constructs of race, ethnicity and class. Everyone constantly negotiates their subject positions because the experience of being a woman is always dependent on other locations and positions that are constructed socially (Moore, 1994:3).

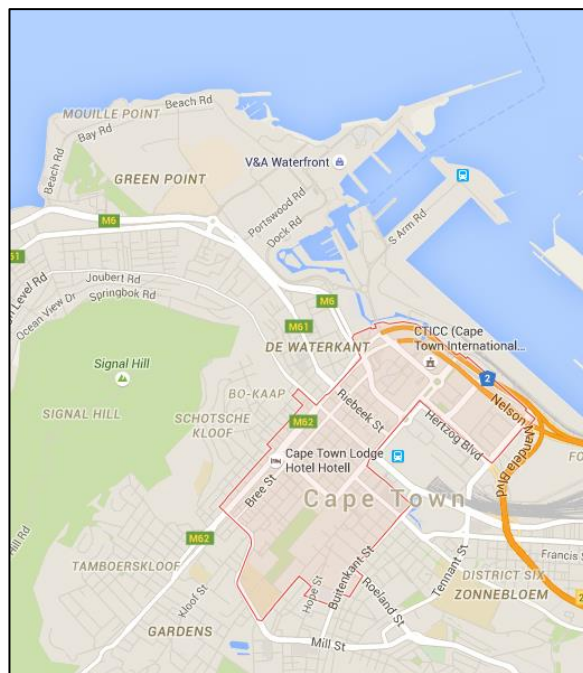
METHODOLOGY

Experiences and events from my first year in Cape Town were used as a starting point when I began drafting my fieldwork project. The advantage of having knowledge of the city landscape and the South African society helped in preparing for the fieldwork.

I arrived in Cape Town on the 16th of January and went straight to The Big Issue's first vendor meeting of the year. The research proposal, code of ethics and methods were explained, as well as how I would work and be part of the vendors' daily work environment. One of the staff members translated my presentation to Xhosa, since the majority of the vendors did not speak English well. Vendors, who were interested in my project, put their names on a list voluntarily and the social worker at the office crosschecked the list to review their commitment to the project. I had a few criteria for participation, such as vendors must speak and understand English, work in the Central Business District (CBD) and be accessible at their pitch weekly.

Field Sites

Field sites were determined by vendors' station in the CBD. Each vendor had a specific pitch and they could not sell at other sites unless it was cleared with the office. This apportionment gave the distribution department an overview and a more structured way of distributing new magazines throughout the month, and it gave vendors a stable workspace. Interlocutors worked in different environments, but the majority was stationed by traffic lights. The intersections in Cape Town are not only reserved for everyday street vendors. The constant flow of traffic makes them important sites for various industries to promote their products and services. Insurance companies, realtor agencies and fashion companies were some of the industries who promoted, advertised and handed out pamphlets by the same intersections as The Big Issue vendors.



Map 4: City Centre of Cape Town.

Screenshot from Google Maps: <https://goo.gl/maps/7nLLq>

The sites varied in size, landscape and number of vendors. The various sites gave me a fuller overview of the city's lay-out and diversity of public spaces. I started with four main sites in the CBD where interlocutors were frequently met. I found it enriching to include areas outside the CBD, to create a deeper understanding of the city life and how the diversity of landscapes shape places. The neighbourhood of Bo-Kaap, where I stayed during my fieldwork, was also considered as a field site. This neighbourhood is the only city neighbourhood with an

informal settlement located on its edges. During the analysis, specific sites are not given much individual attention because the sites were structured and experienced in similar ways.

The seventh site is a township in the Cape Flats. My interlocutors never referred to the Cape Flats as townships, they used the term *location* when speaking about where they lived. The terms ‘Cape Flats’ and ‘townships’ will be used when speaking about interlocutors’ *locations*.

Participant Observation

Through staying in the field for six months, I got close to my interlocutors and we built strong relations with each other, and this contracted the distance between us (Bernard, 1994:141, 152). Participant observation was the most important method used throughout the fieldwork. This method is the foundation of social anthropology’s research methods and gives researchers a unique insight into interlocutors’ lives (Bernard, 1994:136). In the first two months, I did more observing than participating, and was therefore comforted by Unni Wikan’s experiences and how she explained that this was rather common (Wikan, 1996). I, as a researcher, was a participating observer, as opposed to an observing participant, since I did not participate fully in the activities of my interlocutors (Bernard, 1994:138). I stood on the side line most of the time, observing their work and customer interactions. It took months before my presence became “naturalised”. As we got to know each other better, my observational method became more participatory; I tried to sell the magazine, went shopping with them and we walked to the office together. During the latter part of my fieldwork, they invited me to their dwellings in the Cape Flats; I attended church, parties, trips to *shebeens* (informal pubs), a ceremony in honour of ancestors, helped rebuild a shack-dwelling, funeral visit and home visits. In addition, I attended the monthly meetings and workshops at the Big Issue office, which are mandatory for all vendors.

Interviews

The majority the ethnographic material was collected through everyday conversations and events. In the beginning the vendors viewed me as a journalist and expected questions to be asked, so unstructured interviews were conducted with all vendors the first time I met them. Towards the end, I conducted three semi-structured in-depth interviews; two involved interlocutors and the third interview was with Mrs. Pam Jackson the director of an NGO called ‘Ons Plek Projects for Female Street Children’ organisation, situated in the city centre. ‘Ons Plek’ works with female street children and helps them get back to a more structured life in safe environments, through education, counselling and life skills training.

Mapping the City

Several strategies were used to make the interlocutors explain their view of the city spaces explicitly. First, they were given pencils and paper and asked to draw a map of the city. I gave no strict guidelines, to make sure I did not tell them what to draw. This task turned out to be more difficult than expected. Few handed in the requested map and the rest had several excuses for why they did not draw it. As a change of strategy and I brought the map to them instead. Interlocutors were shown a map of the city and a map of the Cape Flats. The map of the Cape Flats had few roads and few signs – according to the map the area looked “empty”. The map of the city, on the other hand, was neatly displayed with all necessary details to be able to move about in the inner city area.

I, as researcher, drew three maps of the city myself; beginning of my fieldwork, halfway through it and at the end of my stay. This was in order to see a development in my own overview of the city landscape. It was also a means for a better overview of the city. During the first month, a lot of time was spent navigating and walking through the city; observing people, the spatial landscape, and social interactions (Bernard, 1994:144). I took photos of buildings, signs, adverts, pavements, street paintings, art, security and people. The physical and spatial outline of the city is an important factor to include when mapping out how citizens experience and adapt to the city spaces.

Inspired by Fiona Ross’ (2010) research method, twelve disposable cameras were bought and given to four male interlocutors and eight female interlocutors. Interlocutors were asked to take half of the film in the city and the other half in their township, so the pictures could be compared. I looked through the photographs with each vendor individually, for them to explain each one. The purpose was to give interlocutors a chance to photograph how they contextualised and experienced the city and the Cape Flats. The picture on the front page was taken by one of my interlocutors. The pictures in this thesis are marked with ‘figure’ when I have taken the photos, and with ‘figure’ and name of interlocutor when an interlocutor has captured it. Judith Okely (2001) emphasises the importance of images and how they can “if the context is elaborated, highlight contrasting visions, depending on who is setting up the picture” (Okely, 2001:99). Pictures go beyond the text and conversations, and could potentially give insight into interlocutors’ perspectives of the world that we live in (2001:100).

Ethics

I became closely linked with my interlocutors in this research and it is my responsibility to sustain that dignified relationship, both as a human being and as a researcher. My main ethical concern is to protect interlocutors' identity and dignity (ASA, 2011:3). Pseudonyms were therefore created for all interlocutors, and their personalities and stories split up. As in Hopkins (1996) research, various events and individuals were blended together to make a collage, instead of an analogical representation, to avoid revealing too much about an individual (Hopkins, 1996:129; Caplan 1988:9). Concrete street names has been avoided, since the majority of my interlocutors worked at road-specific sites. In contrast to Hopkins' research, my interlocutors were not such a small group of people with such a particular historical background that Cape Town and The Big Issue needed to be change names (1996:124). It is a constant flow of people that works for The Big Issue. Vendors get jobs, start studying or lose their right to sell magazines; so tracking down the vendors at a later stage can be difficult. However, finding out who I worked with will not be impossible within The Big Issue vendor group of 2014, as the majority knew each other and who I interacted with.

An important ethical concern is informed consent. The presentation held at the vendor meeting informed vendors of what relation I would have with them and my topic of research. Interlocutors did not sign a written consent form but their oral consent was verified several times throughout the fieldwork. Passers-by would ask questions about who I was and what I was doing with them and interlocutors responded that I was researching them. Those incidents re-established the oral consent and the *Code of Ethics of the American Anthropological Association* state that "it is the quality of the consent, not the format, that is relevant" (American Anthropological Association, 2009:3).

The necessary precautions were made to maintain full confidentiality for the interlocutors portrayed in this study. There is a chance that interlocutors do not agree with the way I portrayed them, since each individual will have their own opinions of what is alright and what is not. Hopkins problematises this dilemma on how researchers portray interlocutors and how our writings may result in an undignified portrayal of a person. One of the core elements a researcher must keep in mind is to protect and respect their pride (Hopkins, 1996:126). This dilemma was experienced in this research as well, after listening to several interlocutors tell stories of verbal or physical abuse within the family. I fear that by telling their stories I may

inflict more pain upon them. Though, I believe it is important and correct to tell their stories. I believe it is the task of anthropology to give a voice to those who so seemly live so different lives in the townships compared to others and I hope to show that their lives are in fact not so different at all. This dilemma makes my anonymous collage an even more important factor of the finished product.

Challenges in the field

I was an outsider. I came from a different continent. I did not speak their language nor did I live in the same environment as them. Despite of all this, I believe my “outsiderness” gave me access to information that would not have been accessible for a black or white South African. Interlocutors were eager to tell me about *their* culture, and if I, as a researcher, had been Xhosa, they might have expected me to know about their culture to a larger degree. Being an outsider created certain benefits, but it did not take away restrictions from participating in conversations and discussions.

Language was the biggest barrier. Interlocutors would often comment that I was “lost in the mist” because I did not speak Xhosa. My lack of Xhosa skills and my interlocutors’ limited English vocabulary influenced our conversations and what information I obtained. Few were comfortable speaking English, especially in front of other vendors. I completed a six-week Xhosa course at a language school in the city and learnt basic Xhosa phrases that gave me a greater input in their language and cultural concepts. The attempt to learn Xhosa was appreciated, and being able to greet them in their language strengthened our relationship.

Physical mobility was the second biggest barrier. Public spaces were regarded unsafe in the evening and I was therefore not able to conduct fieldwork after six or eight pm, depending on the month as the sun sets earlier during autumn and winter than during summer. I pushed time restrictions a few times but would always consider my own safety first. This restriction has in many ways influenced the collected data and made the night/day dichotomy even more apparent. Visits to the townships had to be planned as well because the local *taxis* (minibuses) were regarded unsafe in the evenings. Restrictions of mobility in the city gave me a significant understanding of how safety, crime and mistrust shaped both public *and* private spaces.

Subjectivity and Reflexivity

I became my own research tool in the field since I was a woman studying women in public spaces. I could not simply be an observer when my presence was regarded part of the scenery. There was large variety of people in the city across genders, age, nationality and ethnicity, which made me “part of the crowd”.

My position in the field was not static. I was in constant alteration in relation to my interlocutors. They placed me in the categories of student, daughter, friend, journalist, white, *umlungu* (white in Xhosa), and social worker. My position changed the most after my first visit to the Cape Flats. It opened a door and there was no longer hesitation before inviting me to their dwellings. The category they placed me in depended on the setting.

Being neutral is impossible, and my background impacted what information I collected and how. “My culture” was compared with “their culture” and they would always used me in comparisons. I was positioned differently than them in several ways: socially, economically and culturally. Throughout this thesis, my own experiences are visible to the reader, since I found it important to explicitly draw out my role as an apprentice and my influence in the field (Jenkins, 1994:445). Not being a complete member of the group, which one can argue that one can never actually be (Jenkins, 1994), gave me room to create distance from the field and enabled me to analyse my findings.

My own position and interests influenced the information I gathered and how this information was interpreted. I am subjective because I define the focus and interpretation of the events. This does not mean the events witnessed were not real but rather that they have been given a specific meaning by both interlocutors and me (Caplan, 1988:9). An anthropologist is a storyteller who presents a representation of something or someone and again this representation is interpreted by the reader giving the story many meanings and interpretations which is beyond the anthropologist’s control (Jacobson, 1991:3-4). This is why I wish to be explicit about my own collage so that readers can interpret my analysis in their own critical way.

TEMPORARINESS IN URBAN SPACE

“This is where we live but it is not our home”

Internal – rural to urban – migration has steadily increased post-1994 in South Africa, and the Western Cape was in 2014 second only to Gauteng in the receiving of immigrants (Statistics South Africa, 2014:12).² My Xhosa interlocutors are part of these migration statistics. They, or their parents, migrated from rural areas in the Eastern Cape to Cape Town (Western Cape) in search of work. The Eastern Cape is the province that has experienced the largest outflow of migrants, largely attributed to the country’s high unemployment rate that forces people to settle in townships as well as illegal settlements in order to search for work in the cities. These peri-urban settlements, named the Cape Flats, are scarcely-resourced areas. This chapter investigates Xhosa migrants’ connections to the Eastern Cape and how their cultural heritage influences their lives and work in Cape Town. I argue that interlocutors’ heritage and ethnic identity permeates their perceptions and experiences of the urban spaces.

Eastern Cape

Xhosa interlocutors took much pride in their heritage and highly valued their culture and traditions. They maintained strong ties to their homeland and travelled to the Eastern Cape during the holidays and to attend ceremonies, such as funerals. My interlocutor’s husband passed away while I was there and he was sent back to Eastern Cape to be buried in his village. Interlocutors invariably used the term *ikhaya* (meaning home in Xhosa) to describe their birthplace in the Eastern Cape and hesitated to use *ikhaya* when referring their houses in the Cape Flats. Celiwe, Neliswa and I rested in a park as they explained the meaning of *ikhaya*. They were each married with four children:

- Neliswa: “*Ikhaya* is home, you can only have one home.”

Celiwe nodded and agreed with Neliswa.

- Oda: “So what is the *location* then?”

- Celiwe: “*Entlakwamasini*”

She could tell by the look on my face that I did not understand the word.

² Gauteng province (where Johannesburg is situated) receives the most migrants. Mpumalanga and North West provinces receive immigrants as well but in a lower percentage compared to Gauteng and Western Cape (Stats South Africa, 2014:12).

- *Celiwe*: “It actually means ‘north of the field’, but it does not make much sense in English. *Kwamasini* means ‘the field where we plow’ and *entla* means ‘north.’ In the rural areas, the men go to the field to plow and grow the crops, and that is very hard work. We are doing the same here in the city; it is very hard work to be here, and in the village when things are difficult and rough we say *entlakwamasini*”
- *Neliswa*: “We also call location *ukufihla intloko*. It is the place where you hide your head when it is raining! Under a roof you want shelter, neh’?”

I believe the city became their new field. This was where they worked hard in order to support their family both in the city and extended family in the Eastern Cape. *Ukufihla intloko* (hiding place) implied that the city was only a temporary place for them. They were only there to seek shelter from the rain, meaning the city provided a place solely to earn a living. Celiwe continued to explain: “We are not from here. We will go back to Eastern Cape after working in the city”. Such comments made the rain analogy realistic because rain is also temporary. The importance of *ikhaya* and the city as temporal was again verified at my farewell party in one of the townships when Neliswa’s neighbour commented:

“You know, this is where we live, we live in poverty out here, but we work as hard as we can and we don’t just sit and wait. This is where we live but it is not our home, you see?”

Oda: “Yes, because it is not *ikhaya*?”

The woman got so excited when I mentioned *ikhaya*. She leaned over the table towards me and stared me in the eyes while responding; “YES! Exactly, this is not *ikhaya*!”

Interlocutors planned to return to their village when the rain stopped. They did not intend to stay in the city when they retired, and therefore conceptualised the city as a temporal place to live.

N. E. Ngxabi (2003) conducted her fieldwork among some amaXhosa³ in another settlement in the Cape Flats called Crossroads. Her interlocutors had similar views to those of my interlocutors regarding urban dwellings and rural villages. One of Ngxabi’s respondents, a Christian woman who did not believe in ancestors, also planned to move back to her village as well:

“[...] Although she did not need the ancestors in her life she and her husband would *goduka* (go home) when their retirement came, and would leave their four-roomed Crossroads house for their children. ‘Going home’ (*ukugoduka*) gave a home, in this perspective, an element of a level of permanence,

³ amaXhosa- is plural, umXhosa- is singular (Munnik, 2006:22).

implying that she believed had come to live only temporarily *esilungwini* [place where things are done in a white person's way]. MamTshawe described a home thus, "*kaloku ikhaya yindawo yokuphumla*" (but a home is a place to rest), thus implying that it is opposed to the place of *impangelo* (working for wage)" (Ngxabi, 2003:52).

This woman did not regard the urban dwellings as an ideal place for a 'home', because it did not have the same sense of 'homeness' as her village (2003:52). According to Ngxabi, the description people used when explaining waged work in the city meant that people thought of themselves as visitors who planned to leave (2003:53). The view of the urban dwellings as temporal became evident.

The connections interlocutors had to their birthplace were strong and though it was expensive to travel to and from the Eastern Cape, they managed to afford it.⁴ All who had relatives in the Eastern Cape (parents and/or children) remitted a large portion of their magazine sales to family in the Eastern Cape. One afternoon, I bumped into Mandisa as she was on her way to her pitch. Mandisa told me she had just transferred money to her mother in Eastern Cape:

"I sent her R500 just now, it was all I had. I cannot let them be without money, so that is why I send her money when she needs it. I feel better then, but now I must work, because I don't have money for stock for the new book [coming out tomorrow].... There is not much work there, and my baby needs things for school!"

