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XENOPHOBIA IN SOUTH AFRICA

A History

Hashi Kenneth Tafira

African Histories and Modernities

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Johannesburg, South Africa

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This book is dedicated to my late mother Jennifer Ndlovu-Gatsheni.

Preface

How were the black subject and black subjectivities produced? How did a colonised self-hating being emerge? A being that is not only self-hating, but hates another that looks like them. These foundational questions need profound answers. The overarching concern of this book is a phenomenon termed xenophobia which I prefer to describe as intra-black-racism/black-on-black-racism which has haunted postapartheid black communities. The so-called xenophobia is not a postapartheid aberration. It has its roots deep in the colonial contact. But what does colonial contact entail? To have a deep comprehension of this latter question one needs to take a historical tour. Colonial contact is a process brought about by, and an integral part of, colonial modernity from at least the fifteenth century. When one unpacks the contents of colonial contact then a lifetime story of depredation, dismemberment, dehumanisation and self-abnegation unravels. Now these are the techniques underpinning colonial contact.

Violence and Brutality

Colonialism is not possible without employment and deployment of violence, terror and brutality. African people and all non-Western people are welcoming and hospitable people. European strangers unfaithfully misconstrued the hospitality they received as naivety and weakness and sought to eject indigenous people from their lands. That could only happen through the sword, the barrel of the gun and trickery. At the core of this project is rabid racism which sees other people as both sub-human and non-human and only fit for

perpetual enslavement and coerced labour. Once the appellation non-human has been fixed, brutalities like genocides, epistemicides, dispossession, rape and murder and, consequently, colonialism are applied. The violence introduced by colonial conquerors seeps into the being and the psyche of the colonised. That explains the banal black-on-black violence common in black communities. The 2008 anti-immigrant violence is according to Mngxitama not fear and hatred of "foreigners" but fear and hatred of black people which he calls Negrophobia/Afrophobia.[1] This violence is a perpetuation of colonial and apartheid violence against black people which they have systematically internalised.[2] Mngxitama adds that the security and privilege of South African whites and the new black elite is fed by the everyday structural violence of poor blacks – who are trapped in that reality. In fact, whites are never considered foreigners but tourists, investors and employment creators. Ironically, South African whites who constitute 10 per cent of the population own more than 80 per cent of the country's wealth. The Johannesburg township of Alexandra which was the theatre of 2008 anti-immigrant violence is only a few kilometres from Sandton, the richest suburb in Africa and the epicentre of South African capital.

The Psychological/Mental Entrapment

Given the fact that attempts at dispossession and colonial conquest are met with fierce resistance, techniques aimed at subduing candidates for colonisation are necessary. These comprise the use of religion, book and inferiorisation. The colonial subject is made to feel and believe in their own inferiority; that they are inadequate and that they are not even fully human. This inferiority is interiorised and stays in the psyche of the colonised for generations. Mental colonisation often produces multiple ripple effects. These include colourism, black-on-black violence and other malaise plaguing black communities. Indeed a black subject sees another black as a mortal foe, a rival and a competitor who at certain circumstances must be verbally and physically assailed, expelled and eliminated. Here Mngxitama's analysis is revealing: colonialism was crucial in creating a black subject preoccupied with labour, jobs and seeking employment at the white man's employ and content with scrambling for crumbs from the white man's table.[3]

Division, Disunity and Colonisation

One of colonialism's successful techniques has been divide and rule, often based on artificially imposed differences. The ethnic factor, for example, which has come to haunt postcolonial societies, is itself a refraction of colonial creation. In any case it is necessary for colonialism to pit one group of people against another and, in turn, to place the blame on them. This intra-black tension, quarrels and violence is regarded as normal to and constituent of the African nature.

Pioneers of the liberation struggle saw the perils of division and sought to unite the people under the banner of African nationalism. A xenophobe, who also happens to be a thoroughbred tribalist, behaves and acts contrary to the humane precepts which African humanism professes. Azanian Pan-Africanist Mangaliso Robert Sobukwe called for creation of the United States of Africa which symbolises African unity, erases racialism, tribalism, imperialism and colonialism.[4] The success of a liberated African nation hinges on loyalty to one African nation, from Cape to Cairo, Madagascar to Morocco, where ethnic and national groups are subsumed.[5] Africanists, according to Sobukwe, do not subscribe to the idea of South African exceptionalism because South Africa is part of the indivisible whole of Africa. Arguing against multiracialism, Sobukwe insisted that it fostered and maintained group exclusiveness.[6] As a negation to democracy, multiracialism "implies that there are such basic insuperable differences between various national groups here that the best course is to keep them permanently distinctive in a kind of democratic apartheid. That to us is racialism multiplied, which probably is what the term connotes."[7]

Despite these noble efforts the spectre of ethnicism and differences haunted the liberation movement. In South Africa, the African National Congress of 1912, the Unity Movement, the Congress Youth led by Anton Lembede, the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania and the Black Consciousness Movement sought to foster a Black Solidarity as an antidote to colonial artificial differences. The idea, of course, was to infuse nationalism to override tribal traditions and inculcate pride in the black subject and instil humanity in them which colonialism usurped. The effects of colonial devastations are enduring. Colonial rulers' ideas once etched in the psyche of the colonised are difficult to efface.

The unfortunate tale of intra-black racism haunting postapartheid black communities prods us to revisit the question of colonialism and, of course, the need for decolonisation. Xenophobia is a colonial construct and a

derivative of white supremacy. It can only be effectively dealt with by deconstructing structures and machinations underpinning continued colonialism which manifests in another guise and disguise.

Johannesburg, South Africa Hashi Kenneth Tafira

Notes

1. Andile Mngxitama, "Blacks are Kwerekwere Whites are Tourists," *New Frank Talk 7*, November 2010.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. R.M. Sobukwe, "One Central Government in Africa," *Drum*, November 1959.
5. Manifesto of the Africanist Movement, n.d.
6. Opening Address by R.M. Sobukwe, Inaugural Convention of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania, 4–6 April 1959.
7. Ibid.

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List of Acronyms

ADAPT	Agisanang Domestic Abuse Prevention and Training
ANC	African National Congress
BPC-SASO	Black Peoples Convention-South African Students Organisation
COSATU	Confederation of South African Trade Unions
CST	Colonisation of a Special Kind
GMO	Genetically Modified Organism
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
ID	Identity Book
IFP	Inkatha Freedom Party
NRC	Native Representative Council
SAMP	Southern African Migration Project
SANAC	South African Native Affairs Commission
SASAS	South African Social Attitudes Survey
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
UBC	Urban Bantu Council
WNLA	Witwatersrand Native Labour Association

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Abstract During the month of May 2008 anti-immigrant violence broke out in the Alexandra township of Johannesburg. When the disturbances died down, some sixty-four people were dead, thousands displaced and others lost limb and livelihood. The violence led to many commentaries in the media and in the academic spaces. The analyses were synchronic: they didn't delve into the historical attributes and the colonial facts that has configured and reconfigured the question of identity in South Africa. Neither did they question the idea of decolonisation and its shortfalls. The violence was blamed on an array of causes: poverty, unemployment, competition for scarce resources and so on. I found this analysis to be limiting and reductionist. Societies like South Africa with a long history of settler colonialism have endured the long-lasting effect of racism and ethnicism which are ghosts that continues to haunt contemporary society. Opinion makers and those in the levers of political power grapple to deal with it.

Keywords Immigrant • Identity • Decolonisation • Violence

South African Colonial Modernity

Societies like South Africa with a long history of settler colonialism have endured the long-lasting effect of racism and ethnicism which are ghosts that continue to haunt contemporary society. Opinion makers and those in the levers of political power grapple to deal with it. The question then is:

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why? This book attempts to lay out pertinent theoretical, political and ideological questions. It takes a historical tour and analyses how the South African social formation was configured and how it continues to do so. It unashamedly, and with courage and conviction, argues that colonial conquest and the colonial idea of artificial difference has much to do with what we are witnessing today. South African colonial modernity is not an isolated instance. Since 1488, it has been a part of a world historical process and a world system whose base has been capitalism, and whose axis has been race and racism. South African modernity, as elsewhere, has been a monster that has terrorised indigenous inhabitants; and has, in its totality over the past five hundred years, seen internal and inherent mutations, fissures and fractures in the process creating subjectivities and identities that are racialised and ethnicised.