Mandisa's daughter stayed with her grandmother in the Eastern Cape. Mandisa wanted her daughter to come and stay with her in the township but she could not afford it. Mandisa and other interlocutors said it was their responsibility to take care of family living in the rural areas. The information I gathered on family, responsibility and the importance of birthplace is in line with the findings of Hall, Kepe and Cousins (2008) in their article *Land*:

"Many people in South Africa's increasingly urbanized society retain strong links to the land where they were born and where their ancestors lived. In Xhosa, they speak of their rural home as their *umnombo*, meaning their 'roots' [...] Xhosa people also refer to a person's *inkaba* (umbilical cord), which is buried after birth, to denote the place where his or her physical and emotional identity is based and signify a lifelong attachment with that place. [...] Even after years of living elsewhere, many Xhosa people choose to return to their *umnombo* and *inkaba* either to retire or be buried" (Hall, Kepe & Cousins, 2008:148-149).

⁴ A trip to the Eastern Cape costs about R600 per person. A vendor sells, on average, *less* than ten magazines a day. Ten magazines give a profit of R100.

I never heard interlocutors mention *inkaba* or *umnombo* during conversations, probably because I did not speak Xhosa. Regardless, I believe *ikhaya* inhabited many of the same connotations and can be understood as similar to the metaphors presented by Hall, Kepe and Cousins (2008). In addition, Celiwe and Neliswa's understanding of the city as *ukufihla intloko* strengthened their connections to the Eastern Cape and reinforced the city's temporariness. I argue that their village home was conceptualised with a sense of eternity since they planned to go back to be buried in the same area as their ancestors.

Ikhaya

Andile was a Xhosa man in his fifties, born in Cape Town and grew up in the city with his parents. He referred to the city as *ikhaya* and his village as *ikhaya*. Andile built a house on the family's property in the Eastern Cape and told me he would go back there when he retired. He was currently living in the Cape Flats with his wife and two sons. He spoke of two places as his *ikhaya*, but it was the degree of 'homeness' that defined where 'home' was and the conversations I had with my interlocutors implied that the ties to the Eastern Cape remained strong even for those who were born in Cape Town. Andile drew the picture below to show me his home in the Eastern Cape. He and his brother built the houses with flat roofs and the last house belonged to his father. His father's round house was regarded the main house. The cross in front of the main house was the cooking area. Andile's mother has recently moved back to the village. She takes care of their home, their garden and animals. Andile explained that she stays in the Eastern Cape for several months and then returns to the city with vegetables from their garden.

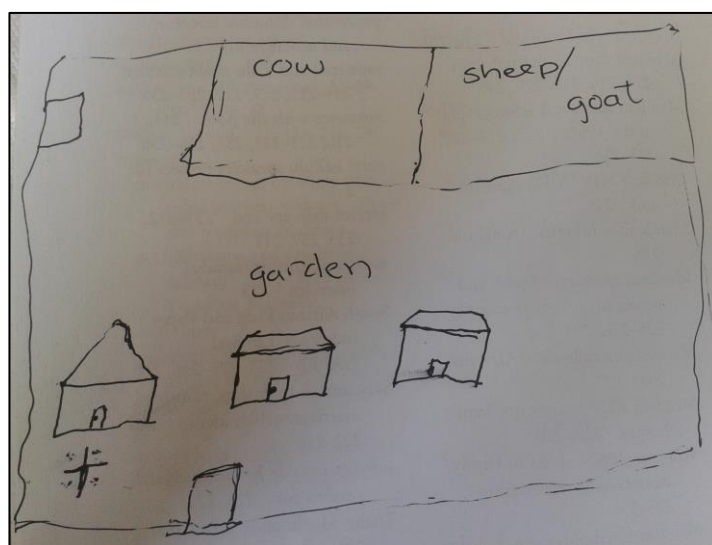


Figure 1: Andile's drawing of his *ikhaya*.

There were few opportunities for residents to build their own house in the townships, due to lack of space. Those who moved to the city rented or bought existing shacks or built their own if they found an opening. Neliswa and her family used to live in a shack but were granted a house through the reconstruction and development programme (RDP) implemented by the ANC government in 2006. Neliswa bought new furniture for her house in the Eastern Cape, whilst the furniture in the RDP house was second-hand and according to her, “not so nice”. She was very proud of her house in the Eastern Cape, and showed me pictures of it on her phone. Neliswa explained why people build their own house in the Eastern Cape:

“You don’t buy a house, you must build it. It is because of the ancestors. If you buy someone else’s house the ancestors will be confused and will not know where to go. When you have finished building you will have a ceremony with *mqombhoti* [traditional Xhosa beer] and you must slaughter a sheep or cow to welcome the ancestors, then they will know it is your house and where to go.”

Village homes were a lot more than just buildings – they were embedded with meaning. Several of Ngxabi’s interlocutors explained that it was the people (parents, grandparents and ancestors), both the living and the dead that “made the home”. Departed relatives and ancestors guarded the home and this created a sense of safety for the living, as well as maintaining a strong connection between the living and the deceased (Ngxabi, 2003:69). The village became important because that was where relatives and ancestors were buried, and this was what gave the home a strong sense of ‘homeness’ which was difficult, or even impossible, to create in the urban dwellings (2003:64).

My intension is not to say that all Xhosa migrants wish to move back to their village, as some experience their lives in the city as better than what they had before. They sent money to their family in the village but considered their future to be in Cape Town. There was one interlocutor who said she never wanted to move back. She was happy in the city and would, when she earned enough money, buy a car and *not* build a house in her village. She refused to call the city a hiding place’, and instead referred to the city as a ‘working place’. It is therefore more correct to say that the wish to move back to the Eastern Cape was a strong tendency among the Xhosa interlocutors.

Sustaining Xhosa Culture

In many ways, houses in the townships became more permanent than people planned them to be. The way interlocutors explained their urban living situation was strongly influenced by

their way of living in the rural areas. They made the distinction between the rural village and the urban dwellings explicit. At the same time, as Neliswa's neighbour explained at a party I attended in the Cape Flats, Xhosa migrants found new ways to sustain their Xhosa traditions and customs in the urban areas:

“You know, usually when we have parties like these there is a fire in the middle and everybody tell stories around the fire. We say that it is not a good house if there is no fire. This is a good house, even though there is no fire, because it is lights inside [the house] and food and drinks, so that is the fire.”

They made sense of the urban places by incorporating ‘the village way of living’ by constructing open communities in the Cape Flats. There were always people relaxing on the side of the road, children playing and several of my interlocutors kept their doors unlocked when they left their house. Neighbours visited each other frequently and their *braais* (barbeques) and parties welcomed everyone. Xhosa migrants also made a sense of place by organising Xhosa rituals and ceremonies in the urban dwellings. According to Comaroff and Comaroff (2009) are cultural identity lived manifestations that appears to be, on the one hand, a natural essence, and on the other, a cultural identity seems to be conceptualised through acts of consumption (Comaroff & Comaroff, 2009:40). How Xhosa migrants lived out their “Xhosaness” showed how it was something they understood as an essence of who they were and in their consumption and sustainment of Xhosa customs showed how cultural identity was “both blood and choice” (ibid., 2009:40). I attended a ritual in a township to celebrate Thandiwe's husband's ancestors and this ritual exemplified sustainment of “Xhosaness”:

A big group of family and friends kept entering their dwelling. Visitors brought gifts of brandy or vodka. Thandiwe, the woman of the household, distributed drinks and plates of food to everyone who came. The place was filled with people, sitting in every corner of the four-roomed shack. Guests sat on couches, benches and on the floor in a big circle in the main room. We drank *mqombhoti*, vodka and beers, and those who wanted to shared stories about the rural areas. They danced and sang songs for the ancestors, while children ran around in and out of the house. Teenagers and unmarried women were not allowed to join the circle in the main lounge. They sat in the back room of the shack, where the food was prepared. Thandiwe explained: “You are only allowed to join the main room if you are married, but you are a guest Oda so it is okay!” Thandiwe wore an apron and the other women had tied a ribbon around their waist. The women explained that in the rural areas you must wear this ribbon at all times if you are married, because it signalled your marital status. In addition, all women wore a *duk*. A *duk* is a

piece of cloth or scarf wrapped around the head to cover a person's hair, and worn by married women, though not only during ceremonies.⁵

The way the women dressed, showed how they incorporated the traditional customs into the urban atmosphere. They sustained Xhosa culture through rituals and clothing, and did not necessarily need to go back to the Eastern Cape to do it. Their codes of conduct were always connected to “how we do it in Eastern Cape”, both in what they did not do anymore and what they continued to do. Female interlocutors never wore the ribbon at work it was only used during rituals like these. Clothing and how women acted out their “Xhosaness” is explained further in chapter four. A ritual like this sustained the bonds within a family, not just among the living but it also ties to their ancestors. The ritual indicated how important it was for Xhosa people to uphold their traditions, even when living urban areas. I came to a similar conclusion as Ngxabi: “[...]People in Crossroads envisaged their village homes as the standard by which to measure what I call the ‘homeness’ of the urban township dwelling types they lived in” (Ngxabi, 2003:48).

Not all village ways of living could be incorporated into the urban spaces. Zintle told me she had to go to the Eastern Cape when she gets married in December. She would learn to be a *makhoti* (wife) there, which meant that she would be living with her boyfriend's mother. She would cook outside, collect wood and fetch water from the well. She explained that these things could not be taught in the city; “ a woman must go to the village. In the village everybody cooks outside on a fire” (see Andile's drawing p. 31). Zintle told me she had never cooked outside before, so it would be difficult for her to do since she was used to cooking on a stove.

Massey (1994) argues that the character of a place is shaped by social relations, such as social structure, political character as well as the ‘local’ culture (Massey, 1994:120). This argument becomes evident in the way interlocutors navigated in the urban landscape and how their background influenced their conceptualisations of urban dwellings. The social and spatial order in the townships was strongly influenced by the cultural customs of the people who lived there.

⁵ Thandiwe and her husband did not have the same ancestors. If Thandiwe were to have a similar celebration she would have had to go to her brother's house or to her home in the Eastern Cape.

Lack of Space

Another reason why the city life inhabited a sense of temporariness was the lack of space Xhosa migrants needed in order to sustain their traditional family households. Usually, sons built additional houses on the property when they got married, but due to the lack of space this was impossible. When I entered the Cape Flats, I saw shacks everywhere, built close together and some shacks had two stories. The RDP brick houses were also built close together, with limited space for future extensions. The best way to get across a location was to walk on the narrow paths that swirled their way between the shacks. Open green spaces were few and far between. The soil was sandy and difficult to grow crops on. You could observe an odd cow or goat now and then, but it was not as common as it was in the rural areas. Neliswa explained the layout of a village while we stood at her pitch by the robots:

“It is different in Eastern Cape. The houses are not like in here; there are fields in between. Here [Cape Flats], there are no place to build more onto your house, and there is no room to build a shack for me next to it for when my kids grow up. It is not good! On the fields in Eastern Cape you can grow your own vegetables, so you don’t need to have money for food all the time. [...] And you many trees with peaches, and if you don’t have peaches you can go to someone else and trade with them, maybe a bucket of maize for a bucket of peaches, so you see, you don’t need money. I go to the store once a month, you don’t need to go to Shoprite every day!⁶ Here, you don’t have space in your yard to grow anything, so that is why you must have money. That is why I work hard, but I want a better job because there is no future in this. Not for my kids either.”

Neliswa visualised an open and idyllic landscape where people traded with each other instead of going to the grocery store. Andile’s drawing too depicted a big property where there was room for both domesticated animals and a vegetable garden. The Cape Flats are cramped and over-crowded without fields to grow crops. The rural areas of the Eastern Cape had a self-sufficient system and there were long distances between the houses and to the nearest shop, making it more convenient to trade with your neighbour. Andile expressed a similar comparison:

“You never find chickens in the streets here in town or in the location. If you have them here they will be stolen at once so there is no point in buying one. When you go to Eastern Cape you can walk wherever you want, even at night! Nobody will harm you. We don’t even lock our doors there!”

The Eastern Cape was described as a peaceful place that moved with a slow pace, where green hills and round clay houses surrounded you. The open rural landscape made it easy for

⁶ Shoprite is a national grocery store chain

inhabitants to expand their households. I visited the Eastern Cape myself during my first visit to South Africa in 2012, and recognized their harmonic visualisation of the environment. Animals roamed free, women collected wood and the distances between the houses were big. Ngxabi's interlocutors shared similar views on the structure of the locations. Her interlocutor, who had lived in Cape Town for more than twenty years, explained: "This place can't be a home, it does not allow us to have our own livestock. You know how we need those to perform our rituals" (Interview, May, 2000 in Ngxabi, 2003:58). Although interlocutors viewed the city as temporal, several were on the waiting list for formal housing in the Cape Flats. In addition, Neliswa's statement about not needing money in the Eastern Cape implied how interlocutors romanticised village life. It was only an idealised place, since lack of money was the reason why they emigrated in the first place.

Relations to the City

Few interlocutors had comprehensive knowledge of the city spaces, in terms of overview and layout. This became clear when I showed my interlocutors a map of the city and a map of the Cape Flats. Interlocutors did not remember the streets names and could not find their pitch on the map. Vendors were familiar with the areas they worked in but not with the rest of the city, and had a hard time navigating through the city with the help of the map I showed them. Although interlocutors had little understanding of the map, this did not mean that they did not understand the social and spatial structure of the city. I was familiar with navigating with a map and linked my lived experiences with the conceived representation on the map. A map is fictional and created by someone, and not everybody can or will share the same understanding of the information presented. A map is a particular representation of a space with close connotations to the spatial landscape. The map I showed interlocutors was structured with a 'global' perspective, while interlocutors saw the city spaces from a 'local' perspective (Ingold, 1993:215). Ingold emphasises that these two perspectives of seeing the world are not placed on a hierarchical scale. The perspectives are based on different foundations, with the 'local' being based on a practical, being-in-the-world and dwelt-in foundation while 'global' is observing and presents the world as merely occupied (Ingold, 1993:216). The map enables us to view the world with a distant gaze that we can insert with meanings through our lived experiences (Ingold, 1993:212).

The vendors were more interested when I showed them the map of the Cape Flats. This map looked empty, as if nothing was built there. I got the map from a tourist information office

and, as tourists do not sojourn in the Cape Flats on their own, the maps did not need to be as detailed as the city centre. This again exemplified how a map is fictional and created by someone with a specific purpose. My interlocutors conceptualised the map and the city on a different spatiality compared to mine, however these two understandings of the space existed simultaneously (Massey, 1994:4). During my visits to the townships, it became apparent that they had a good overview of the township outline and it was not “empty” as the tourist map framed it. There were few signs telling you where you were, and the narrow paths between houses and shacks were put up without a specific pattern. Regardless, interlocutors knew their way around the township.

The townships they stayed in were towns on their own, with all necessary services available; wood and hardware stores, petrol stations, hair salons, *shebeens* (informal pubs), *spaza shops* (kiosks) and grocery stores. I believe this was one of the reasons why they did not invest their time in the city centre. Their economic situation was another factor that influenced their distance to the city. The shops in the township sold mostly second-hand goods, whilst the city offered new luxury products that were out of their price range. Interlocutors complained several times that brandy and wine costed more in the city than in the townships. The township shops catered for their needs, and the city was far from where they stay. It took approximately 30 minutes with a *taxi* (privately owned mini-buses) to get to their township. This disconnectedness is an additional argument towards understanding how the urban spaces were temporal compared to their homes in the Eastern Cape. There was no point in investing time in a place when they did not intend to stay there for too long.

The interlocutors who did not have relatives in the Eastern Cape had more extensive knowledge of the city spaces and related to the city in a different way. My Coloured interlocutor George grew up in the city until the age of eleven when his family moved to one of the Coloured neighbourhoods outside of the city centre. His father worked for the railway company and they provided housing for their employees in this neighbourhood. He was now living in a mixed township in the Cape Flats. He took me on a journey through District Six, a city-neighbourhood, and elaborated on its history. He showed me where he used to play as a child and how buildings had been reconstructed into apartments and schools. He remembered all the street names, how the names of the streets had changed and other events that happened in the area during apartheid. He was eager and had a lot to tell me. He talked about “the good old days” and how he sometimes got together with old friends and they spoke about all the

fun they had. Throughout my fieldwork, he told me several stories about going to clubs and bars, playing soccer, and how he learned to swim at the outdoor pool in Sea Point on a warm summer day. For him, the city was not only a place where he worked; it was filled with memories and stories. He was very attached to places, and invested time in the city. George expressed passion and connectedness, in contrast to Xhosa interlocutors who had a distanced approach towards the city spaces.

George seldom compared the locations with the city spaces, but he talked about the city a lot and about how it used to be: “It was better before, there were more jobs and opportunities, now it has become worse.” He agreed that democracy was good because without it he would not have been able to talk to me as a white person. However, other things were better pre-1994.

Defining Safe Places

The only way Xhosa interlocutors expressed concrete opinions about city spaces was in relation to safety. Thomas, a Xhosa man in his late thirties, worked in a shop in the city. He used to live in the Cape Flats but moved to town after experiencing break-ins and watching several of his friends being shot there. After that, he decided to never move back. Thomas did not like driving through the Cape Flats, for the fear of being hijacked at the *robots*, and told me that he pushed his seat back and lied down whenever he drove around in the townships to become invisible. He was afraid of “getting shot or anything worse”. He did not worry about attacks when he drove around in town.

Another common comparison was between the Cape Flats and the Eastern Cape. As much as Cape Town was considered safe, the Eastern Cape was considered safer. Several Xhosa migrants kept their children in the Eastern Cape to protect them from the violent Cape Flats. It was during a conversation we had about a gift Thembeke got for her daughter that the topic came up:

Thembeke: “I am giving her the gift in two weeks!”

Oda: “why are you giving it two weeks from now? Is it her birthday?”

Thembeke: “Because she is living in Eastern Cape!”

Oda: “Oh, with your parents?”

Thembeke: “No, with her older sister. They live in a location there.”

Oda: “Why do they not come to stay with you?”

Thembeke: “It is not safe here! If they are in the location all day, then I don’t know if they are safe because I will be in town all day working. In Eastern Cape, I don’t have to worry. It is safer there so I know they are okay!”

Interlocutors regarded the Cape Flats as unsafe as a consequence of the high rates of crime and rape. I will continue to investigate how fear of crime and violence influence people’s perceptions and experiences of various places and spaces in chapter five.