The myth accompanying colonial occupation has been the civilisation of the non-Western world whereby Western civilisation was seen as a generous gift and contribution to humankind (Fanon 1964). This implied a number of assertions: that civilisation diffuses from Europe and Europe brings civilisation to the whole world; that European civilisation is superior; that Europeans are the makers of history; and that Europe is the source and centre and the rest is the periphery (Blaut 1993). The epistemological orientation of European modernity sees other people as sub-human, less intelligent and less cultured (ibid.). In this milieu, Africa is constructed as dark devoid of light, savage, barbaric and cruel. The truth of the matter, however, is that the so-called European civilisation is a recent project: African and Asian civilisations have been in existence for thousands of years. Africa gave birth to the sciences, the letters, and the arts. For this reason, Europeans cannot claim superiority over other people because prior to colonial modernity they were "not more advanced, not more modern, and not more progressive" (Blaut 1993: 51). Moreover the rise of Europe after 1492 was the result not of superior intellect but of the destruction of societies in Africa, Asia, the Americas and a policy of plunder, conquest and colonial exploitation (ibid.).

In 1488 Bartholomew Diaz circumnavigated the Cape in a failed attempt to reach India, a feat finally achieved by Vasco da Gama ten years later. Diaz's achievements were crucial in opening the southern part of Africa and later to colonisation and incorporation of South Africa into the nascent world capitalist system. By the time Jan Van Riebeeck arrived in 1652 the pathway had already been opened. Van Riebeeck and his squad were children and products of colonial modernity that carried with them its

imperial and racist baggage. Their white supremacist ideas and values were framed prior to their arrival on the shores of South Africa. Thus anti-black racism did not develop with the inception of a new mode of production, but was consolidated with settler colonialism. Within twenty years of Van Riebeeck's arrival, the Dutch settlers considered themselves owners of the land they dispossessed from the Khoi, land they claimed was acquired through military victory. Similarly, the British settlers who later arrived in the Cape colony were given generous portions of land. This was in addition to encroachment on pastures and territories and the extermination of indigenous peoples through diseases like smallpox, typhoid, measles, common cold, drought and cattle disease. Similarly, elsewhere in the Americas Christopher Columbus exchanged germs and genes which had a devastating impact on indigenous populations who had no immunity to them (Gunder Frank 1998). British arrival on the Cape in 1795 and their supposedly conflict with Dutch settlers portended a fateful future for indigenous people of South Africa. The arrival of both of these groups, progenitors of Western modernity, resulted in war, conquest, genocide, slave labour, dispossession, rape and alienation. In fact, British readiness for genocide is seen in its amassing of 6500 armed troops at the Cape in 1810 and the experience of men such as George Grey and John Cradock, who had previously prosecuted genocide against indigenous people in the Australasian territories. Indeed, the British lived true to their word and conviction. During the wars of 1835 and 1846 they carried "scotched earth" policies on the Xhosa. The *Grahamstown Journal* of 10 April 1847 declared:

> Let war be made against the kaffir huts and gardens. Let all these be burnt down and destroyed. Let there be no ploughing, sowing or reaping. Or, if you cannot conveniently, or without bloodshed prevent the cultivation of the ground, take care to destroy the enemy's crops before they are ripe, and shoot all who resist. Shoot their cattle too wherever you see any. Tell them the time has come for the white man to show his mastery over them. (cited in Magubane 1986: 12)

All of these features are central to colonial modernity, whose primary *raison d'être* is elimination. The initial phases of conquest saw colonial occupiers establishing domination, affirming their superiority resulting in the defeated groups suffering dehumanization (Fanon 1964). The polydimensional aspect of occupation: exploitation, raids, tortures, racism,

collective liquidation and national oppression take turns thereby objectifying the colonised that is "broken down in the very depth of his subsistence" (ibid.: 35). Colonialism, according to Fanon, cannot be understood without the possibility of torture, violation and massacre and "torture is an expression and a means of occupant-occupied relationship" (Fanon 1964: 66).

White Settlerism

For Magubane (1979: 3), white settlers are a creation of the world capitalist economic system from the seventeenth century who "would safeguard colonial conquest and secure these countries as future outlets for excess population and for investment of capital from the metropolitan country." Further still, "put simply, the settlers came to South Africa as robbers and enslavers and they stayed as colonisers. The country belongs to the African people, both as hereditary right and through life-and-death labours extracted from them to build everything that the settlers claim as their own" (Magubane 1979: 4). In another way, colonies provided a safety valve where problems in the metropolitan were exported and although some settlers arrived as indentured labour, social misfits and social outcasts, it was the darker peoples who became truly exploited and exterminated (ibid.). By definition, settler colonialism and the term settler implies the dispossession of indigenous peoples to facilitate the settlement of people of European origin. Settler colonialism, which conditions economic, political and cultural processes of indigenous peoples in which power and coercion are central, naturalises those processes. Fundamental to the notion of settler colonialism is the logic of elimination, extermination and genocide. Constitutive of these approaches are practice such as murder, rape, plunder, enslavement, racialised labour, theft, dispossession, deceit, trickery, chivalry – the list and adjectives are endless. Settler colonialism is established within the confines of white supremacy in which race and rabid racism are underlying factors. Humans and human relations are organised on the idea of superficial differences, taxonomies and racial ordering. To facilitate these processes, some humans have to be construed as lesser humans or sub-human – akin to animal level. The justification is eminently religious, epistemological and scientific. The legal demarcation of civilised/uncivilised prompted disciplines like anthropology where characteristics of the uncivilised were elaborated (Anghie 1999). The rationalisation of white supremacy played on innate differences, gradation and racial hierarchy of

superior and inferior races (Magubane 2007). This goes hand in hand with extermination and assignment of the status uncivilised, animal, bestial, barbaric and savage. In the Americas, the general question was whether indigenous peoples could be civilised, converted to Christian belief and follow precepts of law or were barbarians who acted against God's law and therefore deserved to be enslaved was a poser (Morgensen 2011). The latter solution was arrived at anyway. Although indigenous people could be accorded provisional humanity. it could not stop the settlers from applying the logic of elimination regardless of whether or not indigenous people conformed to settler norms (ibid.). Central to white Settlerism and white settlers claim to ownership of land is the myth of empty lands and that all other areas were blank interiors devoid of occupation. Thus, European occupation and settlement doesn't displace any indigenous peoples (Blaut 1992). Within this logic indigenous peoples were regarded barbaric without culture and history; were intruders who waged aggressive wars and raids against innocent settlers (Magubane 1986). The perversion of this history is that the "Bantu" migrated from the north and arrived simultaneously in South Africa with white people. For Magubane this tells a great deal of South African white settler society.

Law, Colonial Conquest and Production of Subjectivities

Capitalism's demand for land and labour drove European systems of law to the colonies and "law redefined land to make it available for capitalist development and constructed notions of contract and wages that converted subsistence farmers into wage labourers" (Merry 2004: 574). This went alongside the control of drinking, dancing and festivals on the pretext that natives would be dangerously sexually excited; they would cause states of chaos and disorder and immorality, where the virtues of work were absent (ibid.).

Law, the judiciary and denial of right to self-determination and were major aspects of colonialism and on the basis of perceived difference the racist legislates and enforces regimes of privilege and power that is discriminatory and uphold white interests (Miller 2011). Colonial potentates were obsessed with the maintenance of law and order provided by criminal law consistent with the policy of coercion, tutelage and penalisation (Nabudere 2001). In fact, colonial expeditions were undertaken under the pretext of establishing law and order among barbarians (Fanon 1964). The repressive apparatus of colonialism has remained intact in the postcolony and despite

changes in their legal regimes postcolonial countries still operate within a colonial legal framework. In tune with the colonial and imperialistic socio-economic political system, the law served as a social engineering force. In countries like South Africa, where crass racism was manifest through Jim Crow legislation and the denial of citizenship rights was prominent. As a result, the African ceased to be a national in his own country; instead he was reduced to status of foreigner.[1] The law therefore played an important role in the growth and stability of colonialism and assisted in the emergence of a new social order whereby the law was essential for establishing imperialist hegemony and colonial governance and colonial sovereignty meaning colonies became white man's countries (Prashad 1964; Magubane 2007). Ordinances like Masters and Servants introduced in the British colonies in the nineteenth century regulated movement of black labourers; restricted their freedom and movement from one place to another without a pass. Pass laws fixated them in regimented compounds and the proletarianised Africans constituted forced labour (Magubane 1983). In essence, colonial rule was hinged on the principle of "rod of iron" which compelled natives to work for wages determined by the master in addition to colour bar and differential treatment between white and black workers (ibid.). Africans formed the basis of the economic structure of South Africa and were crucial in the country's development and prosperity. Notwithstanding this fact Africans received very low wages; by law were disposed of land so they could provide labour in farms and mines. For this reason, Tabata has argued that the main problem facing South Africa is land hunger and the agrarian question which is interlinked with the national question.[2] Land shortage prompted Africans to be migrant labourers working under contract temporarily and their homes were presumed to be in the reserves. Reserves and later on segregated urban locations characterised by overcrowding became death zones. They are creations of racial social engineering. These are the native towns where all manner of vice and malaise happen (Fanon 1967). They are an epitome of abnormality, which has become normalised and naturalised. Death, suffering and malediction are banal. Disease is rampant. Violence is the norm and inhabitants are trapped in psychological contraption. These spaces represent blackness at its baseness, and at its alterity where race and power relations define subjectivities and consequently effect miseries. Existence in such worlds is akin to living in hell. The racial and gendered aspects of the naturalisation of non-ethics of war that was part of colonial conquest are exhibited in zones of non-human:

> Indeed, Coloniality of Being primarily refers to the normalisation of the extraordinary events that take place in war. While in war there is murder and rape, in the hell of the colonial world murder and rape become day to day occurrences and menaces. 'Killability' and 'rapeability' are inscribed into the images of the colonial bodies. (Maldonado-Torres 2007: 255)

Spaces where black subjects occupy are characterised by explicit and implicit war – there are war zones – the war is both physical and silent but with a singular continuum - erosion of life. Now the black subject always confronts or is regularly visited by death, a mundane and daily reality of black ontological existence. The black subject is perpetually engaged in the struggle against death which is not only omnipresent but ominous. He or she doesn't hesitate to eliminate another black, who, ironically, is oppressed like them. They are quick to anger towards their own brother and sister than they are to their oppressors. The immigrant, and those from another ethnic group, are defined as the enemy. Frustrations and anger is directed to anyone perceived to be different. This is not an aberration, however. These are residues of colonial depredations that condition(ed) the mind of the colonised and imputed straps of hatred. From the inception of colonial modernity, indigenous people were seen as half-child, half-devil, child-like, licentious, and indolent and morally degenerate (Merry 2004). Colonialism stripped the African of his right to be human; his contact with white "civilisation" was one of insult and humiliation and "under the pretext of 'civilising him' the colonial institution spread revolting and insipid images of himself that the oppressors wanted him to accept" (Magubane 1986: 25). Images and imagery are central in the white supremacist project and are historically etched in western cultural patterns with regards to viewing the world and are helpful in constructing certain myths. While an image denotes self-definition, there is always a projection of real and created images (Gerald 1972). When reality is reshaped "then we are within that other person's sphere of influence and can be led to believe whatever he wishes us to believe (ibid.: 350)." The result is acceptance of white as good and pure, black evil, ugly and base. Gerald gets more direct:

> This did not just happen. It is the result of white racial projection of its own best image upon the universe. Concomitant with that projection for several hundred years – ever since the black man has come within the sphere of influence of the white – the moral and aesthetic associations of black and white has been mixed up with race. Thus, the negative reflection of ourselves

> is, in the white man's system, the reverse side of his positive projection of himself. The white man has developed a myth of superiority based on images which compare him symbolically with the black man. The very fact of this interconnection is at once a holdover from previous bondage and the most effective means of perpetuating that bondage. We realise now that we are involved in a black–white war over the control of image. For to manipulate an image is to control a peoplehood. Zero image has for a long time meant the repression of our peoplehood. (1972: 353)

The African's physiognomy and phenotypical features were deemed to be different from the European standard of beauty and virtue. In any case colonial conquest, and the vanquishing of the African, leads to the coloniser implanting his ideas, values, thoughts and panoply of corruption in the mind of the conquered. This mental conditioning makes the colonised straddle between two worlds – the double consciousness (du Bois 1903) – and strives to be as white as possible while failing to achieve that insurmountable objective. Colonialism, control of culture and wealth, economy, political and mental domination had an effect on how the colonised viewed themselves (Ngugi 2005a). Interiorisation of inferiority, a by-product of colonial exigencies, leads to the inferiorized group to attribute its misfortunes to racial and cultural characteristics (Fanon 1964). Fanon stresses this point:

> Guilt and inferiority are the usual consequences of this dialectic. The oppressed then tries to escape these, on the one hand by proclaiming his total and unconditional adoption of the new cultural models, and on the other, by pronouncing an irreversible condemnation of his own cultural style. (1964: 38–9)

Thus, "having judged, condemned, abandoned his cultural forms, his language, his food habits, his sexual behaviour, his way of sitting down, of resting, of laughing, of enjoying himself, the oppressed flings himself upon the imposed culture with the desperation of a drowning man" (ibid.: 39).

During the BPC-SASO trial, in explaining why township life makes it difficult for blacks to see adulthood, Steve Biko said:

> This refers to the degree of violence that one gets in townships, which tends to introduce a certain measure of uncertainty about what tomorrow will bring. . . when you are in the township it is dangerous to cross often from one street to the next, and yet as you grow up it is essential that kids must be sent on

> errands in and around the township. They meet up with these problems: rape and murder are very very common aspects of our life in the township.

Although violence and self-abnegation are unacceptable, in black spaces one can just die without reason, cause and explanation. Black life there is cheap and trivial.

Preceding this was an international law called the Doctrine of Discovery whereby European countries took control over indigenous peoples and made legal claims of ownership of the lands they "discovered". To augment those rights they erected flags, monuments, religious symbols and renamed places. Ngugi (2005a) examines the relation between Africans and European memory because Europeans always planted its memory wherever they went including naming of landscape and bodies:

> A name given and accepted is a memory planted on the body of its grateful or unquestioning recipient. The body becomes a book, a parchment, where ownership and identity are forever inscribed. (Ngugi 2005b: 158)

This memory was extended to the intellect, languages, culture and morals. This resulted from enslavement, subjugation, colonial conquest, permanent occupation and settlement. The full implications were loss of rights to land, self-determination and sovereignty by indigenous people; Europeans could acquire title to land through conquest and "just war"; the idea of terra nullius (empty lands) and that Europeans were on a civilisation project.

The Entangled Spider Web

During the month of May 2008 anti-immigrant violence broke out in the Alexandra township of Johannesburg. When the disturbances dies down, some sixty-four people were dead, thousands displaced and others lost limb and livelihood. The violence led to many commentaries in the media and in the academic spaces. The analyses were synchronic: they didn't delve into the historical attributes and the colonial facts that has configured and reconfigured the South African identity question. Neither did they question the idea of decolonisation and its shortfalls. The violence was blamed on an array of causes: poverty, unemployment, competition for scarce resources and so on. I found this limiting and reductionist. One can concur with Mngxitama when he comments that anti-immigrant violence and anti-