Concluding Reflections

This chapter explored how cultural background influenced the way particular people related to and viewed the social and spatial landscapes of the city. Xhosa migrants’ connection to the Eastern Cape is an important factor in understanding their lived realities in Cape Town. Xhosa migrants found themselves in a position where they always negotiated Xhosa customs to make sense of urban places and spaces. This limited attachment to the city spaces was visible in how they sustain customs, how they talked about Xhosa culture and how they dressed. Their background influenced their relationships with each other and their social positioning in the urban spatial landscape. The Coloured interlocutor, who grew up in Cape Town, had a different perception of the city spaces since he attached meaning and memories to various places. Cape Town, and the rest of South Africa, is incredibly diverse and this diversity gives all groups their own specific understanding of a place. Xhosa migrants’ particular position and relation to the city spaces is part of shaping the diversity, just as much as other cultural backgrounds influence the city spaces’ diversity. The next chapter will therefore explore how people of various backgrounds perceive and experience the public spaces of the city differently.

AMBIGUOUS UNIVERSALITY

“That is your culture”

The aim with this chapter is to unfold the diversity and complexity of Cape Town’s city spaces. The city centre is a melting pot of various nationalities and ethnicities, where poverty and wealth exists side-by-side. I will start by investigating the notion of the city centre as ‘universal’, since the city is perceived as a spaces where people are freely able to express their religion, sexuality, identity, gender, style and political opinions. This ‘universality’ will be exemplified by describing public events, city art and interlocutors’ perceptions of the city. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) has a non-racialism and non-sexism policy, where everyone is equal before the law (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 1996, Founding Provisions, section 1). However, this is not implemented in the social and spatial structure of the city of Cape Town. The last section will therefore describe social and spatial power dynamics in public spaces that disrupt the perception of the city as universal. My overall argument is that within the city spaces there is a differentiation in and across space according to race, ethnicity, gender and class.

The Rainbow Nation

Archbishop Desmond Tutu is the one credited with terming post-apartheid South Africa as *The Rainbow Nation*. The term is supposedly inspired by Tutu’s biblical sermons and linked to Xhosa cosmology where the rainbow signifies hope (Baines, 1998). *The Rainbow Nation* symbolises the united people of South Africa and Gary Baines argues that it reinforces the notion of nation building (Baines, 1998). In the foreword of the Truth and Reconciliation Report (1998) Archbishop Tutu writes:

“Let us celebrate our diversity, our differences [...] [We] are moving to a future “founded on the recognition of human rights, democracy and peaceful co-existence and development opportunities for all South Africans, irrespective of colour, race, class, belief or sex” (Truth and Reconciliation Commission Final Report 1998, sec. 1, para 91).

South Africa is a multi-cultural society with eleven official languages, and I will show how many embrace their own cultural heritage (that has been highly influenced by the former regime). By celebrating and accepting differences a new society is in the making. It is on the

note, of seeing South Africa as a multicultural *rainbow nation*, that the city centre of Cape Town is introduced as a perceived universal space.

I argue that the concept of multiculturalism does not grasp the broader dynamics happening within public spaces in Cape Town because class dimensions are becoming more important than race. Class cultures have not been given much attention in debates about multiculturalism. The concept of multiculturalism has further been criticised for objectifying and essentialising particular groups and cultures and not seeing them as dynamic and fluid formations of meaning (Segal, 2001:10182). Therefore, by conceptualising public spaces as ‘universal’, I refer to people’s notion of the public spaces as equally accessible for all, independent of ethnicity, race, gender *and* class. In addition, my findings imply that people have an anticipation of being an ‘anybody’ in the public city spaces of Cape Town.

Nancy Scheper- Hughes (1993) explains, with help from Gilberto Freyre and Roberto da Matta, how a person in a *favela* (township) in Rio de Janeiro is categorised as a ‘somebody’ in the home while he or she is an ‘anybody’ on the streets (Scheper-Hughes,1993:86). The home (*casa*) governs *private* behaviour while the street (*rua*) governs *public* behaviour. In the home, a person is embedded in existing relationships, with duties and rights based on birth and family. In the public streets these duties do not exist in a similar hierarchy, so a person becomes a ‘universal’ and an ordinary citizen (1993:87). Sheper-Hughes understands the tensions between street and home in a classed way. She says that there is a tension between, and in, the private and public spaces that creates a “double ethic”, because the rules of democracy and the social hierarchy are in constant conflict and contradiction (1993:87). Central to my argument is that this perceived ‘universal’ Cape Town is complicated by economic hardships, ideas about race, and already established perceptions of places. In addition, I believe that people have the *potential* to be perceived as ‘somebodies’ in particular places because an ‘anybody’ will always be ascribed a category and social position by others in this seemingly universal space. Though, the duties a person has in the home may not necessarily be made explicit.

The Central Business District

The central business district (CBD), where the majority of the interlocutors worked, was regarded a ‘white space’ under the Group Areas Act legislation during the apartheid regime (Samara, 2011:65). Tony R. Samara (2011) explains in his book, *Cape Town After Apartheid:*

Crime and Governance in a divided city, how the Act was amended in 1984 to open the CBD to commercial and professional use for all races. Despite the law changes, the area continued to be dominated by whites (2011:65). According to Samara, the majority of Cape Town's citizens considered the CBD a "no-go" area up to the 2000's, but the area has changed dramatically since then (2011:66). Samara goes on to explain how it was not by random that the CBD was given so much focus:

"The CBD was chosen by city officials and the business sector as the flagship of the city's revitalization campaign by virtue of the economic power it represents, a power that is a direct consequence of the privileged status the downtown received under apartheid" (Samara, 2011:66).

The change started in the late 1990s, when the city council and private companies feared that they would lose the city centre to violence and crime, since this had already happened in Johannesburg – South Africa's largest city. There was a lot of pressure from the private sector to safeguard the tourism industry (2011:67). Several projects and operations were put in place and the private-public partnership 'Central City Improvement District' (CCID) was established in 1999. The crime rates went down gradually, investment went up, and shoppers and tourists generally reported satisfaction with the overall security situation (2011:66). Today, the CBD has become a space with less crime and cater for both upscale and low scale consumers. It is characterised by businesses, hotels, clubs and restaurants where people from all layers of society merge together.

On a regular day, I saw the same distribution of men and women in the CBD, who interacted with each other without disrupting the flow of people. I saw homeless people resting on pieces of cardboard while business men walked by on their way to important meetings. A woman wearing a *niqab* (headpiece that covers hair and face) drove past a group of African and white girls dressed in short summer dresses that showed both their shoulders and knees. In the evening, on my way home, I heard the sound of the mosques and I saw muslims on their way to their mosque in Bo-Kaap. Bo-Kaap consists of predominantly Muslim inhabitants, and there are ten mosques in this neighbourhood. While on Sunday mornings, I heard the familiar sound of church bells.

One day, as I entered the taxi rank in the city centre, a black cross-dresser struck a pose in the middle of a square that was surrounded by small shops. This taxi rank is centred above the

train station and is constantly crowded during the day with people entering and leaving the city (mostly middle and lower-class citizens use the taxi/minibuses as their daily transportation). The man's muscular body structure revealed his masculine curves. He wore a short skirt combined with a pink top, high heels and he had a small black leather purse hanging from his shoulder. Nobody bothered him as he flaunted his masculine femininity in public. This person was able to express himself freely because public spaces were conceptualised as 'universal'. The Big Issue vendors became 'anybodys' as well, when they walk through the city spaces. It was impossible to place them as street vendors when they walked around without their uniforms. I argue that the city must carry a sense of universality in order for people to become 'anybodys' on the streets.

Art, Festivals and Parades

Street art was part of shaping the notion of a universal space. Images of the struggle towards freedom were symbolised by Mandela's portrait. Women are seen as the "rock" of society and their images vividly decorated city buildings – thus, making female visibility even more explicit. The vivid pictorial view of apartheid history demonstrates the intensity with which the country's history influences contemporary South Africa.



Figure 2.



Figure 3: South Africa's history depicted on a building in District Six

Various festivals and parades takes place in the city throughout the year and I attended three during my fieldwork. 'Infecting the City' is a public arts festival wherein the CBD is centre stage. Dance, music, theatre and performances took place outdoors, and it was accessible to all citizens, free of charge (Infecting The City, 2014). The festival's official website wrote:

“Infecting The City, at its core, is intended to disrupt the absurdity that we need permission from anyone to expose our humanity. Our intentions with this Festival are to bring curiosity, wonder, beauty, empathy, pain, and new ideas out into the streets for everyone to engage with. To demonstrate that we all have the right to speak and be heard. With great vulnerability and respect, over 300 artists will step into the void of Cape Town’s public space this year and attempt for one week to transform it into a more complex, dynamic, interesting and welcoming place.

After 20 years of freedom, join us in this liberation.”

(Infecting the City, Tanner Methvin, 2014)

The collaboration between citizens, government and businesses makes ‘Infecting the City’ a unique event that allows citizens to explore public spaces in a different way, whilst enjoying various performances that would normally be held indoors for a fee. The festival lasted for six days and performances happened continuously day and night. The night performances broke down the dichotomy of the daytime as safe and the night as unsafe, though only for a week.

Dancer and development activist, Mamela Nyamza, performed her piece – *Hatch* – in the late evening. Her performance told the story of a woman’s challenging issues with culture, traditions and sexuality. The performance expressed both vulnerability and empowerment. Another performance was a male dancer, who performed in the late evening as well. His performance – *Dark Cell* – depicted a male inmate on Robben Island⁷. The piece commemorated South African history and simultaneously mirrored contemporary society. The past and the present combined made an explicit presentation of how history continues to influence society. A third performance – *Couched* – included two boys dancing intimately together with a big chair and two backpacks as accessories. The piece explored the dancers’ growth as individuals, partners and friends (Infecting the City Programme, 2014: 6-8). A girl sitting in front of me said: “You kinda’ forget how amazing this is, that two boys can dance together like this and that’s okay!” Not everywhere is it socially, and legally, accepted to dance with a partner of the same sex. Sexuality can be expressed more freely in South Africa compared to other African countries (Smuts, 2010:121).

⁷ The prison where Nelson Mandela and other activists were incarcerated during apartheid



Figure 4: *Hatch*, by Mamela Nyamza.



Figure 5: *Dark Cell*, by Themba Mbuli.

‘Gay Pride’ is an annual event that exemplified the perceived universality of the city. In 2014, the event ran under the theme “Marching for those who can’t” (GayCapeTown4You, 2014). On this day, gender stereotypes were challenged and barriers broken down, if only temporarily. Men dressed up in sparkling dresses and high heels whilst women put on baggy jeans and oversized jumpers. The parade challenged the general stereotypes of women and men and participants pushed the social boundaries of appropriateness by showing as much skin as they pleased. The lines of what was considered male and female became blurred as this parade overtook the area of Green Point – a gay-friendly neighbourhood nicknamed ‘the pink street of Cape Town’. Despite this freedom of expression, the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community in Cape Town and in the rest of South Africa do still suffer discrimination in local communities in regards of to work, home and family (Smuts, 2010:115, 120).

It is not only sexuality and remembrance of the past that was at the centre of people’s social engagement in the city. The project ‘Open Streets’ is a worldwide citizen-run initiative that promotes the usage of public spaces. The idea is to promote public spaces and make them accessible and safe for all citizens. On the 18th of January 2015, the organisers stopped all traffic in Bree Street, one of the central streets of the CBD, and created a temporary space for pedestrians and non-motorised vehicles. ‘Open Streets’ lasted from 10am till 2pm with activities ranging from open art galleries to street performances by artists and dance crews. The event is an important step in building awareness about the city spaces and showed citizens’ willingness to “take back” the streets. Similar to ‘Gay Pride’, ‘Open Streets’ challenged the regular view citizens had of public spaces. The event created a limited time

frame for people to freely enjoy a fraction of the public city spaces. A message was written on the pavement for all to see; *“Cape Town Streets could be more than they are. ‘Open Streets’ create shared places that embody respect for all and help bridge the social and spatial divides of our city”*.



Figure 6: ‘Open Streets’ on Bree Street.

As I walked down Bree Street I did not see an equally distributed crowd but mainly middle- and upper-class residents. All ages, from toddlers to pensioners, and various ethnicities were represented. I observed that social class, and not race, gender or age, became the biggest social divide in this setting. The lower-class may have been unaware of the event as it was not marketed in neighbourhoods considered poor; hence, this speaks of their absence at the event. Furthermore, travelling costs are high and interlocutors mentioned that their Sundays were spent in church, resting or cleaning the house. In fact, my interlocutors had not heard about the event and it seemed that they did not have the same interest in spending time in the city like middle- and upper-class citizens did (see page 36).

Cultural Heritage

This section will depict how the diverse use of city spaces is connected to a person cultural and ethnic background. As mentioned in chapter 1, the government continues to divide the population into four racial categories, namely; African, Indian, Coloured and White. These categories influence society today as South African citizens’ continue to categorise themselves and others using the same racial categories. These institutionalised categories influenced how I perceived people as well. Xhosa interlocutors would often compare “white culture” and “African culture” when they explained their cultural customs to me. The previous segregation policies have influenced citizens’ perceptions of the experiences of the past, they even differ between those living in the same city. As Massey (1994) argues, people

conceptualise and act on different spatialities simultaneously, because we live in a world with a multiplicity of spaces that evoke various identities within us (Massey, 1994:3).

An example of how a space can evoke various identities in a population is the newly heated debate about the Rhodes Statue at the University of Cape Town. On April 9th 2015, students gathered on campus to see the statue of the British colonist Cecil Rhodes fall as a result of several demonstrations, running under the theme “Rhodes must Fall”, in the previous weeks. A majority of the black students and other students viewed the statue as a symbol of white supremacy at the university. They said the Rhodes statue’s visible placement on campus was a constant reminder that this space was made for white people, and that the white authority continued to discriminate black students (Rhodes Must Fall, n.d). This clearly exemplifies how the past continues to affect the country’s present and future, and how the population is differently positioned because of it.

An example of how an event can be significant to one section of the population and meaning very little to others is the ‘Second New Year’ celebrations in Cape Town that dates back to the slave trade. Lisa Baxter (2001) writes that “the growing popularity of street carnival and its connotations with freedom and temporary release from servitude on the second day of the New Year, clearly has historical roots in both the pre- and post-emancipation eras” (Baxter, 2001:87). George explained with excitement:

“The slaves started the festival, but now, everybody can join. We go in a parade with many different groups and everybody is dressed up and dance and sing. It starts in District Six and then it goes down to Adderly Street and up Wale Street, all the way to Bo-Kaap. That is where the parade ends and after Bo-Kaap all the *Coons* [troupes] get into taxis and drive to Green Point stadium. There they sing and the best performance is announced. They win big prices and the trophy is enormous!” George looked excited, measuring the trophy to reach him from his feet to his waist. George has been part of the Coons festival many times. “Everybody wear colourful costumes that look the same and all the troupes have different ones. Oh, and everybody must buy their own panama hat. Only one guy in front dances, while the rest of us just wave with the umbrella pushing it up and down like this!” He showed me the moves by pretending to hold an umbrella and moving his arm up and down over his head.

Spectators lined up early in the morning along the streets, with chairs, blankets and snacks, to get a good view of the colourful Coon troupes’ procession through the streets of the city. The Carnival has, over the years, become a mixture of a parade and organised competition

(Baxter, 2001:88). The Coloured interlocutors spoke warmly about this event. They loved the atmosphere and talent. When I asked Xhosa interlocutors if they participated, they said they had heard about it but never attended, others just shrugged their shoulders and seemed uninterested. I asked George if other vendors from The Big Issue went to the event: “It is only me and three other guys. I don’t know why. They don’t know about it or they don’t want to see the parade. One of them used to live in District Six so he has always been part of it”. This perception of the celebration was verified by several agents. Baxter (2001) writes that “historians, observers, critics and proponents of the event appear unanimous in their insistence that participation in the Carnival has been, and still is, drawn almost exclusively from the coloured working class” (Baxter, 2001:88).

The ‘Second New Year’ celebrations demonstrated how Cape Town has opened up the once segregated city centre and given everyone access to express their heritage and identity freely. This particular celebration is public and open to all but the majority who participate and enjoy it are Coloured, for the historical reasons mentioned above. My emphasis is that everyone have freedom to express themselves but that the various cultural identities are kept separate, and this become explicit during an event like this. Massey argues that “the specificity of place is continually reproduced, but it is not a specificity, which results from some long, internalised, history” (Massey, 1994:155), that is because the sense of place can only be given meaning by linking a particular place, like Cape Town, to other places that stretch beyond (1994:156). Each place is a mix of several views and influences over time and though Cape Town went through comprehensive changes during apartheid and after, these changes are experienced differently.

Comparatively, at a public event such as ‘Open Streets’ social class was the differentiator, and in the ‘Second New Year’ celebrations it was cultural identity. Public spaces become sites where gender, race, ethnicity and class function on various levels depending on the processes found in a particular place. As Massey argues, relations to spaces and places are experienced and negotiated differently according to a person’s social position (Massey, 1994:3). The city spaces inhabit multiple understandings and perceptions at all times, and these various experiences are part of upholding the idea of a universal city centre.

When City Spaces Become an Escape

The city centre is not only a space where people can express themselves freely; it is also a space so diverse and big in size that people can disappear in the crowd. Andile asked a lady, resting on a park bench in the city, if he could take a photograph of her with the disposable camera I had given him. The woman said no at first, but after negotiating with Andile she agreed to be photographed as long as she could face away from the camera together with a donation of five rand from Andile. Andile did not mind giving her R5 because he knew she struggled, regardless of facing similar economic hardships. I asked him why she did not want to be photographed and Andile explained to me that the woman was afraid of her family finding out she was living on the street. I believe a photo would document her situation and not knowing what happens with the photo later on was a risk she did not want to take. In this manner, it seemed that she wanted to stay invisible and blend in with the rest of Cape Town's diversity.



Figure 7: Lady on a park bench, by Andile 2014.

Several of the interlocutors were homeless and spoke openly about their situation except one, and I only became aware of his situation through The Big Issue staff months after my fieldwork had ended. He had told the office and me that he stayed with relatives in the Cape Flats and the office only found out about his living situation after a relative informed the staff. This relative had tried to convince him to stay with her several times but he refused. I argue that he managed to conceal his living conditions to the people he met weekly because the universal city spaces made it possible. The size of the city combined with a notion of a

universal ‘anybody’ space made disappearance possible for both my interlocutor and the lady on the bench.