immigrant attitudes have led to a burgeoning anti-xenophobia industry whose business is to absolve historical white responsibility of anti-black racism.[3] In the months of May, June and July a year after the riots, I embarked on ethnographic research into the township, as part of postgraduate studies at the University of the Witwatersrand. The results of my findings are presented in this book. To my astonishment, most women when asked what caused xenophobia answered that it had to do with competition for women. The theme that immigrant men are "taking our women" recurred repeatedly during my conversations. Certainly, the xenophobic violence in Alexandra was due not only to dire objective conditions. There were a myriad of factors and causes which are divorced to the favourite theme of poverty and want. However poverty and unemployment are intertwined in a sticky spider web and entangled with other factors and it is difficult to analyse the situation by picking one factor and isolating others. This has been the tragic case of the so-called xenophobia discourse. I for one have always disagreed with these "expert" analyses. And I have taken a lot of flak for it. First I have disputed the use of the word xenophobia, highlighting its weaknesses as an analytic tool. I maintained that what is called xenophobia should be analysed within the lenses of race, that rather it is **black-on-black racism/intra-black racism** practiced by black people on other black people whom they deem to be inferior. That explains how South African black populations have been racialised and how they view each other. This is *delegated/transferred racism* with roots deeper in South African racist colonial experience. It is definitely true that the oppressed and formerly oppressed take on the traits of their racist oppressors and transmit them onto their own and those they deem lesser. In recent times I seem to have been vindicated. Many are in favour of the appellation Afrophobia as a descriptive and analytic tool for what has been happening in South Africa. In 2008 that term was not in discourse, except in analyses by Andile Mngxitama and Pumla Gqola. Second, I have disputed the economic reductionist approaches that privileges material and objective conditions. I have argued that nuanced micro-factors such as gender, sex, culture, ethnicity, significations, and semiotics and mundane social relationships are interlinked with the objective. Third, in this book I propose that contemporary society is imbricated in global colonial matrices of power; its residues especially psychological have stayed in the psyche of black subjects. Since xenophobia and other particularisms like self-hatred, tribalism and parochial nationalism are deeply etched in the minds of blacks it would be a somewhat Sisyphean task to reverse these self-abnegations without embarking on

rigorous mental decolonisation approaches. These, of course, have to enjoin with the material and the objective. Fourth, the idea of Black Solidarity and the abandoned ethos of Pan-Africanism will aid us in the positive direction. Constitutive of this approach is a dismantling of mental and superficial colonial borders. The nature of apartheid colonialism made South Africa insular to the rest of the continent and made African countries unknown to South Africans. Sisonke Msimang captures this well:

> They weren't geographies with their own histories and cultures and complexities. They were dark landscapes, Conradian and densely forested. Zambia and Kenya and Ethiopia might as well have been Venus and Mars and Jupiter. They were undefined and undefined-able. They were snake-filled thickets, impenetrable bush and war and famine and ever present tribal danger.[4]

Msimang adds that the reality of the rainbow nation is to set South Africa apart from the rest of the continent, "just as whiteness means nothing until it is contrasted with blackness as savagery". The misconstrued idea of Africa was at the heart of the idea of South Africa itself and South African-ness relies on the image and imagery of Africa as a place of chaos, dysfunction and violence, a fact which is opposite to South African civility and orderliness.

The Quest for Pan-Africanism

Imposed ethnic identities and their clones tribalism and xenophobia hinder our quest to Pan-African unity and ultimately our goal to total liberation of black communities in Africa. Zimbabwean liberation hero Joshua Nkomo once cautioned about the dangers of pandering to tribalism:

> Our enemies are trying to split us up into tribal groups hostile to one another. We should realise that once we fall prey to such tactics practiced by people some of whom pose as nationalists, we cannot build a happy and stable Zimbabwe. Our enemies repeatedly remind us of so-called tribal wars fought by our fore-fathers centuries ago. They remind us about these wars not to help us understand our history but to make us hate those who do not belong to our tribes, those who belong to tribes with which our fore-fathers might have clashed over, perhaps, grazing land, fishing or hunting areas. We must be vigilant and expose such divisive tactics. Similarly we should never tolerate any form of racialism whatsoever.[5]

This brings to the idea of unity. Unity is an essential value in effacing historically imposed colonial artificial differences. Since racism was used to maintain black subjugation and white dominance where superficial differences were employed to sharpen divisions among the oppressed unity is, therefore, indispensable. In the words of Isaac Bangani Tabata (1974: 4):

> Here we have the spectacle of a whole people whose humiliation and serfdom have been maintained by a simple trick of dividing them amongst themselves. They who have been deprived of their land, stripped of all human rights, reduced to a position of helotry in the land of their fathers, the only land they know, have taken the weapons devised for their destruction and with their own hands have taken it against themselves.

The realisation and basis of racial harmony is, according to Tabata, full equality of all races and all peoples.

It is confounding that Africans tenaciously cling to the idea of the nation-state, a colonial construction, and use it to keep other Africans outside its borders. Africans are foreigners to one another, whereas outsiders have a free rein on the continent. Criminalisation of Africans due to social, geographic, territorial, national origin and cultural difference is inimical to Africa-wide brotherhood and sisterhood. Colonial borders only serve as Joseph Ki-Zerbo (2005: 87) puts it, "instruments of vivisection of peoples and have, since their establishment, caused untold human sacrifice in the form of fratricidal holocausts, merely out of respect for boundary lines already marked in blood by the colonial conquest". Similarly, Ngugi (2005b: 162) affirms, "There are no rational basis other than convenience for regarding colonial boundaries as sacrosanct and by implication the residents of either side of the colonial border as foreigners. These borders were historically constituted, markers of European memory on Africa, to meet colonial needs, and there is no reason why they cannot be historically reconstituted to meet African needs and reconnect with African memory."

The pursuit of the cause of Pan-Africanism as a quest towards the total liberation (economic, political, social, cultural and psychological) of the African people remains a relevant project. As a thought embedded in our intellectual progenitors, Chinweizu phrases it thus:

> Pan-Africanism is an ideology made up of the most important ideas that have brought the Black race thus far in our quest for liberation from imperialism and racism, and for the amelioration of our condition in the world: it

continues to be the vehicle for Black African hopes and aspirations for autonomy, respect, power and dignity.[6]

For Walter Rodney (1981), Pan-Africanism is not merely a unity of colour but a unity of common condition since the world continues to be defined in racist terms.

In similar vein, Ngugi (2005a) argues that we have to see Pan-Africanism as a people to people relationship rather than one between heads of states, intellectuals or Western educated elite. As a person-to-person relationship it is congruent with the African humanist ethos at whose heart is universal citizenship, unity, love, harmony, sharing and cooperation. For this reason, African humanism is antagonistic to petty ethnic squabbles, hatred and murder. In other words, xenophobia and racism are anti-African, anti-black and anti-human. Thus, there is a need to decolonise the African mind by withdrawing allegiance to the authority of foreign traditions and dismantling white supremacist values (Chinweizu 1987).

Notes

1. IB Tabata, Proceedings of the 4th Anti-CAD Conference, Banqueting Hall, Cape Town, 5 January 1951.
2. IB Tabata, "The Agrarian Problem," address to the Society of Young Africa, May 1954.
3. Andile Mngxitama, "Blacks are Kwerekwere Whites are Tourists," *New Frank Talk 7*, November 2010.
4. Sisonke Msimang, "Belonging – Why South Africans Refuse to let Africa In," http://www.africasacountry.com/belonging-why-south-africans-refuse-to-let-africa-in/.
5. Joshua Nkomo, *Zimbabwe Review* Volume Number 6, 1976.
6. Chinweizu, "Black Power Pan Africanist Perspective", n.d.

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CHAPTER 2

Is Xenophobia Racism?

Abstract The outbreak of anti-immigrant violence in May 2008 in the Johannesburg township of Alexandra have in the mainstream media been presented as an instance of xenophobia, this chapter argues that what is termed xenophobia is in fact racism: black-on-black-racism/intra-black racism practised by people of the same population group, which has characterised postapartheid South African black social relations. These are characteristics of decolonisation and difficulties of assimilating and integrating black African immigrants into the new South Africa. On the other hand, there is increased cultural contact and intermixing as a result of accelerated presence of other identities. There are, of course, conceptual and definitional limitations of the term xenophobia in describing the complex social realities happening in present-day South African black communities. Rather, the call is for the deconstruction of the term xenophobia and that we begin to see it as culturally based racism.

Keywords Anti-immigrant • Xenophobia • Black-on-black racism • Postapartheid immigrants

The outbreak of anti-immigrant violence in May 2008 has prompted a set of theoretical questions and a reappraisal of theoretical suppositions. While the attacks have in the mainstream literature pervasively been presented as xenophobia, I argue in this chapter that what is termed xenophobia is in

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fact racism: black-on-black-racism/intra-black racism practised by people of the same population group, which has characterised postapartheid South African black social relations. These are implications of decolonisation and the difficulties of assimilating and integrating black African immigrants into the new South Africa. On the other hand, there is increased culture contact and intermixing as a result of the increased presence of other identities. There are, of course, conceptual and definitional limitations of the term xenophobia in terms of its ability to describe the complex social realities occurring in South African black communities. Rather, I call for the deconstruction of the term xenophobia and that we begin to see it as culturally based racism. This kind of racism is heavily entrenched on cultural differences enunciated by dissimilarities in nationality, ethnicity, language, dress, customs, social and territorial origins, speech patterns and accents. These differences which are deepened by social and economic inequalities and frustrations by the locals are expressed thorough economic grievances, which, however, mask the preceding cultural contempt and disdains. There is of course evidence of deployed racism where current black-on-black practices are reminiscent of apartheid white anti-black racism.

On 11 May 2008, violence against black African immigrants erupted in South Africa, starting in the Johannesburg township of Alexandra before spreading to other areas of Gauteng. When the violence subsided, sixty-two people were dead, hundreds injured and maimed and thousands displaced. The attacks were, in terms of both scope and nature, characteristic of pogroms. The thrust of my argument is that what has been termed xenophobia in many circles, including the media and academia, is actually racism, or, to be more precise, black-on-black-racism. Black-on-black racism is racism practised by black people on other blacks, the latter not only belonging to the community but also seen as socially and culturally inferior. I further argue that racism is based not only on skin colour (that it is possible for people of the same skin colour to practise racism against each other), but also on differences in culture, nationality, language, dress, habits and ethnicity. This kind of racism is more cultural in nature, and culture takes precedence over all other aspects. I am cognisant of some complexities this problematic raises, particularly the question: what activity constitutes racism, and/or what is xenophobic? As I will show later, I have equated xenophobia with racism and have maintained that what is seen as xenophobia is actually racism. I have attempted to achieve that by taking a semantic route and putting both xenophobia and racism into a conceptual and theoretical framework. Indeed, I am sceptical of the definitional and theoretical limitation of

the term xenophobia vis-à-vis practices, nuances and logics in Alexandra which I find more racist than xenophobic. However, all this begs the question: what is xenophobia and what is racism? The definition of the former term is more straightforward, while the latter poses dilemmas because of its fluidity and the lack of general agreement of what constitutes racism. This chapter begins with some theoretical interventions on the subject, as I make some arguments about why I am inclined to use the term racism rather than xenophobia. The middle section of the chapter bolsters this argument with some ethnographic evidence, which I have extrapolated for the purposes of this book. Finally, I end with some observations as to why it is important to treat xenophobia as racism.

In my understanding the use of the term xenophobia is inadequate in comprehending the violent attacks against black African immigrants. My call is for the deconstruction of the term xenophobia and that rather we begin to see what happens in postapartheid South African black-and-black relations as intra-black racism. Xenophobia as a universal phenomenon can be broadly defined as an intense dislike, hatred or fear of those perceived to be strangers and denotes behaviour specifically based on the perception that the Other is foreign to, or originates from outside, the community or nation. In the wake of the 2008 violence, others saw it as Negrophobia or Afrophobia (Gqola 2008; Mngxitama 2008). Negrophobia is seen as the fear and dislike of black people and their culture (Fanon 1967; Chinweizu 1994; Gqola 2008). Phobia as defined by Hesnard (cited in Fanon 1967) is a neurosis characterised by anxious fear of an object or anything outside the individual and it must therefore arouse both loathing and revulsion. These definitions I believe to be incompatible with the salient, implicit, explicit or hidden racist practices that black people exercise on each other. Although both Gqola (2008) and Mngxitama (2008) have noted that the attacks were racialised and characteristic of Negrophobia, I argue that what happens in South Africa is neither xenophobia, Negrophobia nor any other kinds of phobias, but must be understood in the context of racism, practised by black people on other black people. This has its roots in colonial and apartheid white anti-black racism. My supposition is that this black-on-black racism which sometimes assumes a cultural bent may indeed take on an economic outlet, albeit not being economic in origin, but the economic logic serves to deepen these differences, in which they are mobilised to effect prejudices, discriminations, notions of inferiority and superiority and, subsequently, violent attacks and pogroms. My renunciation of the term xenophobia and subsequent adoption and use of the term black-on-black/intra-black

racism is inspired mainly by the following propositions: xenophobia has been the term the media have used, juggled around and fed on the audiences; it is possible that the media itself doesn't understand the racial nature of anti-immigrant attacks; or commentators or anyone who has used the term may have done so unconsciously and inadvertently or for lack of a better term to describe anti-immigrant practices in the postapartheid South Africa. I assume it seems incomprehensible to many that racism can be done and practised among populations and people of the same skin colour. Further, I suspect commentators, including the media, may be failing to see the intra-black racism as it has unfolded, an unfortunate misconception, and may be falling into the conundrum of biological racism analysis. They have not seen how people of the same skin colour, in this case, black African immigrants and black South Africans have over the years been transformed into races, have become racialised subjects and have brought each other into racial subjectivity. At this juncture, my question is: are both xenophobia and racism, as universal concepts, different, even if they are distinct and overlapping? Xenophobia is understood to be the dislike and fear of strangers, and racism, to use Goldberg's definition, is discrimination against others based on their putatively different social membership (Goldberg 1993). Commentators assume that when discrimination and prejudice happen among people of the same skin colour (where immigrants are concerned) this constitutes xenophobia, rather than racism. The meaning of racism is contingent on the prevailing social and epistemological conditions. It follows that racism is a fluid, chameleonic and delicate term, and its conceptualisation assumes a different meaning at different times (Goldberg 1993). I insist then that racism, from apartheid racism to what is called xenophobia and to what I call black-on-black racism, are all types of racism(s) which are transformed over time, subjected to contingencies of history and the ever-changing sociocultural and material landscapes. How and when does one kind of racism change into another, different in forms, contents and manifestations but still remaining what it is – racism – is, according to Goldberg (1993), subject to existing social conditions:

> The methodological predisposition one brings to the analysis of racism will influence, if not fully determine, its definition. The conception of the phenomena analysts take themselves to be addressing is circumscribed by the constraints of method. Studies of racism have tended to divide methodologically between those assuming an individually oriented and those accepting a structural approach. (1993: 92)

Goldberg further states that:

> Nevertheless, the meaning of racism is significantly narrowed to omit a range of expressions – namely, practices, effects and implications – that I want to insist are properly constitutive of racialised discourse, in general, and (subject to proper definitional constraints) to racism in particular. (1993: 93)

From these observations, I have drawn the conclusion that in South Africa, the era of xenophobia in discourse may have come to an end. What is needed now is to analyse, treat and see what is called xenophobia as racism, albeit racism practised by population groups of the same skin colour. This may probably constitute the new paradigm.

Since the decline of the nineteenth-century biological conceptions of superior and inferior races and its disappearance from public and academic discourse (Modood 2001), what has emerged is the *cultural assemblage* of racism. In fact, what is seen as xenophobia in the postapartheid South Africa should instead be viewed through this lens. In any event this intra-black racism is part of the era of decolonisation marked by the difficulties of assimilating and integrating black African immigrants into the more modern, industrial and economically advanced South Africa. I find many striking similarities between the European experience of two decades ago and the contemporary South African one. In the 1980s, writers in Britain and France were often talking in terms of a new "cultural" racism, "a name given to the enunciation of difference on cultural grounds", meaning that the racist discourse was now being culturalised (Grillo 2003: 7). In other words, cultural racism is seen as "racism in disguise" (Stolcke 1995: 4) articulated through a language of essentialised cultural difference (Taguieff 1990). For Taguieff (ibid.), when talking of cultural racism, racism can be articulated in terms of either race or culture. He further argues that racism not only biologises the cultural, but also acculturates the biological. While biological racism is based on unequal treatment and the exclusion of others due to phenotypical and other physical differences, cultural racism builds on these to vilify and marginalise certain groups and this is expressed in racial terms (Balibar 1991). Although many a scholar has decried biological bases of racism, its traces are not entirely eliminated; biological racism doesn't become negligible as such and in some cases works alongside, and in conjunction with, culturally determined prejudices. In Alexandra, while immigrants are defined by their phenotypical appearances (they are seen as being darker in hue), they are also a racialised group with distinct cultural