Andile knew several of the *strollers* (homeless) sojourning around the area of his pitch, and told me one of them used to stay in the same location as him. I asked him why he stayed on the streets but Andile said he had not wanted to ask him in case it made the *stroller* uncomfortable, in which implies that the roles and duties this *stroller* would be expected to act out in the township and at home did not matter in the same sense when living on the street. To continue in the lines of Scheper-Hughes (1993); he became an ‘anybody’ on the streets.

Not only adults hid away in the city spaces, street children were also a common sight. The director of ‘Ons Plek’ said the majority of the street children come from abusive homes and lack motivation for staying in school. They pictured the city of Cape Town as an escape from their families and local gangs. In a way the girls conceptualised the city as a neutral and universal space since it gave them opportunities to be ‘anybodies’. This particular NGO started 26 years ago, when homeless boys told other NGOs about the homeless girls. Before that time nobody knew there were girls living on the street. The director explained how both boys and girls focused on the positive sides when escaping to the city. They could earn their own money and do what they wanted. The thrill of the city excited them – with its clubs, money and instant rewards. Girls got attention from men with money (sugar daddies) and others helped them with food or cash. This was attention they rarely got when living with their families. The constant flow of people in the city made it difficult for families to find and identify them. Regardless of this seeming obscurity, their new life was quickly permeated with crime, poverty and violence. The girls’ street life is further explored in chapter six.

Several of The Big Issue vendors explained to me how nice it was to come to the city and work: “Here you don’t worry about your problems, you can joke and laugh together, and for a few hours you forget about struggles and stress that is waiting for you when you come home!” It was Neliswa who told me this. She did not invest much time in the city except do her job and earn money. Neliswa’s “reality” was in the township (and the Eastern Cape) where her family and friends lived. The township was where she invested her time. The city created a space for her to be an ‘anybody’ for a few hours a day, and allowed her to forget about personal and familial problems.

These presentations of the diverse public spaces are coherent with Massey's argument that we must think about places as particular moments where relations intersect (Massey, 1994:120). Some relations will be contained within the place (they are homeless, street vendors, women) while other relations stretch beyond (the reasons for why they sojourn in the city spaces) since individuals carry with them their own history and background that connects them with a broader context (1994:120). These stretched-out relations are further discussed below.

The Cape Flats

The way my interlocutors talked about the Cape Flats implied that they did not conceptualise it as universal. The fact that they wanted to “forget about struggles” and “escape stress”, indicated that the township was loaded with meaning and specific expectations from the inhabitants. The townships were embedded with meaning in several ways. Zukile, for instance, was uncomfortable taking photos in the township with the disposable camera I gave him because he assumed that people would become suspicious and question his intentions of why he took photos. However, he took photos freely and without asking permission in the city centre, and it did not seem to cause any problems for him. Being in an ‘anybody’ space influenced people to perceive the city differently compared to townships. I argue that townships were embedded with meaning because these places were connected to Xhosa interlocutors' roles – as for example a mother or wife. In their dwelling they became ‘somebodies’. The place a person lives in creates a personalised relationship between the person and the place, and other places will not be attached with the same meaning because that person is not connected to it in the same way.

White or *Umlungu*

Another indicator of how the city spaces and the Cape Flats were embedded with different meanings became evident when I visited vendors in the Cape Flats for the first time. Neliswa said I had to get used to being called *umlungu* (‘white’ in Xhosa), because everybody there would call me that. Interlocutors never called me *umlungu* in the city. The topic of *umlungu* became relevant only when I went to the township, they had never mentioned it before. In the city they called me white. Being *umlungu* became relevant in their space in a different way than my “whiteness” was relevant in the city spaces. I argue that the township they stayed in was conceptualised as an “African” space. Owen Sichone (2008) explains that, “in South Africa, as in other Anglophone African countries, though English is the chief language, it is not the preferred language of personal communication in the townships” (Sichone, 2008:259). The townships Neliswa and other Xhosa interlocutors lived in consisted mainly of Xhosa

dwellers. The language spoken in the township was part of defining the space. In the context of Cape Town, the English language caters for a variety of people which the Xhosa language does not. In the townships, as a consequence of not using English, foreign African immigrants easily mark themselves off as locals because they do not speak the local language (2008:259). In the city, foreign Africans and others will to a lesser extent be excluded from places they find themselves in. Power relations are not absent in the city spaces but it is in this space that all layers of society come together.

The way people understood racial categories implies that the demographic landscape continues to exist of demarcated areas since specific places are linked with racial categories. This became clearer after visiting Celiwe in one of the informal settlements of the Cape Flats. Her three year old daughter asked Celiwe if I was a doctor. Celiwe giggled at her daughter's comment and said: "The last time he saw a white person was when he was in hospital, getting a stomach surgery, so that's why he is saying this." It was necessary for the little girl to ask who I was in order to categorise me and since the only personal experience the girl had had with a white person was at the hospital she assumed that I had to be a doctor. The girl had been in the city with Celiwe before and seen me there, but did not question who I was at the time. I believe I was just an 'anybody' who blended in with everyone else, but seeing me in their home environment, as the only white person, changed the setting and made me a 'somebody'.

Branding or Being Branded

I realised that white was not always white, in terms of the colour of your skin. One day four cheerleaders, in red and yellow striped outfits, handed out flyers by the robots. Three of my female interlocutors discussed their outfits; a short top showing of the belly and a miniskirt with red panties underneath. The short skirts bounced in unison as the cheerleaders skipped cheerfully up and down in-between the rows of cars.

Thembeke looked at me: "That is your culture!"

Oda: "What? No it is not. I would never dress like that!"

Zintle: "That is just because you have a big bum."

Oda: "I would not dress like that if I had a small bum either."

Zintle: "They are showing off too much. You can see their bum. The boys will say 'I want to take you home!'"

Bongeka: "That is *white* culture!"

Oda: "But what about her?"

I pointed to the African cheerleader, with a long curly afro bouncing in unison with the short skirt.

Zintle: "She is white."

Oda: "Why is she white?"

Zintle: "Because of her clothes."

Thembeke and Bongeka agreed.

Oda: "So if I dress up in a traditional Xhosa outfit I will be black?"

They all answered unanimously: "No no. You would be white."

They did not give me a profound answer on why I could not be regarded Xhosa. They knew nothing about her but from how she behaved, dressed and connected with the rest of the cheerleader squad, they categorised her as white. Neither I, nor my interlocutors knew how she chose to classify herself (and maybe she did not classify herself as either), and the fact that I classified her as black showed how our background influenced our construction of racial categories. I argue that explaining her "whiteness" based on her clothes was insufficient, since it did not apply to me if I dressed up in traditional Xhosa clothes. Vendors' expectations of 'appropriate behaviour' for blacks were not fulfilled in how the cheerleader dressed and behaved so they therefore labelled her as different to them. In the same way as they labelled me as someone different to them; they already knew I was not black and dressing up in Xhosa clothes would therefore not change their categorisation of me. "Whiteness" was not only about the colour of your skin but also about class, and class became visible in how a person acted and dressed in a particular place. It was not only my interlocutors who had certain expectations about others, road-users showed expectations about vendors as well.

Female vendors were conscious about how they presented themselves in their workspace. A vast amount of the female vendors working for the Big Issue (and about half of my interlocutors) would put on "Xhosa make-up" before entering their workspace. The make-up included dotting pink calamine in patterns across their face. They promoted "Xhosaness" as a strategy to generate more sales. Mandisa explained: "When I first started working for The Big Issue, I did not sell anything, so I had to change how I was selling. I put on make-up, wore nice beads and maybe a hat. Then I began singing and dancing [at the pitch]. Suddenly everybody wanted to buy!" This indicated that vendors *branded* themselves as Xhosa when selling magazines and this branding was in accordance with customers' expectations. Comaroff and Comaroff (2009) explain in their book, *Ethnicity Inc.*, this objectification of ethnicity; "[...] ethnic corporation rides on a process of homogenization and abstraction ... withdrawn from time or history, congeal into object-form, all the better to conceive,

communicate, and consume” (Comaroff & Comaroff, 2009:12). By objectifying their Xhosaness they evoked “authentic” and positive assumptions about themselves to the customers. Vendors would never enter the city with this make-up; it was only applied right before they started working. Those vendors who put on make-up sometimes commented that sales would drop if they tried to sell without make-up. This essentialising exoticism vendors made of themselves is found in many contexts. The cover page of *Ethnicity, Inc.* depicts a vividly smiling Zulu maiden enmeshed in colourful beads. It is a poster advertising tourists to visit the Zulu kingdom in South Africa (Comaroff & Comaroff, 2009:12). They explains how “this icon of African femininity evokes something entirely familiar in her otherness: the interpolation of the erotic into the exotic” (2009:12). In a similar way to the Zulu woman, female vendors branded themselves and got branded by others. This branding of “Xhosaness” was not a topic among my male interlocutors and indicated how women become a site for culture in a more explicit way compared to men.

How you dressed signalled who you were, although “who you are” meant different things to different people. Female vendors’ “Xhosaness” was conceptualised on several levels. Celiwe commented directly to another vendor because she wore trousers. Celiwe said it was inappropriate for a married woman to wear trousers: “When married you must wear long skirts or dresses and a duk”. Celiwe made these comments based on traditional Xhosa etiquette and explained to me that she would not have made the same remark to a married lady from another culture, since the customs are different. It implied how both gender and cultural background determined ‘appropriateness’. Within the same space people could follow the same or different dress codes. It depended on how they negotiated their multiple identities and subject positions in that particular place (Moore, 1994:4). Not all vendors used Xhosa make-up and some wore jeans, which clarified that the female Xhosa migrants working for the Big Issue was not a homogenous group.

Person out of Place

I argue that the categorisation of people is connected to place as well as skin colour. My presence was often questioned and comments implied that I was not meant to be there. The empirical example below exemplifies how the majority of drivers and passengers found my presence anomalous in the social and spatial landscape:

Mandisa sat on the concrete step barrier, which separated the opposite lanes on the road, and did her make-up. I sat down next to her. She held a piece of a broken mirror up close to her face while dipping

her match in the bottle top filled with calamine. She dotted a pattern of a wave on her face going from the tip of one eyebrow to the tip of the other one. She finished with the make-up and offered me chicken. I took a piece and gave her one of my wheat rolls. We sat there in the middle of the road, with the sun shining on us and ate lunch. The cars kept driving by us, but Mandisa did not seem to mind the traffic. We finished our lunch, got on our feet, crossed the road and walked up the street. A black man came running from across the street, he stopped us and asked whom I was. He introduced himself as Bobby, and told us he was a host on the radio station 'Smile FM'. He saw us sitting on the side of the road sharing a meal and wondered what our story was. He wanted to interview me on his phone to know our story and asked if it was okay. I was not comfortable with that and turned down his offer. He asked several times and I kept declining. Bobby did not speak much to Mandisa; his focus was directed towards me and "my story". Mandisa asked me: "why not?" and the man responded: "It is okay, she is only shy." He said goodbye and left us.

This incident explicitly shows how my presence in a vendor's work environment was "matter out of place" (Douglas, 1979). The radio host was curious about "our story" and why we ate together. The class difference was essential here, since it was unusual for me as a middle-class white person to eat lunch on the side of the road with a black lower-class street vendor. He would not have stopped his car if Mandisa sat there alone or with another vendor. My presence added new and unexpected content to the place, which disrupted the stereotypical characteristics of a street vendor's social network. I assume that my clothing and "whiteness" indicated a certain social class.

Mandisa and I were two 'anybodys' in the universal city space, but when we came together in one particular place we were ascribed a particular meaning; a meaning that disrupted the everyday flow and notion of universality. This workplace was embedded with assumptions of the type of people who sojourned there, as a place reserved for blacks and poor, which made us 'somebodys' when we were there together. There is a broader discourse regarding race and discrimination in South Africa, which I believe made our relationship "special" and worth pursuing. This incident would not have been relevant if the discourse had not been concerned about these issues.

Hierarchical Work Environment

I argue that the meaning embedded in vendors' work place lead some people to degrade the vendors. This example verifies why:

The pitch I stood by this afternoon was a big intersection with three lanes going in each direction. Suddenly, a chubby Coloured passenger in a big truck commented on the *Funny Money* Xhosa vendor.

He shouted out the window of his car, high above the vendor: “Hey hey! Here to meet Malema! Here to Meet Malema! Hey! Cockroach cockroach! Here to Meet Malema!” The passenger laughed and the African driver chuckled. Another *Funny Money* vendor came by at the same time and the passenger continued to mock them: “So here we have Mandela and there is Malema! Haha” The Xhosa vendor got angry and screamed back at the passenger. The passenger continued with his scornful laugh and did not seem to care, and they drove off when the lights turned green.⁸

I had never heard anyone be called a ‘cockroach’ before and the degrading connotation this word inhabits explicitly depicted the vulnerable atmosphere of streets vendors’ workplaces. The passenger’s dehumanising comment depicted the vendor as a less-worthy citizen. Harassment was common, but it was the first time I experienced it to this extent. I argue that people have a lower barrier to harass vendors when they are sitting in their cars because they are protected from the vendor’s response. The car created an explicit distance to the vendors, and this spatial distance impacted the social distance. There was a higher acceptance for harassment in this space compared to other public spaces because it was experienced and perceived as temporal. The harassers could distance themselves from their own comments because they continued on when the lights turned green while vendors had to stay. Vendors place themselves in a particularly vulnerable position when working by the robots.

The interactions between customers and vendors were ambiguous. The vendors are dependent on customers, but the customers are also the ones who, potentially, degrade them and make them feel inferior. After receiving 20 cents from a customer, Zintle said to me: “Just because we are empty in here [pointed to her stomach] does not mean we are empty up here [she pointed to her head]”. Some customers rolled up their windows when vendors walked by, which created a bigger social and spatial distance, however it was never clear whether these drivers intended to demean the vendors or not. No matter how many negative comments or rolled up windows they experienced during a day, they always kept a facade of thankfulness. Vendors were given half-eaten food and only a few cents but they kept smiling and thanked the customers. If the half-eaten food was given to them without a container or wrapping, they usually gave it to street children roaming around. Zintle explained: “They think we will just eat anything!” Vendors never complained directly to customers because they were dependent on them. I find it important to underline that vendors dearly appreciated the food and clothing they got from customers, as long as it was given in a way they perceived as decent. Selling

⁸ Julius Malema is the leader of the political party Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF)

magazines by the robots provided an income for their families, making harassment a secondary concern. In addition, as already established, the city spaces created an opportunity for interlocutors to escape stress.

The hierarchical work environment the Big Issue vendors were part of and the reasons for why they moved to the city are similar to Sheper-Hughes (1993) informants' experience in the urban contexts. Rural migrants in Brazil did not get to partake in the open, democratic and modern space on the same basis as others in the area. They migrated to the city to be part of the modern democratic public space but social class continued to affect their positioning (1993:90):

“And yet these rural migrants live imperfectly in, and sometimes much at odds with, the world of the *rua*. Its promise of autonomy and equality eludes them, and freedom from personal obligations is a sham or comes only at the price of negating, depersonalized anonymity. The democracy of the *rua* is not meant to extend to the likes of them” (Sheper-Hughes, 1993:90).

Gendered Harassment

I argue that women become particularly vulnerable when entering the workspace. They were not only harassed for their social class, sexual harassment was also common. I was frequently approached by men in cars, who would open their windows and compliment my appearance, shout ‘I love you’ or the equivalent in Xhosa, or just stare. I adapted to it and did not notice the comments to such a large degree after a month in the field. The sexual harassment was one of the reasons why I wanted to study women in public spaces in the first place, so being exposed to these comments was something I expected.

Zintle, one of the unmarried vendors, told me how male drivers often approached her and asked if she wanted to join them in the car. They did not want to buy her magazine but instead offered to buy her things if she went with them. She was hesitant when speaking about it and tried to avoid saying the word prostitute, but she eventually whispered: “prostitute”. Selling magazines by the road signalled to road-users that she was without a job and because of this they thought she was interested in earning money in other ways. Being young and unmarried made her susceptible to attention from men. Bongeka, a married vendor, had a solution to stop men from approaching her while she worked:

Bongeka wore jeans and a white blouse and Celiwe wore a long purple dress and, both of them with long black weaves reaching down to their shoulders. The three of us sat in a park right next to where they sold magazines. It was time to start work so Bongeka pulled out a second outfit from her bag. She put on a skirt and I asked why she changed her clothing. Bongeka responded: “I don’t like wearing jeans when I work, it gives me more attention and men approach me, so that is why I always wear skirt and a *duk*!” Both wrapped their long weaves in a *duk* and walked to their pitch.

The workplace by the robots made Bongeka and Celiwe very visible, as two women among long lines of cars. By wearing a long skirt and a *duk* she signalled to customers and drivers that she was married and it made her less approachable for comments. I never saw Zintle wear a *duk* and full-length dresses; instead she wore jeans or dresses reaching down just below her knees. Bongeka deliberately changed how people perceived her in the workplace because she knew her positioning in the street would change people’s perception of her. She avoided unwanted attention, something my male interlocutors never expressed any concern about. I never saw men change their physical appearance when moving in and out of work settings. This, in addition to promoting Xhosaness, indicated that men and women followed different ‘codes of conduct’ when moving in and across spaces. Her workplace is “formed out of the particular set of social relations which interact at a particular location” (Massey, 1994:168), and these differed for men and women.

The robots changed character when Bongeka entered, and Bongeka changed her character as well. Her mobility in the city was conditional as she adapted to the environment she worked in. The fact that men did not change their appearance when they entered the workplace implies that her adaption was first and foremost gendered. It was not the city per se that changed Bongeka’s feminine appearance; it was the workplace within the universal space that influenced her adaption. I walked with Bongeka through the city several times and there were no comments directed towards her and the way she dressed. Her jeans and long black weaves did not send the same signals as they did by the robots. Male road-users would approach female vendors based on their physical appearance. Robots became gendered and Bongeka became a ‘somebody’. Adaption to gendered expectations did not restrict women’s mobility but it made it conditional.