identities which is primarily a motivator for certain prejudices and discriminations. Michel Wieviorka (1997) notes two kinds of racism: classical/inegalitarian and differential. The former considers the Other as inferior, thereby occupying the lowest rungs of society; it denotes the legitimisation of domination and discrimination as a result of overt racial doctrines which support biological racism. My analyses of the situation in Alexandra, however, lead me to apply Wievorka's differential racism which in many ways is cultural racism. Being cultural, the Other is seen as a new danger to society, a threat, an invader intent on usurping the hard-won materiality which the locals fought for with sweat and blood. The ultimate answer is for the "foreigner" to be kept at distance, expelled and, if all should fail, destroyed. Synonymous with cultural racism is the emphasis on cultural differences in manners, speech and pronouncement, detection of accents with a special attention to "purity" of local languages. All of these portray the problems of ethnic and cultural intermixing, intermarriage, cross-border love relationships and "interbreeding" in societies like Alexandra. It must be noted that although cultural racism implicitly avoids hierarchisation as apartheid doctrines espoused, which were dissipated with its abolition in 1994, it is nonetheless presupposed on social and economic factors and inequalities between members of the "locals" and the supposed "foreigners".

By the 1960s and 1970s, the Enlightenment notion of racism was being widely and prominently discredited. Scientific racism as both a historical construction and product of Enlightenment era has origins in the myths developed by philosophers of the eighteenth century to explain man's nature and place in society (Anthony Marx 1998; Frederickson 2002; Magubane 2007). Though the European supremacist discourses were not inherently racist *per se* they were employed to justify racist acts and practices (West 1993). Thus, in the eighteenth century science, philosophy, religion and rationality merged to circumscribe the European representation of Others (Du Bois 1965; Magubane 2007). As race has come to be understood, it is a social construction. There exist such beliefs as race, beliefs used to construct the Other and, consequently, the self (Miles 1993). For Goldberg (1993, 2002), race and racism is neither static nor monolithic with a single given meaning. Rather, it insinuates itself in the paradigmatic views of the day. It is adaptable in defining particular population groups at a given socio-historical conjecture. As races are formed, there is transformation over time of what counts as "race" and what sorts of exclusion and discrimination it entails. Goldberg argues that although the scientific notions of racial hierachisation and gradation are

now obsolete, the concepts of inferiority and superiority implicit in racial hierarchy are still finding expressions in contemporary society. Racism, therefore, cannot simply be defined in biological and economic terms. Historical analyses must extend beyond economic relations, to embrace systems of values and appropriations. These values converge and merge at a certain sociohistorical conjecture to formulate terms that are political, legal and moral and that espouse racist expressions. In racial subjectification (identification), Goldberg observes that in using racial terms with a racial significance, social subjects racialize people and population groups whom they infer and characterise. What would constitute racism are entities and expressions which include beliefs, verbal outbursts, slurs, acts and consequences which are sometimes violent in nature. In racial subjectification, social actors subject themselves and are subjected to modes of expression which in most cases is by means of language which Benveniste (1971) calls interpellation. This is the use of language in ways that are debasing, demeaning and derogatory. It is from these, according to Goldberg, that a thorough understanding of racism can be made. Once a racial label has been applied to people, ideas about what they refer to come to have social and psychological effects. By constructing ways in which people see others and themselves, these labels help shape identification which Ian Hacking (1992) calls "making up people". This is synonymous with the use in South Africa of terms like *makwerekwere* and *amagrigamba*, which I discuss below, which are not only derogatory but also carry racial connotations and with reference to civilisation, *makwerekwere* would qualify for a subhuman race (Nyamnjoh 2006).

Racism has a historical specificity (Hall 1996). Since racism is not monolithic and has no single given meaning (Goldberg 1993), it augurs well to talk of racism(s) where different racism(s) are not only historically specific but are also articulated in different ways in the societies in which they appear. Though they may draw on historical, cultural and ideological traces of the previous historical phases, they always assume specific forms which arise out of present – not past – social and material conditions and organisation of society. Emphasising the historical specificity of racism, Hall posits that the general features of racism are significant: they are modified and transformed by the contexts in social environments and societies in which they appear. Precisely in history there is not only racism, a monolithic concept, but rather "racisms". Hall also promptly warns us against assumptions that since racism(s) are anti-social and anti-human, they are the same everywhere and homogeneous. Instead they are contingent to time, place

and social contexts in which they appear. Therefore, the characteristics in, and within, a nation have a level of determination in which racism is active. In societies like South Africa, which are previously structured and articulated in racial domination, racism tends to persist and endure through history even if it changes its *colours* in a new socio-economic context. For the purposes of this chapter, I will not delve into the intricacies of apartheid racism; rather, I would like to point out that there seemingly appears a deployed racism in societies like Alexandra, which continue to exhibit traits of anti-black racism characteristic of apartheid. I am of the opinion that psychoanalysts would agree that population groups that were previously racially subjugated express the same attitudes to their own.

"Alexandra is Africa." This I was told by one of my participants. I suppose he said that because of the multi-ethnic character of the township where almost all South African ethnic groups and immigrants from across Africa reside. Since its foundation in 1912 Alexandra has been a primary destination for both internal and external migrants. Internal migrants came from areas like Natal and Transkei and external ones were from neighbouring countries like Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), Mozambique, Nyasaland (Malawi), Lesotho and Swaziland, where they worked in the gold mines and the subsequent secondary industries. In the postapartheid era more have descended from different parts of Africa. Many settled, made the township a permanent habitat, married local women, set up homes and changed their names and surnames to local ones. In the pre-1994 era there were contestations of who the bona fide residents were and who were not (Bonner and Nieftagodien 2008). Migrant labourers from rural South Africa were called *amagoduka* meaning those who would return. It tallied with the apartheid migrant labour system that prohibited permanent urban residency. It implied that the *amagoduka* were temporary residents who, after a certain period of time, would return to their rural hinterland. This kind of arrangement suited the apartheid regime's interests, which was loath to the city-slicker type and the streetwise township resident.

The advent of democracy in 1994 saw the country opening up to the whole world in a globalised process involving the accelerated flow of movement of goods, labour and increased migration by black African immigrants (Nyamnjoh 2006). Many non-nationals found their way to Alexandra Township because of long-existing kinship networks of immigrants who had been migrating for over a hundred years. Secondly, the township is favoured because of the industrial areas surrounding it, Kew, Marlboro and Wynberg, which offer prospects of employment. Thirdly it makes economic

sense because of the presence of cheaper shack accommodation, which has been proliferating since the late 1980s. The increased migration and settlement by black African immigrants has exacerbated anxieties, insecurities and anti-immigrant attitudes (Nyamnjoh 2006). As a result, there has been a building up of boundaries and the consequent sequestration of ethnic groups.

Construction of Racial Categories

In Alexandra, non-South Africans are known by, and given, a wide array of names. These are not just names, but racial labels which carry racial connotations. Some are these are completety degrading, whereas others are jocular but equally offensive. These emanate from culture contact, the result of presence of other identities and ethnic groups. Each of the labels are value laden, carry a particular meaning denoting the social and cultural origin of the carrier. In Alexandra, in particular, the labels change and transform over time in which they undergo a mutation process. While the origin of these terms may be fairly specific, with them being used to address a particular ethnic or social group they may later become a blanket label for anyone and everyone who is not South African. The process of Othering apparently uses national or ethnic identity as a cover, in which there is a psychological and racial impulse to mobilise these identities and other forms of differences to degrade, deprecate and inflict physical harm. I believe the use of labels to effect Otherness has more far-reaching effects than what might on the surface seem. My research has revealed other practices occurring in the township, although for the purposes of this chapter I have attempted to show how construction of Otherness leads to racialised identities and pervasive cultural racism. Such interpellation and signifying practices are indicative of other modalities of cultural racism in Alexandra like fight for women, the myth about the male immigrant genitalia and other cultural myths about immigrants. Certainly, there are many complexities and contradictions in the township; that connect in an intricate manner and throw one into a theoretical conundrum. If one looks at the labels below, they transcend ethnicity, nationality, social and geographical origin, culture, language, perceptions, opinions, innuendos and modalities of migration. All these connect in way or the other into a maze, yet at the same time are mobilised to effect difference and degradation.