In understanding this gendered harassment, the relation between gender and class needs to be examined. The director of ‘Ons Plek’ was, when starting to work in the sector 25 years ago, surprised and shocked by the constant harassment the street girls were exposed to: “It is any

man they pass on the street. Men are frequently watching them, commenting and verbally abusing them. I experienced harassment and random comments when I was growing up and as an adult, but never to the same extent as the girls”. Her perception of harassment was similar to my findings among the female street vendors *and* my own experiences. I got more comments when I was with my female interlocutors, than I would with my male interlocutors and when in the city in my leisure time. It was with whom I interacted that decided “how much” harassment was appropriate and this was connected to social class, gender, *and* place. Social class affected the extent of harassment, and the lower the class the more harassed a person would be. Class could be determined by the place you sojourned in, since places are embedded with meanings (Massey, 1994).

City spaces are not only gendered in how people act in them, spaces are also gendered in the way people perceive spaces. When the newly started ‘Ons Plek’ asked for funding, they struggled to convince the economic elite of the street girls’ existence. The director explained how the economic elite believed funding was unnecessary because girls could become domestic workers or prostitutes. These arguments show how boys and girls were given different characteristics and abilities based solely on gender, which imply a patriarchal social structure of the South African society *and* a naturalisation of gender characteristics (Massey 1994; Moore, 1994). The director explained how this perception changes according to whom is in position of decision making and their personal beliefs. In addition, ‘Ons Plek’ constant lobbying for street girls has managed to change the elites’ perception of street life.

Concluding Reflections

It became evident through this chapter that the public spaces of Cape Town inhabited multiple meanings and perceptions which were influenced by a person’s social position and cultural background in society. The diverse usage of Cape Town’s public spaces underpins Massey’s (1994) argument of understanding spaces as relational and multiple. A place and the identity of a place is a product of social relations and these relations can change over time because people, places and spaces are dynamic (Massey, 1994). This dynamic relationship between people and places created processes where race, ethnicity, class and gender intersected. The universal space is expressed through various events and festivals, but within this universal space, gendered, classed or racialised dynamics and places appear. In order to understand these power dynamics further, I will, in the next chapter, investigate how the *discourse of mistrust* influences the way people navigate within and between social and spatial relations.

MISTRUST IN PUBLIC SPACES

“We are all skellems here”

In this chapter I argue that the *discourse of mistrust* influences the structural order of social and spatial relations in Cape Town. During my fieldwork, people’s expectations and engagement in the discourse became apparent on several levels. In Cape Town, mistrust is explicitly signalled through the high walls and high amount of security across the city centre and suburbs. It is also noticeable in the biased perception of black men as criminals (Lemanski, 2004). Statements in a discourse will always be embedded with power (Hall, 1992:292), and in the light of South Africa’s complex social hierarchy, I will investigate how race, class and gender can influence the extent of mistrust. First, a brief contextualisation of citizens’ perceptions of the national police force is necessary. I argue that people’s view of the police influences how they relate to and experience public spaces. My aim is to show, in this and the following chapter, how *mistrust* influences people’s social and spatial navigation patterns on several levels.

The Police

Frequently, images and videos are posted on social media and they depict how officers from the South African Police Service (SAPS) act violently towards citizens. In March 2014, a video was published on the streaming website YouTube, filming two officers who beat up and stripped a man in broad daylight on the side of a busy road before they put him in the police car. The women who recorded the incident opened the window of their office building and shouted at the police. One of them screamed, “Police brutality! That’s not how you treat a person [...] That’s the only reason why you are in the news all day!” (ECR Newswatch, 7. March, 2015). The video exemplified a general opinion citizens have of SAPS. Several interlocutors said their husband or wife abused them, but that they did not go to the police because the police would only respond by saying it was none of their business. Fiona Ross (2010) got similar statements from her interlocutors who lived in a settlement in the Cape Flats. One of her interlocutors, Vicky, complained, “Man, we call the help of the law but they only ever tell us that domestic disputes are none of their concern. They’re probably waiting for our bodies to lie somewhere before they step in. Women are beaten around here...” (Ross, 2010:35). The police are expected to be trustworthy and accountable, so when this trust is

abused a sense of betrayal becomes evident (Punch, 2009:5). Grimen (2009) proposes that a morally and trustworthy institution is founded on four core values: truthfulness, keeping promises, justice and solidarity (Grimen, 2009:113). If a person suspects an institution or people working in that institution to not follow these values, it will become problematic to trust the people within the institution because people do not know what motivates them (2009:114).

People's lack of trust in the police is according to Charlotte Lemanski "aggravated by historic mistrust of a police force that previously functioned as a brutal government enforcer rather than a citizens' protector" (Lemanski, 2004:104). As Grimen points out, it is easier to break down trust than to build it (Grimen, 2009:91). The government and the police force were heavily criticised for how they dealt with the 'Marikana Massacre' in 2012 (Satgar, 2012) and, more recently, the lack of effort the government and police showed in stopping the recent xenophobic attacks in Durban and elsewhere in South Africa (Vourlias, April 2015). Research shows that SAPS is affected by corruption on an individual, organisational and societal level. These levels will not be detailed, I only wish to underline that corruption permeates the whole system and is not only acted out by individuals in the South African police force (Bruce, 2008:8).

South Africa experienced a resurgence of crime after the demise of the apartheid regime. Several academics state that, regardless of unreliable crime statistics, South Africa suffers from high rates of violent crime (Altbeker, 2005; Lemanski, 2004; Samara, 2011). Irrespective of the real crime rates, South Africa has experienced an increase in personal insecurity. High crime rates and 'fear of crime' have led to an increase in non-state policing (Baker, 2002:31)⁹. Commercial policing has long been part of South Africa's national security measures. In the 1970s security problems started to increase and non-state policing started to grow. The state encouraged the expansion of commercial security to relieve the pressure from the already overworked state police (Baker, 2002:32). It became common for both black and white communities to start up their own forms of policing as they felt that the state response was inadequate. The frustration resulted not only in an increase of commercial policing but also local vigilante groups, and street committees being established to fight crime. Baker's

⁹ I am referring to Baker's terming of non-state policing that "cover[s] all policing activity other than that performed by the state police" (Baker, 2002:31)

article from 2002 states that there is estimated “to be three times as many commercial security guards in South Africa as uniformed police” (Baker, 2002:47).

The private security companies have an important role in communities across the country. Security guards from commercial policing companies are hired and placed in every office building, and in almost all private apartment blocks in Cape Town. Buildings and gates are decorated with warning signs depicting an angry dog or guns telling passers-by and potential criminals to stay away. Throughout the inner city of Cape Town you see security guards in green and yellow reflector vests, and these guards belong to CCID (see p. 41). They are visible on all streets and in parks, and their task is to provide safety and security for people sojourning in the city’s public spaces. City Improvement Districts and ‘neighbourhood watches’ have been established in several suburbs and city neighbourhoods, to contribute to security and create safer public spaces. Samara (2011) sees several problematic consequences of the development of non-state policing in South Africa. He finds it disturbing that the rapid adaption to the post-apartheid socio-spatial segregation continues to generate inequality among its residents. It is not only the spatial landscape that is affected, the language of the discourse continues in the same direction:

“Through a language that rearticulates the apartheid-era geography of inside/safety and outside/danger, and its social reference points, neoliberal governance effects a troubling naturalization of these inequalities and the closing of a historic opportunity made possible by earlier, critical perspectives” (Samara, 2011:182).

Samara argues that the neoliberal governance’s security strategy, consisting of public and private actors, mirrors a divided city (2011:187). This divided city is shaped by people’s mistrust in public spaces. Individuals’ perceptions of the police as untrustworthy influence their perceptions of public spaces because it is those spaces the police are supposed to keep safe. The perception of the public as unsafe is a consequence of, or rather influenced by what Lemanski calls “fear of violence” (Lemanski, 2004) and what Caldeira terms “talk of crime” (Caldeira, 2000). This fear is symbolically and materially visible in the spatial landscape of Cape Town.

Spatial Mistrust

The South African society’s presumed need for safety becomes visible in Cape Town’s city architecture and high use of private security companies. In accordance with Grimen (2009), it

can be argued, that mistrust in institutions, such as the police, has an effect on the trust between individuals in public spaces. Lemanski (2004) explains how citizens build high walls, put up electric fences around houses and hire private security guards as a consequence of fear of violence and crime (Lemanski, 2004). This discourse of mistrust can reveal a lot about how the spatial is constructed and managed. I argue that this mistrust is internalised in citizens' perception of the public space and people's actions show how they conform to it. Adding to this, public spaces with a high level of security sustain the existing mistrust. This is because the social and spatial function in a dialectic relationship and are dependent on each other (Massey, 1994: 120-121). Across the city, the use of "invisible" fences and symbolic boundaries, different types of paving, bricks vs asphalt, was evident. This creates an understanding for people moving across the city that spaces anticipate different behaviour. There are no signs that explicitly tell the new rules of the space, but the lay-out of the places contributes to a switch of atmosphere. I will explore how women's various perceptions of men are dependent on the place they are find themselves later in this chapter and more thoroughly in the next chapter.



Figure 8: Barbed wire prevents people to sojourn close to the Police Station building.
Figure 9: A CCID guard at St. Georges Mall. A common sight across the city centre.

Lemanski (2004) refers to a survey from 1998 and how it depicts citizens' experiences of crime and fear of crime in their residential areas and in the city centre. The survey implies that all social groups experience fear; the difference is where the fear of crime is located spatially. Blacks fear their immediate surroundings and residential area, while the white population fear the city centre more than their residential area. This fear was also compliant with the crime

statistics; the majority of crime against white citizens happened away from their residential area while victimisation of blacks and coloureds happened within theirs (2004:105).

When citizens mistrust others, they think they are protecting themselves, their family and their belongings by retreating into private spaces. However, this creates an even bigger divide between public and private spaces. The house and the private space become a safe zone, while the public spaces become even less safe. In the end, those left sojourning in public spaces are people who are economically unable to enter private safe zones. A new post-apartheid segregation becomes evident (Lemanski, 2004:107). Lemanski argues that this new type of segregation is recreating a city of divisions, which categorises certain social and racial groups as more or less feared. She explains how several academics suggest that “fear of crime is coded for fear of race” and in broader terms this can be regarded as fear of difference (Lemanski, 2004: 108).

Outsiders

Road users often categorised street vendors based on predetermined characteristics. How these degrading comments came to life show how different sides of the social order in Cape Town is structured. This next example depicts how a street vendor is assumed to be a criminal based on his position in the social and spatial environment.

An elderly man marched over to where Zukile and I were sitting. We sat on the pavement in the shade of a tree to rest, in-between his sales by the robots. The man approached us and was clearly angry. He shouted at Zukile and accused him of breaking in to his car that was parked 50 metres from us. We were both startled by the situation, and stood up. I was surprised over how this man could accuse Zukile of breaking into his car without any valid proof. He presented himself as a pastor of a church down the road and clearly stated that he would contact Zukile’s office and report him to the police. Another street vendor, who was intoxicated, came over and wanted to be involved in the discussion, although his presence made the pastor even more furious. The pastor pointed and shouted at Zukile and I asked him why he did not accuse me of breaking into his car since I was with Zukile as well. His response was clear: “Don’t be silly, I know it is not you who did it, I know it is him!” The pastor turned back to Zukile and pointed his finger to Zukile’s face: “I know how you people are! You... you who live in the locations!” The pastor was not afraid of causing a scene and cars driving past us slowed down and stared, trying to understand what was going on. Zukile tried to defend himself. He said he had not seen anything and that he cannot notice everyone who passes this road, because he is busy selling magazines. The pastor was not convinced, he had already decided to blame Zukile for the crime.

The pastor based his accusations of Zukile on his existing prejudice and stereotypes against lower working class/ unemployed citizens, the majority of whom happens to be blacks. The pastor was correct when he said Zukile was living in the *locations*, but that does not automatically make him a criminal. Lemanski (2004) emphasises that the fear of difference is generated by an underlying assumption of poor Africans and Coloureds as criminals; termed *swart gevaar* and *skollie menace* during apartheid (Lemanski, 2004:109), and these stereotypes can have influenced the pastor to accuse Zukile of the break-in. The pastor gave me the impression that he did not feel guilty over the accusations because he phoned The Big Issue's office to inform them later that same day. When I confronted the pastor, he did not think that I committed the crime. The quarrel between the pastor and Zukile indicated a divide between social classes in Cape Town. These are hierarchical stereotypes that lead to discriminating accusations. I experienced several incidents like this and negative stereotypes were often made explicit if the person expressing them was stressed and angry. A possible reason can be that when people get upset they find a scapegoat and these scapegoats are the vulnerable people in close proximity to them. Regardless, these underlying assumptions about particular groups in society make mistrust explicit in public spaces.

People always put others and themselves in categories; it is how we structure the world around us. Unfortunately these categories influence and legitimise why we are assigned unequal roles in society. Daniella Gandolfo (2009) argues that this is what many sociological studies speak of implicitly; a basic rule of avoidance between people where social relations based on differences like class, race and gender, influence who and how we interact with others (Gandolfo, 2009:11). Fears of the unknown and prejudice influence people's actions and continue to keep the lived realities in Cape Town separated. Caldeira (2000) explains how this naturalises the categorisation of some groups as dangerous. It creates a simplistic divide of good and evil. In addition, "this symbolic criminalisation is a widespread and dominant social process reproduced even by its victims (the poor, for example), although in ambiguous ways" (Caldeira, 2000:2). The power of the discourse makes the supposed criminals experience the categorisations in the discourse as true. As an example; the accusations from the pastor made Zukile upset, however it seemed that his biggest concern about the accusations was how it would affect his sales, since potential customers saw him arguing with another man on the street. His perception of the argument indicates that Zukile was not surprised about the accusations; it was rather part of the "everydayness" of working by the robots. The identities in Cape Town's spatial structures are multiple, but simultaneously there

are some identities and some opinions that have authority over others. The way the pastor reacted exemplifies that “social relations are inevitably and everywhere imbued with power and meaning and symbolism” (Massey, 1994:3).

Lemanski (2004) replaces the simplistic black-white lens with an insider-outsider perspective. The insider-outsider perspective “helps to explain why township blacks oppose black squatters and immigrants, in the same way that whites oppose black squatters but accept affluent blacks” (Lemanski, 2004:109). I find this insider-outsider term very useful for my analysis. Zukile’s placement in the spatial landscape, selling magazines by the robots, indicated his shortage of resources. The concept of insider-outsider is constructed around class and not race. If the setting and placement had been different the accusations might not have been the same. The intersections of race and class continue to overlap and are negotiated differently depending on the particularity of the place. The pastor judged Zukile on his established prejudice of the outsider. Zukile’s placement in the city indicated his inferior social position and show how places are embedded in power.

My Coloured interlocutor, Danika, was very open about living on the streets. She explained how everybody works together on the streets and that there are no racial divides among people living there, because everyone is in the same situation. There was rather a divide based on where in the city a person lived. Danika said that she had to be more careful when walking into unfamiliar areas. ‘Place’ was what, in her context, differentiated people from each other. This is coherent with Lemanski’s insider-outsider divide, and in this case it was the place that decided who was on the inside and who was not. Race remains an important factor in people’s perceptions of others, but it is a more significant factor when different classes interact compared to interactions within the same class. People’s actions and the physical architecture show how both social and spatial practices are part of defining a place. This makes it impossible to view a place in only one way (Massey, 1994).

Cape Flats

My Coloured friends living in a community in the Cape Flats known for its widespread gang violence, expressed relief when they came to visit me in the city. When we rested in a city park and they felt more relaxed when compared to hanging out in their community because they did not have to worry about gangsters. They said they wished they could go to the city every day just to relax. I, on the other hand, never experienced this relief and relaxation when

entering the city spaces, though I experienced more concern about my safety when I visited them in their community. I have never experienced a stabbing or being grazed by a bullet in my home environment, like my friend has, therefore I enter the city spaces with different attitudes and expectations. A person's background and living conditions shapes the way that person perceives city spaces. A person uses previous experiences when comparing one place to another and that comparison creates a sense of that place as more or less safer than the former. Just like Neliswa viewed the city as a place to escape stress, the social and spatial relations goes beyond one place. This indicates that places are unfixed, since the social interaction happening in a place is dynamic and changing (Massey, 1994:169). A place does not comply as just one thing, it is identified with many different qualities dependent on who is looking and experiencing that place. Massey argues that since we recognise that people have multiple identities, places too inhabit multiple identities (1994:153).

There was a different kind of openness in the Cape Flats compared to the city centre and residential suburbs. This was noticed in the lack of barbed wire, private security, guard dogs barking or posters with threats around the townships when visiting interlocutors. People moved about quite freely, frequently visiting each other's houses, and locking doors was not an essential concern for many dwellers. Low fences made out of wood, beer cases or bricks separated shack dwellings from the main street, and RDP houses had their own front yards. In the city, houses were locked and the majority of houses had an extra gate outside the main door, to prevent burglary. Houses were rarely seen without warnings of alarms and security on alert. The gate was always locked in the house I stayed in, and a security camera was installed in front of the house, keeping an eye on the road and entrance.

Neliswa and her neighbours did not lock their doors when they left their house, or when they were indoors. Neighbours went in and out of houses as they pleased. Neliswa and her neighbour even made a comment about it, differentiating themselves from the Cape Town suburbs:

Neliswa wanted us to go and buy *amagunya* [deep-fried flour buns]. There was no one else home so I asked if we had to lock the door: "You don't need to lock the door. It is fine to leave your stuff here." After buying *amagunya* at the local spaza shop, Neliswa remembered she did not have any coffee in her house. We stopped by her neighbour to borrow coffee. The house had a wooden fence around its front yard, we walked in the gate and I asked if I should close it, Neliswa said no. The door of the house was open but we could not see anybody so Neliswa called out her name. A woman in her forties appeared in

the doorway. She wore a pink robe and commented on my question: “No need to close the gate, we are not in the suburbs!” Both Neliswa and the woman laughed. They continued to chat in Xhosa and the lady took a box of instant coffee from her kitchen cupboard and gave it to Neliswa. We said goodbye and walked out the gate. A police car was parked in the front yard of the house on the opposite side of the road. Neliswa bumped my shoulder on purpose and said, “See! The cops are watching. This is a safe place!” She giggled. I asked her if it was the same in the areas with the shacks, if they needed to lock their doors or not. Neliswa responded, “Yes, you must lock the doors. There are more people there, many *skellems* [untrustworthy person]!”

There are several elements to this example. First, Neliswa and her neighbour joked about the closed suburbs and expressed opinions of not being like “them”. Both were clear on how they were different and living in a more open community. Second, Neliswa saw the presence of the police car as a sign of protection and safety, with a hint of irony. The fact that they did not lock their doors showed that they acted on the basis of trust, to a certain extent. The third element is that there are different rules and precautions that need to be made within the locations in the Cape Flats. Some places are considered safer than others. Neliswa is staying in an area consisting of RDP houses. There was less people, less traffic, less noise, greater space between the houses and paved roads compared to shack areas. Shack areas accommodate more dwellers, there is less space between the shacks and people get around these areas using the small paths that swirl their way through the settlement. Neliswa complained that the area she stayed in was too quiet; she missed the loud atmosphere in the shack dwellings. The structure and layout of the place is part of defining her expectation to the place (as well as language, see p. 50).

In contrast to Neliswa’s neatly planned neighbourhood, Bongeka lived in a shack dwelling in a different part of the township. Bongeka locked her door each time she went out. Her shack was right next to a busy road, with constant traffic of cars, taxis and pedestrians, and therefore easily accessible for strangers. It was necessary to lock the door because of the constant flow of passers-by. I told my Xhosa teacher, who also lived in the township, that I had been to this specific area. She was surprised and told me I had been to the ghetto. Her comment underlined the diversity of places and perceptions within the township itself. Neliswa and Bongeka lived approximately a kilometre away from each other, but their spatial landscapes differed greatly. Neliswa was not as concerned about locking her door as Bongeka. Her house was not placed right next to a main road but was built with more space between the houses, and only residents of the township sojourned there. When we left Neliswa’s house, she did

not lock the door because her daughter was expected to return home in the next hour. This openness was missing in Bongeka's neighbourhood *and* in the city centre. The lucid landscape of Neliswa's neighbourhood gave neighbours a good overview and made it easier to keep an eye on who sojourned in their neighbourhood. This was never said explicitly though I believe it made the dwellers feel more secure. Neliswa and Bongeka expressed mistrust of their spatial and social environment in the township but they behaved in a more open and including manner compared to the city residents, who constantly distanced themselves from the streets and pedestrians.

It is not only the place but also the people in that place that influence senses of trust. Back at Neliswa's house, we had finished the *amagunya*. Neliswa spoke to a vendor on the phone and told me we had to hurry to another location to meet up with the rest of the group:

We walked for ten minutes on the outskirts of the location, with shacks on one side and an open green landscape on the other. We stopped by a large paved road. There was little traffic during this time of the day. Suddenly, Neliswa grabbed my arm and said: "You must watch the men!" Three guys walked down the paved road towards us, all three wore black shorts and t-shirts. They were too far away to hear our conversation so Neliswa continued: "These ones are coming from the gym, so it is okay! You must always watch the men! There are too many skellems this side. Don't trust anybody!" She loosened the grip on my arm and we crossed the road.

Neliswa was never this explicit about her perceptions of men when we were together in the city and at her pitch. There was a constant flow of unfamiliar men interacting or walking past her where she worked and whenever we went to the shops in the city. I believe her concern was evoked by where we were, *and* because the whole location was an unfamiliar place for me. I, as an outsider, was part of influencing her view of the men on the road, but I she also appeared to believe that one should be more careful when moving about in the townships, regardless of living there or only visiting. My "outsiderness" became even clearer as we kept walking around in the township:

After crossing the road we entered one of the informal settlements, there were a lot more people on this side of the road and the paths between the shacks were narrow and difficult to follow. We met up with three other vendors and Neliswa insisted that I walk in the middle. I had one vendor in front of me and one vendor behind me as we walked down the narrow paths of the settlement. She explained: "Oda, you must always be in the middle. We don't want you to be kidnapped".

The vendors expressed extra concern and took extra precautions to make me both *feel* and *be* safe. After visiting the people we came to see, we travelled back to the city. We arrived in Cape Town at about 4pm with the sun still up. We were a group of five and we walked across the taxi rank, which was, as usual, crowded with people coming and going. I ended up walking behind everyone and noticed that they no longer paid attention to my whereabouts. The city was where I “belonged” and they did not feel as responsible for my safety. Additionally, maybe they felt safer in the city compared to the Cape Flats. As I thought this to myself, Neliswa turned around and looked at me: “We don’t need to protect you here. The city is *your* home!”, thus confirming my analysis.

The observations of the city and townships show how spatial and social categories function in a dialectic and dynamic relationship. It is not only the people who decide what is safe, the place itself influences the way a person experiences it. It might be the same people roaming the streets in the city as in the locations but the space makes people act differently and makes people perceive others differently as well. Strangers would often cross vendors’ paths in the city but Neliswa and other interlocutors would never grab my arm and tell me to “watch the men”. They only expressed concern in the locations or when I was walking alone in the evenings in the city. In the evening, the city spaces changed and interlocutors became more concerned about my safety. In general terms, the city centre is regarded safer than the Cape Flats. People come and go in the city spaces and surrounding suburbs with fewer precautions compared to the Cape Flats. The strong visibility of security guards and the symbolic changes of the spatial structured landscape were also part of perceiving the city as safer.

Defining Safe Places

In general, as mentioned in chapter four, interlocutors regarded the Eastern Cape as a safe place for their children. They did not view urban spaces in the same way. The Cape Flats and the city required other precautions compared to the Eastern Cape. This difference can be linked to a person’s background. In contrast, my Coloured interlocutors would always compare the city centre to the Cape Flats. They do not have a third location, like the Eastern Cape, as a reference since they had no personal experience or connection to that province. This is another aspect in understanding how people with different backgrounds construct places differently. In my research it was Xhosa speakers who compared Cape Town and the Eastern Cape, while Coloured interlocutors compared Cape Town to the Cape Flats. Interlocutors’ explicit concern about safety shows how trust and mistrust exist together. The way Xhosa migrants viewed the Eastern Cape as ‘the safe haven’ becomes significant when

they constructed the meaning of places in urban contexts. The explicitness of talking about safety in regards to places influences how people experience social relations as well. As Massey argues, a space is the product of social relations in as much as social relations constitute that space (Massey, 1994:120-121).

Taming Chance

The female vendors often refer to each other as *skellems*, in a humorous way¹⁰. In addition, vendors referred to other street vendors and *strollers* and *bergies* (homeless people) as *tsotsis* (thug) and *skollies* (criminal) when they saw them acting in deviant ways. They told me to not trust anyone, not even “here by the robots”. The labels they gave themselves and others implied that mistrust was not only related to public spaces but also the people in these places.

Vendors would often discuss money and who owed who books. They borrowed money from each other frequently, but disagreements regarding money were always an issue. After a heated discussion between two vendors Thandiwe warned me: “You cannot trust anybody here in the park, Oda!” There were many situations where vendors told me that they would never lend money to others again, but continued to do so the following week. Mistrust was often the topic of the conversation as interlocutors kept repeating that I could not trust anyone and that they did not trust anyone either, but what they said was not reflected in their actions.

An arrangement that required trust was a savings club called a *stokvel*, which the majority of the Xhosa interlocutors were engaged in. It included a group of people, four or more, who collectively saved money. At the end of every week or month, a specific amount of money was collected from each member (for example, R100 each) and given to one of the members. The following week, the second member received the same amount of collected money and this continued until all members had received their share of the *stokvel*. It was a way for individuals to save money and encourage each other to save. I argue that the constant circulation of money and reciprocity created a network and feeling of community for the parties involved (Mauss, 1990). In this arrangement, the benefits exceed the disadvantages, and since interlocutors continue to participate in these *stokvels*, it shows that they view people as trustworthy, as well as *stokvels* portray them as trustworthy. People’s dependence on and expectations for a *stokvel* made people commit to the structure. Comments about not trusting each other were never mentioned in regard of this arrangement and if people were late with a

¹⁰ a person cutting the line in a store would be classified as a *skellem*

payment they did not mind because they knew very well the unpredictable income generated by selling magazines. Trust is not spoken about because trust is part of their being-in-the-world (Daniel and Knudsen, 1995:1).

Another element that can explain the trust people expressed in relation to the *stokvels* is the indigenous social philosophy of *ubuntu*. *Ubuntu* is translated to English as ‘collective brotherhood’ or ‘the art or virtue of being human’ (Masina, 2000:170). Masina argues that it is found in all African communities in South Africa and it “invokes images of group support, acceptance, co-operation, care, sharing and hospitality” (Mgibi, 1995:57, quoted in Masina, 2000:170). My interlocutors never spoke about *ubuntu* and I believe that is because it is a taken for granted phenomenon, just like trust. Masina continues to explain the purpose of *ubuntu*:

“The purpose of Ubuntu is to work toward a situation that acknowledges a mutually beneficial condition. Its emphasis is on cooperation with one another for the common good as opposed to competition that could lead to grave instability within any community. It emphasises the whole and not the part(s). It describes the feeling of the worth of the community and a shared fellowship of men and women” (2000:181)

However, I believe the precarious living conditions and lack of a stable work and income makes *ubuntu* precarious, though simultaneously *ubuntu* remains inherent in their reality and how they act towards other members of their community. This can be explained by Ystanes (2011), in her view, trust is not so much about rational evaluations and interests but the capacity to trust is rather linked to the absence of doubt (Ystanes, 2011:55). If people do not doubt others then there is no reason to not trust them, and in the underlying spirit of Ubuntu people do not doubt.

With the notion of doubt in mind, I argue that interlocutors “tame chance” by explicitly saying that they do not trust others. It functions as a strategy to decrease the chance of getting tricked by their colleagues or friends and if they do get tricked, they are not portrayed as fools because they were aware that they should not trust others. Daniel and Knudsen (1995) write that “the capacity to trust needs to be underwritten by the capacity to tame chance, especially the chance of being hurt. This capacity is not an individual matter but a gift that a cultured society gives a person” (Daniel & Knudsen, 1995:2). Taming chance involves people weighing the benefits with the disadvantages before they choose to trust others. There is an

absence of doubt in relation to *stokvels*, and people will therefore trust others. Interlocutors never said this explicitly because they took it for granted (Ystanes, 2011:68).

Concluding Reflections

A person's degree of trust or mistrust reveals how that person navigates through the city (Grimen, 2009) and mistrust is visible by continuously investing in high fences and the constantly visible security guards in the city. It sustains the image of the outside as dangerous. People's actions and the physical architecture show how social and spatial practices are part of defining a place, making it impossible to view a place in only one way (Massey, 1994). The way people perceive the public spaces is influenced by fear of violence and talk of crime and that makes people mistrust what is "out there". These statements keep generating mistrust and uphold the idea of strangers and acquaintances as untrustworthy. This fear is embedded in people in the way they navigate through the city and the ones they fear are black men. Speaking about mistrust as explicitly as my interlocutors did depicted how mistrust is a conscious state of awareness, which influences their urban navigation. Regardless of talking about lack of trust, interlocutors continued to trust each other and this trust is one of the cornerstones for creating a sense of community. I conceptualise trust as something people take for granted, so in order to really understand how it works I believe we must continue to analyse trust within the spatial dynamics. The next chapter investigates deeper how mistrust is generated and affects relations between women and men.

NEGOTIATING GENDERED RELATIONS AND EXPECTATIONS

“You must always watch the men”

Women and men’s legal rights have not always been equal. Albertyn, et al. (2007) writes how apartheid policies contributed to the splitting of African families, since only men were allowed to work in the urban areas, while women and children were left behind in their designated Bantustans. The 1996 South African Constitution was intended to change this unbalance through its non-racial and non-sexism policies and was supposed to assure women bodily and psychological autonomy (Albertyn, et al., 2007:297). This chapter investigates how women’s increased mobility affects gendered relations and the way public and private spaces are conceptualised. I propose that women’s newly gained physical mobility generates a notion of mistrust from the opposite sex. In addition, how men perceive women has a retroactive effect on how women perceive men. The dialectic relationship between social and spatial structures influences how women and men relate to each other in various spaces. I argue that the “truth” constructed through the *discourse of mistrust* affects women’s way of navigating through private and public spaces differently than men.

Blurring the Lines

“Times are really changing. And women, they are becoming more empowered”

(FGD 1 (participant): Urban, Gauteng quoted in Dworkin et al, 2012:103).

Women are no longer only housewives, they are out in the public “working for a wage” and it is where they spend their leisure time. Dworkin et al. (2012) argues that women entering the public spaces and engaging themselves in waged work have affected gender relations (Dworkin et al., 2012:103). These relations continue to be negotiated, especially in the way people conceptualise spaces. One afternoon I asked Neliswa what she thought were the differences between women and men:

“It is the same in South Africa, here we are ‘50/50’. We are not different here! The government says so, but it does not really work. There are so many different people.” Celiwe stood behind Neliswa nodding while working and displaying her magazines to the cars that had stopped at the red light. Neliswa continued: “Women have too many rights here! You can’t have it like that in the home because then

nobody respect each other. The woman will not do as the man says, she will do her own thing and then the man will do his own thing and you can't run a house or have a marriage like that!"¹¹

Differences, or rather the lack of differences, between women and men connoted the idea of democracy to Neliswa. From her perspective, equal rights generated tensions in the household. The way she interpreted democracy was in contrast to her values, because it went against her "traditional" ways of acting out gender roles and dealing with conflict. Neliswa continued:

"And if you have a problem and fight, you go to the police instead of speaking to the family, and that is how it gets worse because there is no communication between the people. If your husband, for example hits you, the families must speak together and sort it out, you can't take the matters to the police. My husband beat me a long time ago, but then the families came together and we talked about it and now he does not hit me anymore. And sometimes the woman is the abuser but the man can't go to the police, you know?" Neliswa paused for a few seconds before she continued: "How do you think it is for a man to go to the police and say he is beaten by his wife? They will just laugh at him and embarrass him, because this is the democracy where men also must go to the police. And then he is angry when he comes out of the police station without a case! So that is how many women die, you see?"

Neliswa thus indicated that men get so furious after being embarrassed by the police that they will go kill their wives in frustration. Neliswa's view of democracy was not particularly positive as she considered it to have increased interpersonal violence and intimate partner femicide. A recent study states that a woman is murdered every eight hour by her intimate partner, showing that violence against women in the home is very real (Abrahams, et al., 2012)¹². Neliswa's view implies how women and men are given different roles within a marriage. In addition, these roles require women to change because women's rights are seen as the problem, rather than the perceptions these rights trigger. Her view of democracy was not always expressed negatively. The way she used the public city spaces as a place to relax and forget about stress shows that she appreciated the opportunity the spaces provided for her (see p.50). She enjoyed the mobility attained in public spaces. I do not intend to dichotomise 'tradition' and 'equal rights' as these are just as dynamic as any other concepts, and would make the analysis to simplistic. Neliswa tried to negotiate between her conflicting

¹¹ The term '50/50' was used by the ANC government to promote and achieve equal gender representation in parliament and cabinet. From the start it was meant to describe government leadership positions but has now been incorporated in a variety of contexts (Dworkin, et al., 2012:109).

¹² The number of intimate partner femicides has decreased. In 1999 statistics implied that a woman was murdered every six hours in South Africa (Albertyn, et al., 2007:295).

understandings of the world (legal framework, cultural customs and her own physical mobility) in order to make sense of her position within the broader societal changes.

To better understand men's perceptions of women's rights and changing gender relations Dworkin, et al. (2012) conducted interviews among six focus groups of Black South African men across the country (Dworkin, et al., 2012:97, 101)¹³. Their findings are similar to Neliswa's understanding of the new rights framework in South Africa in several ways. Participants had a common belief that men were supposed to be the financial provider of the family. With these changing times, where women enter previously male-dominated occupations and with a general high unemployment rate, men felt frustrated because they were not able to live up to the expectations. Generally, men felt a loss of respect in both the domestic and occupational sphere. The research reveals that the disempowerment men felt legitimised and explained the high levels of domestic violence. Men would accept women's rights as long as they were "adapted to suit local conditions and relations of power" (2012:111). Both Neliswa and Dworkin, et al.'s focus groups idealised the past, when gender relations were stable and balanced (2012:111). Neliswa emphasised the importance of contribution from the family in solving marital matters and Dworkin et al.'s participants romanticised the (physical) discipline they were previously allowed to perform towards their wives and children (2012:111).

Moore (1994) says that "many writers report that violence is often the outcome of an inability to control other people's sexual behaviour" and proposes 'thwarting' as an explanation (Moore, 1994:67). Moore explains 'thwarting' as a person's "inability to sustain or properly take up a gendered subject position, resulting in a crisis, real or imagined, of self-representation and/ or social evaluation" (1994:66). This explains violence not only between women and men, but also in any situation where a person's identity is threatened. I claim that participants in Dworkin, et al.'s research and the men Neliswa talked about experienced 'thwarting'. They were, in their view, unable to be proper men. Moore goes on to say that fantasies of identity and fantasies of power are linked because "the thwarted party" experiences a loss of material goods or social status (1994:67):

¹³ "All participants were Black South African given that this particular population is disproportionately affected by HIV" (Dworkin et al. 2012:101)

“[This helps] explain why violence is so often the result of a perceived rather than real, threat. For example, wives are frequently beaten for imagined infidelities, which makes violence and the threat of violence so much more effective as a means of social control” (Moore, 1994:67).

Neliswa’s assumption about men’s reactions can be understood in the term of ‘thwarting’ because men lose social status when police makes fun of their abuse. Another interlocutor told me about an incident that made Neliswa’s statement contextualised in real experiences;

Thandiwe witnessed an accident by the robots while she worked. The police regarded her as an eyewitness and she had to stay at the police station the whole afternoon. She returned home late in the evening. Her husband was furious when she returned home later than usual and beat her. Although she had a very good reason for coming late, it was not good enough for him.

This incident exemplifies the disempowerment Thandiwe’s husband felt in relation to his female counterpart. He did not have control over her whereabouts and his frustration was channelled through his fists. He became thwarted because he was unable to properly take up a gendered social position, not necessarily because he had no control over her sexual behaviour, but because he did not have control over her mobility (Moore, 1994:66). However, mobility and sexual autonomy are closely linked in the positioning of men and women.