As I went around asking people their perceptions on the social relationships between locals and African immigrants I also enquired about the

names they are given and their etymological roots. These are some I managed to collate. It must be stated that while these labels are the ones commonly used in Alexandra, there are different names applied in other and various parts of the country.

(a) Makwerekwere

Probably the most common, popular and "older" label given to black African immigrants. Its roots are in language differences. The speakers of the strange language with unusual phonetic sounds were seen as the bearers of an alien speech, totally incomprehensible to South Africans. I was told when African immigrants speak; the phonetic sound goes like "*kwerekwerekwerekwere*", hence the name *makwerekwere*. Following the May 2008 violence, The Black Lawyers Association proposed that the painfully offensive term *makwerekwere* be declared as part of the lexicon of hate speech in the statute books (*The Star*, 9 July 2008).

(b) Magrigamba

This is another older term. It originally referred to West African men. I was told by participants that a *grigamba* is a person who came to South Africa with nothing but clothes on their body. After a while, they return home wealthy, propertied and monied, all from the resources of the country. The term might be essentially economic but has gotten collapsed with racial identification.

(c) Maforeigner

This is a recent label which came about as a result of the May 2008 violent attacks on immigrants. The period and aftermath of the violence was captured extensively in the media, which referred to people caught up in the inferno as "foreigners". As a result, township residents merged the term into their daily linguistic repertoire. The term has resonances with nation, nationality and citizenship.

(d) AmaKalanga

I first heard the label from a group of Zulu men, while I was watching a soccer tournament at the grounds behind Madala hostel.[1] Among the first

Zimbabweans to migrate, and to establish migration trends, was the Kalanga ethnic subgroup of Zimbabwe. These workers came to South Africa long ago, to work in the gold mines of the Witwatersrand, recruited by the the Witwatersrand Native Labour Association (WNLA). In Zimbabwe, they are not regarded as real Ndebele, who came with Mzilikazi from Nguniland in South Africa. Most of the Kalangas, however, are fluent in Ndebele, and they settled in Alexandra, where they have lived for many decades. The term *AmaKalanga* came, before and in the post-May 2008 violence. It referred to the Ndebele-speaking people of Zimbabwe and also those from Swaziland. The idea was that they are not bona fide Nguni, and that therefore they are *amaKalanga*. This label has lately come to refer to anyone who is not South African. Implicitly, there is an association with ethnicity, ethnic origin and ethnic identity.

(e) MaNyasa

This term refers to Malawians. The first Malawians to migrate to South Africa did so before Malawi's independence, while it was still called Nyasaland. However, the label, when addressed, causes injury because it is understood to be a derogatory one. The term connotes national and social origin, and, in common with other labels, is a marker of difference, if not inferiority.

(f) MaNigeria and Broder

"MaNigeria" denotes social origin of the Nigerians – Nigeria. "Broder" is an imitation of Nigerian speech: *"my broder from anoder moder."* Apparently, these labels, on the surface, seem "innocent", it is only in the way they are used, and who uses them and for what intentions and purposes and results, that they assume social significance, in the process of social and human interaction. Again, this has to do with nationality and metaphysical boundaries constructed around different social groups.

(g) Ngwangwa

Again, this label refers to Nigerians. It's not clear how it came about in Alexandra. During my fieldwork I was unable to establish its origins. Some participants told me it has something to do with food Nigerians eat or that locals hear the word *ngwangwa* more often whenever Nigerians are in

conversation. It seems to me there's a linguistic connotation to this. Interestingly, many South Africans watch Nollywood movies and appropriate registers to construct identities of the "Other."

(h) Padrao

The term refers to Mozambicans. It originated from the Mozambicans themselves and the way they addressed each other. Initially, it was a respectable term, referring to Mozambican business people involved in hawking and trading. When addressing one another, the other party would shout:

Eh, Padrao!

The other would reply:

Padrao!

The term has been appropriated by South Africans, and the way they use it has become offensive, carrying negative connotations and intending to cause injury to the Mozambican. Though I observed numerous Mozambican women traders, they are not called *padrao*. Seemingly, *padrao* is a gender-specific term and I could not establish why this is the case. Among Mozambicans themselves women are called *señora*. Apparently, this latter term has not been incorporated into the South African lexicon.

(i) Omotswagai

In Sesotho/Setswana, it means "Where do you come from?" Originally, it was used by urbanised township city-slicker types to refer to South Africans coming from rural areas not well versed with city ways and were seen as "traditional, conservative and backward." It is now used on African immigrants. By addressing them as such, it questions their motive for being "here"; where they are coming from (an unknown, alien and strange place with strange people). In the psyche of Alexandra residents, *omotswagai* is another kind of species, who are different from South Africans – in linguistic, physical and cultural terms, implying inferiority associated with their places of social origin and ancestry. It also reinforces locals' claims to autochthony, something to do with geographical, territorial monopoly and citizenship.

(j) Mukwevho

This also refers to Tsongas and Vendas from Limpopo and Mozambicans. The label originated from a popular Venda soapie, *Muvhango*, which is broadcast on SABC 2, which features a prominent Venda family-owned company called Mukwevho.

(k) MaShangani

A label used for Tsongas, Vendas and Shangani people from Mozambique. During the violence, this term was used to refer to Mozambicans, who are commonly known as the Shangaans. I suspect Shangaan, an Afrikaans derivation, gained prominence during apartheid times, where Mozambican immigrant labourers found employment in local mines. Further still, it might have originated from Soshangane, Shaka's general, who, like Mzilikazi, fled during *mfecane* with his followers and settled in certain parts of Mozambique. The logic behind the label *maShangani* is that Mozambicans share the same blood, ancestry or origin with South African Tsongas and Vendas who are also called *maShangani*. It also means the Tsongas and Vendas are constructed outside the South African polity and citizenship. Nonetheless, Shanganis from Mozambique and Tsonga people from South Africa proudly wear the term Shangani and refer themselves as MaShangani.

(l) Abantu BakaMugabe (Mugabe's People)

This term is used to refer to Zimbabweans. They are considered to be just as bad as their president Robert Mugabe. Apparently, nothing positive is constructed about Mugabe, largely because of media coverage that reveals him as a dictator and responsible for his country's economic and social problems.

(m) AmaXenophobia

This is a recent label. It came about in the post-May 2008 racial violence. The term *xenophobia* was being widely mentioned in the media and Alexandra residents began to refer displaced immigrants as *amaxenophobia*. A newspaper article published in *The Star* of 30 May 2008 reads:

> The most used term in the past weeks has been xenophobia, generally understood to mean fear or hatred of foreigners and their culture.

The term *amaxenophobia*, like *amaforeigner*, was incorporated into the daily linguistic repertoire of Alexandra residents and became a racial label. Like other labels, it is also interchangeably used to refer to all non-South Africans.

(n) MaZimbabwe

The label not only refers to Zimbabwean immigrants but also to all non-nationals. It first appeared in the post-2000 era when the political and economic crisis in Zimbabwe led to mass migration by Zimbabweans to South Africa, moreover Alexandra.

(o) Myfriend – Oooo!

It was derived from immigrant patterns of speech and address. Most immigrants are known to say often times, when speaking to South Africans: "my friend. . ." The "Oooo" part is from West African speech which my participants told me they hear from Nigerian movies.

The labelling is, however, not a one-way process. Immigrants also have some names they give to South Africans:

(a) MaSasko

This is mainly used by Zimbabweans to refer to South Africans. There are two explanations for the derivation of this term. One is that it might be a linguistic derivation of "South African". The other is it comes from the South African Sasko bakery or Sasko bread. During severe economic crises and food shortages in that country, cross-border traders were buying food-stuffs from South Africa. This included bread, called Sasko. The label *Sasko* might have originated in Zimbabwe and be brought into South Africa by recently arrived Zimbabwean immigrants.