Participants in Dworkin, et al.’s research saw women’s participation in communities and public spaces as a positive change because men and women could get to know each other and share ideas. This positive attitude was not expressed in relation to women’s rights in the home and household. Men experienced women’s demand for rights negatively (Dworkin, et al., 2012:108-109). Dworkin, et al. argue that “the intersection between the private realm and rights appeared to be a site for solid contestation and struggle” (Dworkin et al., 2012:112). For the participants, as for Neliswa, the framework of equal rights created an imbalance in the household (2012:109). However, I do not believe it is possible to make a clear divide between private and public spaces – Thandiwe’s beating clearly blurred the divide; she came home late from a *public* space and that did not coincide with her husband’s expectations of her role in the *private* space and resulted in a beating. Helen Moffett (2006) argues that “it is a requirement of participation in the new South African state that one ‘believes’ in democracy ‘outside the home’” (Moffett, 2006:142) and I believe this is because of the new legal framework and general discourse about democracy. In turn, this leads to more tension within the household as conflicting gender expectations collide.

Violence

Albertyn, et al. (2007) state that we must keep in mind that “the incidence of violence directed at women in a particular society tends to reflect the general level of violence in such society” and that “the South African society is still characterised by extraordinary high levels of interpersonal violence” (Albertyn, et al., 2007:300). Violence against women cannot be separated from the broader social context. All my interlocutors had some type of scarring on their face or arms, and they spoke about violent incidents with a “matter-of-fact” attitude. Reacting to conflict with violence was expected and considered normal. When a man stole Zukile’s phone Zukile beat him to let him know he did not accept his deviant act. He explicitly told me he did not hit the face because he did not want to kill, only threaten him. Zukile also told me that he was not afraid of being shot because he had already experienced it. He had accidentally been caught in gun-fire on the train on his way home from the city and got shot in his shoulder. The violence he experienced was expected and would just make him more prepared for future attacks. The whole event did not seem to bother him too much. This normalisation of violence was transferred to children as well. Thandiwe laughed while she told me how her three-year-old daughter joined a fight in the township. A man came to their house and attacked her husband. Her husband punched the attacker and he fell to the ground. Her little daughter picked up a broken bottle and approached the attacker. She tried to bite his arm and poked him with the broken glass bottle. Thandiwe thought it was hilarious that her little daughter tried to bite a grown man. Violence is internalised from an early age and becomes part of the everydayness.

Both women and men normalised violence and viewed it as part of their everydayness. When Thandiwe found out that her husband had cheated on her last year, she threw a bucket of boiling water in his face, to show him that cheating was not acceptable. A while back, George had broken the relationship off with his previous girlfriend and started seeing someone new. The ex-girlfriend did not like this and came to his home and set it on fire. She burnt some of his clothes and other items in his shack. Luckily George was not hurt but he lost a lot of his things. He showed me the burn marks on his Big Issue uniform and the paper from the court. He had opened a case with the police and had to go to court to resolve the matter. I believe it was easier for George to open a case with the police, when compared to men being abused by their wives, because this incident was not only physical abuse towards him, the ex-girlfriend also destroyed parts of his shack and belongings. The case was more about his property and not just about him personally. Regardless, the fire put a clear mark on his personal

environment and signalled to him *and* the community that she did not approve of his rejection.

Interlocutors spoke about violent incidents regularly, as physical fights and verbal harassment were visible and out in the open in the townships communities. One day Celiwe apologised for coming late to her pitch. She had not wanted to leave her house because a man had come to her neighbour's place and accused him of having an affair with his wife. It ended in a fight, and the accuser beat up the neighbour. Celiwe did not want any trouble and stayed inside her house until the man left. I argue that the attacker was 'thwarted'. He attacked Celiwe's neighbour because he was unable to control other people's sexual behaviour. The accuser experienced thwarting because his self-representation and gender identity was threatened as a result of his wife's infidelity (Moore, 1994:67).

The stories of my interlocutors point towards the use of violence as a way of dealing with jealousy and negative emotions. No matter if accusations were correct or not, interlocutors were either the deviant or the victim of physically marked pain. I argue that negative emotions and conflicts result in a physical manifestation of pain and these physical marks display to the community that one was not treated fairly. Assumptions about infidelity made jealousy rise to the surface between women and men and could result in physical manifestations of pain. Women's mobility in the public spaces generates mistrust from their spouse, and this mistrust becomes explicit through this manifestation of pain. Moore suggests that we see interpersonal violence, which is triggered by particular forms of difference (gender, race or class), as a means to maintain certain fantasies of power and identity, and *not* as a breakdown of social order (Moore, 1994:70). Men's fantasy of power stems from the idealised past, exemplified in Dworkin et al.'s research (2012). This is part of creating an ambiguous understanding to public spaces which affect women the most.

The point here is that women's newly gained mobility does not give them full and free mobility in public and private spaces because there are expectations of violence. These expectations are gendered and generate a naturalisation of gender characteristics that give limitations to women's mobility in space as well as limitations on identity (Massey, 1994:179). The following sections continue to investigate how women navigate through gendered public spaces, and how they adapt to and challenge current gendered relations and expectations.

Abuser and Protector

One of the adaptations women make to safely navigate through public spaces is by establishing relationships with men. Danika told me that she had been with her boyfriend for more than seven years. They are not only together because she loves him but also because he protects her. “It is not easy being a single woman on the streets”, Danika explained. Before she got a boyfriend she was raped while sleeping under a bridge. Danika and the group she was staying with fell asleep after consuming alcohol, and during the night, a random stroller crawled his way to where she was sleeping and raped her. She screamed to wake the others but everyone was too drunk to realise what was happening. A second act of violence she suffered before she got a boyfriend was when a man attacked her and broke her arm. She believed that having a boyfriend would protect her from other men on the street. Lately, the boyfriend has physically abused her as well, so she is no longer sure if there is any point in staying with him. At the same time she knows that she does not want to be without a boyfriend when living on the street. Without a boyfriend, a woman becomes an easy victim and signals to other men on the street that she is available.

Women seek protection in intimate relationships because people’s general perception of sexual assaults in South Africa is that strangers commit this type of violence is (Albertyn, et al., 2007:307). Statistics on the other hand, show that “60% of sexual assault victims know their assailants” (2007:302). Therefore, “these relationships only provide safety against violence perpetrated by other men in the community, since the domestic relationships in themselves often hold (further) violence and thus the woman’s home is in no way a sanctuary from violence” (Albertyn, et al, 2007:307).

The living conditions of the homeless are rough, especially for women. The director of ‘Ons Plek’ explained how girls and boys have similar experiences on living on the street, apart from chores. However, these chores are part of constructing a gendered social hierarchy:

“They [girls] do keep acting like the feminine role, through cooking and being the wife, washing the clothes and stuff. So they do stick to their roles, in that way it is different for boys and girls. They also very often seem to have the attitude that they must do what they are told and in a relationship, particularly, they are there to serve. They might argue and fight with their boyfriends but they still believe it is correct that they are told what to do.”

The street life does not take away all social order and rules that one usually finds in private spaces but instead reproduces “traditional” gender roles, whereby women do domestic work, like washing and cooking. The director continued to explain:

“And I can remember, it is just things like girls saying; ‘if my boyfriend hits me I will hit him back, but I still do what he wants me to, and if he want to sleep with me I will quickly try and get some tomato sauce or something to put on my panties to show that I am on my period’, which means that she can’t say no, only if she has good reason to say no.”

This indicates a hierarchical order in the relationship where the boy has the power and the girl obeys. The director also told me that the girls have several boyfriends when they live in the NGO-building in the city centre, while they stick to one man when they are on the street. If a girl’s boyfriend goes to prison, she will wait for him since no man will touch her while she waits, because other men fear the incarcerated partner (or so they believe). The girls use the benefits of boyfriends as a way to create mobility in public spaces and as a way to protect themselves when living on the street. If you do not have a boyfriend on the street, you do not have anyone to protect you from other men, especially during the night. The director explained how the girls wanted the NGO house to remain as a place for girls only, because in this way girls could be themselves:

“The ‘Ons Plek’ girls have always said it must stay a place for girls only. They are interested in a co-ed school but not a mixed residence. They might want to be with their boyfriends, but they want to be able to come back and be safe in their own place. Girls need a place to just be themselves sometimes. It is not so much being judged by others, it is more about feeling safe; not having to worry about protecting themselves all the time.”

Danika and the street girls have similar approaches in positioning themselves on the street. They fear the unsafe environment the street life represents. This unpredictable variable influences girls and women to be intimately involved with a man. They build social relations on the grounds of safety. In addition, the boyfriends provide them with material goods. Their stories show how the threat of violence makes women conform to the city’s social structure in a specific way, even if the relationships they get involved in include violent abuse. The difference here is that this abuse has a degree of predictability when compared to the uncertain and unpredictable abuse from unknown men, in addition to the general assumption

that sexual assault is committed by strangers (Albertyn et al., 2007). In this way, the man becomes the protector *and* abuser of the woman, making it less likely that the woman will leave the relationship, because she has something to gain by staying. The director explained how the strongest boys became leaders and commanded girls and weaker boys to do their dirty work and errands. This indicates that the hierarchal order is based on what is feminine and what is masculine, where the masculine is considered strong. Women are, from the starting point, categorised as weak, and become the subservient part of the relationship together with weak boys. The girls negotiate their position in one way while living on the street, while acting more freely when they live inside the NGO building, and this implies that both behaviour and spaces are dialectically bound and overlap (Massey, 1994:4-5). The ways women and men act differently show that the public and private spaces in Cape Town are gendered.

This ambiguous gendered relationship was evident in the stories of my female Xhosa interlocutors as well. They could, in the same conversation, say how much they loved their husband and also how he was violent towards them. Thandiwe told me about her first marriage and the ambiguity was explicit: “He was a good man, I loved him very much ... He taught me everything about life, but you can never trust a man Oda! He tried to kill me you know!” Others told similar stories of how much they loved their husbands and how their husbands threatened them. I once asked Thembeke about her husband since he had phoned her while I sat next to her. I asked if he was a good man and she responded, “Yes. He is a good husband, but not when he is drinking. He beats me.” She shook her head and pointed to areas on her upper body and arms that had been bruised. Other female vendors nodded as she explained how he beat her. He had not hit her in many years because she threatened to divorce him. He did not want a divorce, but from other stories she told it seemed that he continued to verbally abuse her. I argue, in the line of Albertyn, et al., that violence does not necessarily make women feel like victims. Albertyn, et al. argue that women often experience sex as a sign of love regardless of whether or not assault and violence is involved (Albertyn et al. 2007:302). This is something Dworkin, et al. also indicate, as their participants understood violence and discipline as a requirement within the household because that is how it was in the past, before equal rights were of public concern (Dworkin, et al., 2012:111).

Negotiating Roles

This next example shows what expectations my female interlocutors had about their husbands, and how these expectations were embedded in them as a result of previous experiences. However, defining a person's role is complicated, as a person is never just complied with one characteristic:

It was a sunny Saturday afternoon in April when three vendors and I relaxed in the park and celebrated Thembeke's birthday. We could not sit in the grass as we usually did because it had been raining and the temperature was dropping so everyone was wearing jackets and sweaters. Mandisa, Neliswa and Thembeke started singing, and I decided to record it on my phone. They looked at me and smiled, while singing in Xhosa and swaying in unison from side to side on the bench. Mandisa and Neliswa got up from the bench after a few songs and held a birthday speech for Thembeke. At the end, everybody got up and prayed together. Afterwards, I asked what they said in their speech, since it was in Xhosa, I only recognised one word; 'mother'. They explained how Thembeke is a role model for her kids, and a good mother. They spelled out the words that were connected with 'Mother' so I took out my notebook and wrote the words down with their supervision:

M is for Motivator

O is for Organiser

T is for Teacher

H is for Healer

E is for Encourager

R is for Role model

According to them, these characteristics define what a mother is, and both agreed that Thembeke inhabited these characteristics. Mandisa and Neliswa used English terms in the speech while the rest was said in Xhosa. All three looked in my notebook and agreed on the words I wrote down. I then asked how it was for 'father'. They got back into a concentrated mood and we wrote down 'father' together. They were not as synchronised with this word as they were with 'mother':

Mandisa shouted immediately: "F is for Fail somebody!"

It slipped off her tongue so quickly, as if she had been waiting to say this. I started to write down the words.

Oda: "and A is for...?"

It took a while before they decided, so I tried to come up with suggestions.

Oda: "Amazing?"

Thembeke: “Yes!” She paused and thought about it for a few seconds before she changed her mind: “No, abuser!”

She pointed to my notebook and I wrote it down. Neliswa and Mandisa did not oppose her suggestion, so we continued.

Neliswa: “T H E R is the same as ‘mother’”

She was very determined on her argument and the others confirmed immediately, so I started to write them down. Suddenly, Mandisa and Thembeke changed their opinion. They disagreed and wanted me to change ‘THER’ to new words.

Thembeke: “T is for ‘Threatener’, sometimes the husband threatens to kill you, that’s why he is a threatener. My husband did that to me.”

Oda: “What did you say back?”

Thembeke: “I said I would kill him too!”

Mandisa stood next to her with a serious facial expression and nodded, clearly agreeing with Thembeke’s arguments.

Thembeke: “H is for Harassment!”

Another suggestion for ‘H’ was ‘harmful sex’, they explained to me what it meant: “When your husband comes to you and wants sex when you don’t want it” but they could not fully agree so we decided to put down ‘Harassment’ instead. I asked if ‘harmful sex’ was not the same as ‘rape’. They disagreed, both with me and with each other. First Thembeke agreed with me and then Neliswa said it could not be rape when it is with your husband. They tried to explain ‘E’ as well, but it was impossible to understand what word they were looking for even after several discussions. I finally gave up.

Thembeke: “And R is ‘rude’!”

Thembeke was the leader of the name-changing procedure. She asked me to write ‘father’ one more time on a new page to make it correct. She turned the page in my notebook and repeated the new words we had agreed on. I wrote them down and she double-checked:

F is for Fail Somebody

A is for Abuser

T is for Threatener

H is for Harassment

E is for ...

R is for Rude

Suddenly Neliswa interrupted and disagreed because she meant these words had nothing to do with ‘father’, it had to do with ‘husband’. Thembeke shook her head, but Neliswa kept insisting that these words were not meant for her children but for herself and *her* relationship with her husband.

Neliswa explained: “Is this how you would describe you father? No! This is not father, this is HUSBAND!” She spelt it out clearly, before she continued: “Your husband does not treat your kids like this and abuse them! No! This is for your husband!”

Thembeke finally understood what Neliswa tried to say and she agreed with how the words reflected her husband and not a father.

Neliswa: “This is my husband and not the father of my kids! How can I say that my husband is an abuser when he is the one working in a shop and comes home with a pay check every month to support the children? I cannot say he is an abuser when he is the one taking care of the family! It is not right for me to say that! My husband is a good father!”

The way the ladies explained the role of the father and husband indicated a tense dynamic within the marriage. The man in the family was considered both a provider for the family and an abuser. ‘Husband’ and ‘father’ are two different roles, so a man’s characteristics vary as well. Both men and women have several subject positions that are negotiated between daily, and this example reflects the ambiguity of social roles, and how a person is never just perceived in one way (Moore, 1994:4). Gender roles included being a good wife and mother or a good husband and father. Andile would always talk about how hard he worked to support his family. It was his responsibility to give his children and wife a good life and everything they need for school. A person will never be just one thing. It is important to underpin that these terms are coming from a female perspective. I did not get such an explicit and extensive example about women and men from any of my male interlocutors, but later in this chapter, male interlocutors express that women are not always trustworthy either. This strained dynamic has further consequences for marriages and intimate relationships.

Expectations of Cheating

One important mechanism interlocutors used, as an attempt to “balance” their marriage, was to involve themselves in intimate relationships outside of the marriage. I asked my female interlocutors why they wanted a boyfriend and one of the older vendors, who did not have a boyfriend at the time but wanted one, responded: “Sometimes when you argue or fight with your husband, you can go to him and talk about your problems. He will comfort you and make you feel better!” Another common response was: “Because our husbands have girlfriends, then we must have a boyfriend”. Women created new relationships with other men, because they assumed their husbands did as well. This assumption of men’s infidelity can be traced back to perceptions of marriages in the past. One of Dworkin, et al.’s (2012) participants explained the current dating situation for men: “They [women] fight back [now] [...] You know, in the olden days our mothers used to understand that they are in a

relationship of a father who is having much more than one woman” (Dworkin, et al., 2012:106). Dworkin, et al.’s participants were dissatisfied with women standing up for themselves and questioning men’s previously legitimate infidelity. Several argued that women’s rights have given women more opportunities to be “more experienced” and speak their mind about what they want in a relationship. Participants were ambiguous about this change (2012:105-106). In the case of my interlocutors, they reacted negatively when they found out their husbands had cheated, like when my interlocutor threw boiling water at her husband.

Interlocutors dealt with their spouse’s assumed infidelities by copying their behaviour. I argue that they were able to react in this manner because their new mobility gave them the opportunity to do so. Previously, women were based in the home and had few reasons to sojourn elsewhere. In addition, the move from rural villages into overcrowded townships makes it easier to get away with because it is easier to hide. This circle of cheating regenerates mistrust of both women and men. Cheating can be viewed as a protection and control mechanism. It assured that you were not tricked by your spouse, and instead “made balance” as another interlocutor explained.

Cheating is not only a response to a husband’s infidelity; it is also beneficial for women. Zintle explained: “Sometimes you are tired of him so you go to your boyfriend. He can comfort me and make me feel good again!” Through boyfriends, interlocutors created their own networks and it eased the tension and conflicts within the marriage. Women “tamed chance”, as mentioned in the previous chapter, by having a boyfriend. If their husband disappoints them or just disappears, as Celiwe’s husband did (see p.1), they have established a network outside of the household that can, potentially, help them. I believe that their precarious life situation is part of influencing the establishment of boyfriends. In addition, the affection women got from their boyfriends seemed different compared to the affection from their husbands. I visited Bongeka at the location, where I met both her husband and boyfriend. Her husband left their shack and shortly after her boyfriend arrived at the door. We planned the rest of the afternoon together and the boyfriend gave Bongeka R100. He told us to bring a bottle of wine to the *shebeen* (local informal pub) and left. Bongeka smiled and turned towards me: “Do you see how much he loves me?” She showed me the note and giggled. Bongeka had previously told me why she had a boyfriend and that he was married as well:

“I do this because I have to, and we fight less in the marriage because we have someone else to go to. My husband drinks too much sometimes. I don’t see him that often either, then it is nice to go to my boyfriend. He gives me R300 every fourth night. I am not a prostitute; I sometimes give him things as well. We both benefit from the relationship, I give him sex and of course I must have something in return, it is a sign of respect. And then we can share our problems with someone and that makes it less trouble in our own marriage. I am not saying that you must cheat on your boyfriend or husband, but I am saying that this is what works best for me in my situation. My husband does not know about this, but I think he is cheating too.”

Although Bongeka said she had to do it, she, and other women, clearly also engage in these relationships because they want to, and not because they have to. The gifts made her able to obtain material goods in a larger degree than without this relationship. Due to the gifts, the rest of the community can also see that the boyfriend respects her.

The main purpose of the gift could be that it signals a relation of mutual respect (Mauss, 1990:20, 46). Marcel Mauss explains, “yet, it is also because by giving one is giving *oneself*, and if one gives *oneself*, it is because one ‘owes’ *oneself* – one’s person and one’s goods – to others” (Mauss, 1990:46). The respectfulness a gift inhabits can be linked to marriage traditions; when a Xhosa woman marries a man, he is obligated to pay *lobola* (bride price) to the bride and her family. If he does not pay, other people in the community will not respect the married woman. Celiwe explained this to me: “If you don’t pay *lobola*, your wife will not be respected by the other wives. She is seen as not worthy and cheap. *Lobola* gives status and respect!” Therefore, by receiving gifts from her boyfriend a mutual understanding is established between Bongeka and the boyfriend. Bongeka and I met up with her boyfriend at the *shebeen* so their relationship is not hidden from the community. It is only hidden from her husband.

One of the important ways of showing your girlfriend that you love her is to buy her *airtime* (money vouchers for mobile phones). My male interlocutor Zukile told me about his girlfriend and I asked him if he buys her a lot of airtime: “Yoh! So much airtime, they spend too much money on that [phone]!” He said this with a resigned facial expression and shook his head. The exchange of gifts and services keeps the relationship strong, and is at the core of the commitment. So when one party decides to stop investing in the relationship, the relationship fades. This became clearer after going to the corner shop with Zintle one afternoon. We were on our way back to the pitch when we passed a construction site. Zintle

told me she used to have a boyfriend who worked there. She got his number, they texted, and then she asked if he could buy her some *airtime*. He said no, so she stopped having contact with him. “What is the point if he does not do anything for me?” was her concluding argument. Zintle has many boyfriends and, although this relationship did not last longer than a week, she referred to him as a boyfriend. There is an anticipation that your husband cheats and by doing it yourself you create a degree of certainty. The unpredictable becomes predictable – women are taking control.

When You ‘Look’ to ‘See’

Judith Okely’s (2001) piece ‘Visualism and Landscape: Looking and Seeing in Normandy’ points out the importance of senses and the visual (Okely, 2001). Her paper examines how interpretations of landscape differ from the perspective of the spectator, and how a landscape can evoke various experiences in people. In understanding visualism she differentiates between ‘looking’ and ‘seeing’. ‘Looking’, in Okely’s approach, is understood as a distant objective gaze and ‘seeing’ is linked to all senses and the memory in the body (Okely, 2001:99,104). I will use her differentiation between ‘seeing’ and ‘looking’ in connection to how interlocutors interpreted other people’s behaviour and actions. Okely emphasises that ‘seeing’ has already been embedded in participant observation; “participation enables the anthropologist to see, rather than merely look” (2001:104). ‘Seeing’ is a way to interpret your surroundings and, in the same way that I tried to find patterns and meaning in my interlocutors’ actions, they did the same in relation to men.

By ‘seeing’, a person will perceive the world through the existing knowledge that they have of the world. As already mentioned, Neliswa told me to “always watch the men” (p. 64). She connected what she actually saw (the objective world), with her subjective thoughts and visualisations (of the world she knew). I argue that ‘seeing’ is connected to place, in the way that a particular place determines whether or not Neliswa “watch[ed] the men”. It was not something she always did it depended on the place she was in: township or city, night or day. There were no signs that told her to change her perceptions of men, but the particular understanding of the spatial landscape she found herself in made her change her view. She ‘saw’ the men in the township when we stood there as the only women on the road but only ‘looked’ at men in the city as it was buzzing with people and cars. The space or a particular place is part of deciding if men are worth ‘seeing’. I argue, in accordance with Grimen (2009), that a person’s degree of trust or mistrust reveals how that person navigates through the city

(Grimen, 2009), and this can happen through 'seeing' (Okely, 2001). Female interlocutors navigated through space by 'seeing' men, in order to investigate their trustworthiness.

Similar advice regarding untrustworthy men recurred throughout my fieldwork. One morning, Mandisa told me to be careful in regard to boyfriends and men in general. She was very serious and said I had a lot to learn:

“Now, so many people are sick. You can't just let them lay in your bed just like that! You never know if they are sick. You know what I am talking about neh'?” She paused for a few seconds and continued without giving me time to respond: “HIV! It is too much of it these days. It was not a problem before, but now too many people have it, so you must always look!” She pushed her head forward, opened her eyes as much as possible and stared out in several directions so that her eyes became the focus point of her face. “They... Men, they sleep outside the house and then they come back to the house! It is not right! Always look out for the men. They will tell me all the nice things, give me gifts and buy many drinks for me when we go to the club, but I must not believe them when they say they love me because I will only wake up the next day crying!” She paused again before completing her argument: “You will get sick!”

Mandisa was very serious and warned me not to be fooled by men. She told me to “always look”, because, by understanding the behaviour of men, I would become aware of the possible consequences of my own or his actions and therefore be better equipped to protect myself. I argue that Mandisa told me to 'look', so that I would 'see' the man. Mandisa was eager to express her concerns as her whole being, speech and body language was directed towards me, despite our busy surroundings:

“Let me tell you a story from the road right here; a man was in his car crying. He was a white rich man. I asked him what was wrong. He had done one mistake and he had slept outside the house with another woman [prostitute]. He was now worried that she also was sick. He was crying and crying. I saw him again some weeks later, he had told his family but he was not HIV. That was good, but it is not good to sleep outside the house. He was married and supposed to be with his wife. But the wife is at home all day, and he is the one driving around everywhere, so she does not know what is going on! It is not right! Too many men are doing this, and then more people get sick.” Mandisa was very upset and shook her head in frustration regarding men and their mistakes. “That is why I tell the men to always condomise! My boyfriend he comes to me in the weekends and I know he is a good man, but I told him if he is seeing other women he must condomise! It is fine if he wants to see other women, as long as he condomise! You cannot believe all the men. You must close your legs and only be with one man. They will try and trick you, so you must look! I am saying this because I am older and have experienced many things, but you are young! This is important!”

Mandisa warned me of the many dangers and unpredictability of life, and how men often caused this unpredictability. When she ‘saw’ her boyfriend, she used her bodily experiences and her whole spectrum of senses in order to analyse his actions. These senses are based on her biased perception of men as untrustworthy. Being explicit and conscious about ‘seeing’ is a consequence of the discourse of mistrust. The explicit warnings about men generated in the discourse of mistrust made women more aware of the environment they were surrounded by. This awareness influenced women to ‘see’. ‘Seeing’ is embedded in her body and stretches out to the world. Okely explains: “The whole body is the means to understand and resonate with the world. The body becomes the memory and is not so easily separated from the mind” (Okely, 2001:104).

Men’s mobility is also part of Mandisa’s concern. It is not only men who lack trust in women because of their mobility, women, too, are aware of the possible consequences of men’s mobility. Mandisa was very conscious of her own relationship, knowing that her boyfriend might meet other women and telling him to *condomise* if this was the case. She protected herself by ‘seeing’ her boyfriend’s actions and took the necessary precautions. She did not expect him to be faithful to her, since they were not married and no negative consequences came from getting involved with other women, as long as he was honest about it. Although Mandisa’s approach was different to that of married women, it is fixed with the same understanding of men as not being trustworthy. Zukile, who is not married, had a similar understanding of relationships. His girlfriend stayed at a different location and came to visit him on the weekends. He did not care if she met other men when she was in her *location* as long as she was only with him when she was at his. He did not want any trouble, assuming that two men in one place could evoke tension and this in turn could evoke the ladies in his location to gossip about them. Here, looks and signals from people in the community also influence the way a person behaves and how that person ‘looks’ at the people around him/her. The conditions embedded in a place decided whether or not Zukile was ‘looked’ at or ‘seen’. Zukile told me about a few parties he had been to and how he did not like to drink too much because there was always trouble and he would only end up spending all his money in one night. He mentioned how girls were partially to blame for him spending all his money:

“You cannot trust the girls. If we go to a bar and we drink and have a good time the girl will trick you. You get enchanted by her interest in you; she says she loves you and all that. So you buy her drinks for

the rest of the night and then the next morning she disappears and you don't see her again. She tricks you to think she loves you! Eish!"

This implies that men must also 'see' out for the girls, to avoid getting tricked. The discourse of mistrust enables women *and* men to have a conscious approach when analysing people in the spatial landscape. The advice and warnings my interlocutors gave me were not only for me. I believe it was also a way for them to protect themselves. The female interlocutors "tamed chance" by explicitly expressing that they were not taken advantage of by men.

'Seeing' was a way to tame chance because they knew men cheated on them. They did not only analyse what men did but also when and where they did it. One warning signal of infidelity was when their husbands got messages or calls during the night. A phone call during the day was not viewed as cheating but a call during the night was. My female interlocutors had a specific ways of 'seeing' their spouse, depending on the place. 'Seeing' men was applicable in both public and private places. Mistrust is found in both the street and in homes. Both spaces require women to interpret what they observe in order to 'see' patterns and signals.

My female interlocutors continued to warn me about trusting my boyfriend one hundred percent. When asked why I could not trust him, it was often answered along the lines of "he will use you", "he will cheat" and "you don't know what he is doing when you are not there". They doubted his sincerity from the beginning, without meeting him or me telling them anything about him. Bongeka expressed it clearly: "You are young, you should try more people. Never trust anyone one hundred percent, and you said you only see him twice a week, so what will he be doing the rest of the time?" Not 'seeing' my boyfriend everyday evoked an assumption in Bongeka that he could not be trusted. Mobility triggers untrustworthiness towards both men and women. The discourse of mistrust continues to trigger doubt in women's relations to both strangers and acquaintances. In addition, the meanings attached to specific places influences women to decide whether or not a situation requires 'seeing' or 'looking'. This in turn, shows how places are attached with gendered meanings, since women and men navigate differently in Cape Town's urban spaces.

Concluding Reflections

The notion of a universal Cape Town and women's rights help women to move in and across urban spaces, but simultaneously, the same mobility generates mistrust in social relations.

This chapter showed how my female interlocutors took several precautions when navigating through gendered spaces and how this made their mobility conditional. These precautions are acted out in order to benefit them in the best possible way. Interlocutors involved themselves in intimate relationships to balance their marriage and to avoid conflict, and as a means to tame chance. The husband or boyfriend could be an abuser, but his role as a protector weighs more, especially since women often do not think there are many good men out there. Gift exchange is another important factor within relationships and gifts create a balance because they signal that neither party is exploiting the other. ‘Seeing’ is a useful strategy in order to feel in control to either verify their assumptions about infidelity or decrease their notion of doubt towards their husbands. ‘Seeing’ is something they do consciously with a biased assumption that men are untrustworthy. Being explicit about “watching out for men” is a consequence of the *discourse of mistrust*. By being aware of how they could not trust people and the way they spoke and acted about it explicitly shows how they used mistrust as a means to gain control and navigate in urban spaces. Women act and perceive others first and foremost on the basis of gender. It is how they define themselves and how others define them.

CONCLUSION

South Africa has a complex past, and maybe an even more complex present. The demographic and geographic outline of the city structures of Cape Town is an explicit and clear consequence of the politics of the past. The historical backdrop has therefore been an important factor to include in my study of current social and spatial dynamics, since race, ethnicity, gender and class overlap in determining a person's place and perception of society.

Chapter 3 depicted how Xhosa interlocutors' background and cultural heritage had a significant impact in their lives, as their village and birthplace remained important even after they moved to the city. The ethnic identity of being Xhosa created a foundation for the way they navigated in and through spaces and how they placed themselves in broader social contexts. Their living conditions partially shaped their everyday lives and how they perceived city spaces. Their social position influenced their connection with the city and other city dwellers. The majority viewed the city as a temporary place to live, and this temporariness influenced their (lack of) attachment to city spaces. Home could not be found or "made" in urban dwellings, which made their attachment to urban dwellings and contexts less important compared to their attachments to the Eastern Cape. Hence, the city was only *ukufihla intloko* while *ikhaya* was eternal. The way Xhosa migrants related to urban spaces can be seen to illustrate Massey's argument about how the identity of a place is made through processes of social relations happening in that place (Massey, 1994).

In chapter 4, I investigated the notion of Cape Town as a 'universal' space. Conceptualising city spaces as universal was promoted by the notion of a *Rainbow Nation* and the diverse usage of the spaces through art, festivals and public events. However, the perceptions and experiences of the multi-ethnic, multi-racial, and multi-lingual spaces were influenced by a person's social position and cultural background. And, with the emphasis from Sheper-Hughes (1993), there existed a "double ethics" in public spaces since migrants could not partake in the democratic modern public because of their low socio-economic status (Sheper-Hughes, 1993). The history of apartheid is still relevant in peoples' minds and that was made explicit in how interlocutors talked about race, class, ethnicity and gender. The discourses about fear of difference (Lemanski, 2004) and mistrust were part of producing "truths" about

race, ethnicity, gender and class, which influenced people to behave and act in particular ways, in both public and private spaces. These truths that interlocutors made of themselves and others helped me understand their lived realities and what influenced these. My ethnographic data showed how working by robots made a person more vulnerable to sexual and racial harassment, as a consequence of how robot-spaces generated a biased opinion about people sojourning there as lower-class citizens. I went on to argue that these perceptions regenerated and sustained hierarchical stereotypes of citizens. The connections between spatial categories and social categories underpinned Massey's (1994) emphasis on understanding that places are embedded in power. This chapter showed how the constructed "truths" became important in the creation, contestation and management of space. Simultaneously, spaces are part of constructing these "truths" because, as Massey argues, space is the product of social relations in as much as social relations constitute a space (1994).

I chose to focus on the notion of mistrust in chapter 5 to unfold how this discourse influenced people's mobility and perceptions of spaces. I chose the *discourse of mistrust* as the core of my argument because it was visibly explicit in the spatial landscape, which existed in a dialectic relationship with social relations. High fences and barbed wire clearly separated the private from the public spaces in the city and sustained the image of the outside as dangerous. In addition, people's actions showed how they conformed to this mistrust embedded in spatial landscape. Statements about the unsafe public spaces kept generating ideas of mistrust and upheld the idea of strangers, as well as acquaintances, as untrustworthy. Doubting others became embedded in people in the way they navigated through the city and the ones who were feared the most were black men. When speaking about mistrust as explicitly as my interlocutors did, they depicted how mistrust was a conscious state of awareness (Daniel and Knudsen, 1995), and that abled me to understand how it influenced their spatial navigation patterns (Grimen, 2009). Mistrusting public spaces influence trust relations between individuals because spaces and people are dialectically bound together. The result is what Lemanski termed "the new apartheid" because the physical distance between those who hide in their private spaces and those sojourning in the public spaces keeps growing.

In chapter 6 I continued to investigate the *discourse of mistrust*, and how it affected women and men differently. The high rates of crime and violence against women influenced women to move about in the city in a different way than men. I argued that women's mobility in public spaces was conditioned by the degree of mistrust and gendered expectations. This

conditional mobility became visible in the way women dressed and behaved in public spaces, and responses to such behaviours. Mapping out “appropriate behaviour” and how safety was constructed, interpreted and negotiated, by both my interlocutors and the general population (in the way they invested in security measures), served to illustrate how place and people were dialectically connected (Massey, 1994). The variables of approved and disapproved femininity in my research varied with class, race and place. Not only clothing had impact on women’s mobility in and across spaces. I argued that ‘seeing’ too was an important method people used in navigating through social and spatial relations.

‘Seeing’ (Okely, 2001) was, for my interlocutors, a useful tool in order to feel in control to either verify women’s assumptions about infidelity or to decrease their notion of doubt towards their husbands. Female interlocutors interpreted the actions of their husbands or boyfriends in accordance with the ongoing discourse of mistrust. They ‘saw’ actions in relation to an already established and biased assumption about men as untrustworthy. Being explicit about “watching out for men” was a consequence of, and influenced by, the *discourse of mistrust*. Interlocutors “tamed chance” by being explicit about the lack of trust they had in other people. They created a sense of balance and self-control over various situations, and showed the rest of the community that they were not fooled by other people’s presumable deviant acts. By actively interpreting other men’s actions, they made explicit distinctions between men as ‘anybodys’ and ‘somebodys’ (Scheper-Hughes, 1993). I have argued that it was the particular places interlocutors found themselves that influenced if they either ‘looked’ or ‘saw’ their intimate partner and unknown men. The meanings embedded in spatial structures influenced interlocutors to change from ‘looking’ to ‘seeing’. The fact that it was women, for the most part, who told me to “watch out for men”, showed how the meaning embedded in places was gendered. The gendering of places influenced women, in particular, to move about in conditional ways, as a consequence of the high levels of violence, gendered characteristics and notion of patriarchy found in Cape Town’s social and spatial structures.

This thesis has showed how a liberal legislation is not necessarily experienced as liberating by the population as the already established social hierarchy continues to influence the new South Africa. The city of Cape Town did not start with a clean slate with the demise of apartheid; the past continues to influence the present just as much as the present influences the past and future. Social and spatial categories continue to be embedded with hierarchical meaning, and as my ethnographic data depicted; these hierarchical meanings influence

women's positioning and mobility in the liberated post-apartheid city. Partially, my aim has been to show how spaces speak. The importance of understanding the impact of places and spaces cannot be underlined often enough. My ethnographic material has throughout this thesis served to illustrate this argument. In coherence with Massey, we must understand the spatial as an important element in constituting power because social relations are always embedded in power (Massey, 1994:22), and spaces, place and people will forever be dialectically connected. Lastly, I hope my attempt to unfold the lives of lower-class Xhosa migrants in Cape Town's urban spaces have given insight into a post-apartheid city that continues to negotiate its past, its present and its future.

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