(b) MaZulu

The immigrants have a perception that all attacks perpetrated against them, are initiated by the Zulus, a South African ethnic group. Common responses from immigrants were that South African perpetrators of violence would go around asking those they suspect to be non-South African, Zulu

names for certain body parts, failure to do so would elicit a beating and other physical harassment. It has thus become common among immigrants that any people who molest and attack them are Zulus. The *maZulu* label encompasses every South African – be they Sotho, Tswana or Xhosa or members of any other ethnic group, they are still called *maZulu*.

Racism in a Shared Social Space

Given a long history of migration, Alexandra is a place where different ethnic groups reside. The various social actors live side by side, in close proximity. It must be noted that Alexandra is a small area, but overpopulated and overcrowded; a visitor is struck at first sight by a maze of closely intertwined shacks. At one instance, it might appear that given this closeness of human interaction, whereby one cannot go out of one's abode without bumping into a "someone", the social relationships are well defined and close. This might mislead us into thinking that this kind of society is a multicultural melting pot where all that live in it do so in harmony. It is through this presupposition that many were "caught" by surprise and led to them seeking answers as to the cause of the violence in May 2008. More perplexing was that neighbour had turned against neighbour, even though they had been living together for so long. Indeed, male immigrants have lived in the area for over a century, married local women and set up permanent family structures. Many had lost contact with their homeland, their families and kin there. In Zimbabwean parlance, this character is known as *mujubheki* (the Johannesburger) or *muchoni*, that is, one who has been swallowed up by the delights of Johannesburg lights with its abundant entertainment and pretty women. The new families they established in Alexandra had become *de facto* their only kin. It is this question that leads us to find theoretical answers to these problems. What we do not fathom, oftentimes, is reality: does the absence of violence mean that people are living in harmony? Do we have to wait for racial disturbance to acknowledge the existence of racism? Does racism manifest and express itself only through violent ways? What about nuances, innuendos and logics steeped in stereotypes, culture, habits, racial labelling and verbal outbursts? Indeed, salient forms of racism have been an integral part of the community for a while. A fact is that certain prejudicial attitudes exist in people's daily social interactions and it is through an analysis of these, in additions to cultural differences, that a thorough understanding of racist tendencies can be made.

I would like to call Alexandra a common world, where people from different areas, regions and nationalities co-habit in a mutual territory and

social space and apparently live side by side. In a single homestead one might find Xhosas, Zulus, Sothos, Tswanas, Vendas, Zimbabweans, Malawians and Mozambicans. This typical microcosmic world has its own specificities, on the surface the social relationships are not strained, the inhabitants show each other muted respect, a silent acknowledgement of each other's presence. I should emphasise the social distance existing therein: while the social actors are near each other physically, they are distant and far from each other – socially, psychologically and in spirit. Yet they have no choice but to live and tolerate each other's presence because there is no other way. Alexandra is a common world which their fates have brought them together.

The primary social relationships characterised by family, friends and kin where racism is nurtured, are directly correlated to the whole societal network of relations where manifestations of racisms are revealed in the public sphere. While the private domain plays an important role in socialising individuals for participation in the public sphere, the public domain is shaped by a morality which is inculcated in the family (Rex 1997). In the aftermath of the racial attacks on immigrants in Alexandra, *The Star* newspaper ran an article, accompanied by a picture of a group of schoolchildren jeering at displaced immigrants:

> Their (kids) faces contorted with hatred and contempt, the schoolchildren shout and jeer and torment and laugh at a woman refugee in Alexandra yesterday. This perhaps, of all pictures that have come out of Alexandra, is the most disturbing. This is the lesson children have learnt from their elders... xenophobia, even if they never heard the word. (*The Star*, 15 May 2008)

While children live with immigrants and interact with them on a daily basis, the private sphere of this common world is one of greater social distance. Here I imply that proximity can also include social distance. The situation specifics of Alexandra leave people with no option but to live side by side rather than in separate communities. Living side by side can nonetheless give an illusion that all social actors are in a harmonious world devoid of racial or ethnic tensions. This situation I term *coerced co-habitation*. Social actors live together, not that they desire it, but because they have nowhere else to stay other than where they are. As a result, they grant each other some "concessions", which allow them to live together. These tolerances are presupposed by both situation specifics and *coerced co-habitation*. By *coerced co-habitation* I imply that circumstances and the situation *coerce*

people to live side by side. It explains the "surprise" many (especially politicians) felt about the 2008 violence; it is also indicative of the specific conditions that are generative of cultural racism in Alexandra. A couple of reasons may explain this (as I indicated earlier): the proximity of Alexandra to industrial areas like Kew, Wynberg and Marlboro; the availability of cheap shack accommodation; the fact that since Alexandra has a long history of migration by both internal and external migrants, the presence of existing kinship networks is exploited by new arrivals who come and stay in the area and finally Alexandra *mastaands* (landlords) prefer immigrant tenants because they don't give "headaches" when paying rent at the end of the month.

Conclusion

Alexandra as a multi-ethnic society means social relationships are marked by conflict and tension and are barely harmonious as it might seem. Unlike other communities where xenophobia has occurred, Alexandra has its own specifics. It can't be generalised that what happens in one community is the same as in the other. Each community has its own particular and peculiar beliefs, community dynamics, cultural myths and attitudes on non-nationals. These exhibit a persistent endurance through time. Each area has its own specificities and internal dynamics that are different from the other. The *New Racism* in South Africa has found expression in different areas of the country. This implies that our analyses of these different racisms cannot be generalised and that each situation must be treated as unique. We cannot afford a "one size fits all" approach. Against this background I argue that in South Africa there has been an inclination to universalise xenophobia. I rather call for the research on this phenomenon to be contextualised. Thus, what happens in Alexandra is different to other parts of the country where anti-immigrant practices have occurred. I am cognisant that there might be similarities and links between all those areas, *but* the causes and effects are certainly different. I would like to conclude with Goldberg's (1993) assertion that there may be different racisms at the same place at different times or different racisms in various different places at the same time; different racist expressions are different in their expressions, different in conditions of their expressions, forms of expressions, objects of expressions and effects, among different people at the same time–space conjecture. By delving deeper into the limitations of the term xenophobia as against the actual prejudicial practices found in daily social and cultural interactions

lends one to argue that the term xenophobia has outlived both its meaning, purpose and usefulness.

The dichotomy between xenophobia and racism remains confusing, inattentive to human relationships and ineffectual. That is the reason why, during the 2010 soccer World Cup in South Africa, FIFA ran a campaign with anti-racism banners before some matches. Apparently, many could not distinguish the difference between racism and xenophobia. For some, xenophobia remains far removed from racism, being different in form and expression; thus while it may be morally good to campaign against the latter (as FIFA saw fit, despite an orgy of anti-immigrant violence in South Africa hardly two years earlier), the former remains inconsequential. Recognising xenophobia as racism means a combat against xenophobia is *de facto* a fight against racism.

Note

1. The violence emanated from Madala hostel and spread to other parts of the township.

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CHAPTER 3

Inside the Mind of a Xenophobe

Abstract This chapter argues that in order to understand the so-called xenophobia we need to consider the country's history of white supremacy, colonialism and virulent white anti-black racism and how a colonised self-hating xenophobe was produced. It is not incidental that black people have begun to hate and inflict harm on each other; rather, these are effects and manifestations of deployed/delegated racism where the formerly racially oppressed assume the traits of white racists and employ them among their own.

Keywords Xenophobia • Colonialism • Xenophobe

One striking feature of postapartheid South Africa has been the widespread incidences of anti-immigrant sentiments which have often taken violent forms, in the process causing physical injury, death, stress, distress and dislocation. Copious literature exists on this subject and widespread studies on this phenomenon have been conducted. One term that has been bandied around and promoted, especially by the media, is xenophobia, which most agree is a postapartheid aberration. In this chapter, just like the preceding one, I decline to see anti-immigrant behaviour as xenophobia, either in its semantic or operational use. I regard it, therefore, but as black-on-black/intra-black racism that is similar to white anti-black racism. I argue that in order to understand the so-called xenophobia we need to consider the

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country's history of white supremacy, colonialism and virulent white anti-black racism and how a colonised self-hating xenophobe was produced. It is no coincidence incidental that black people have begun to hate and inflict harm upon one another; rather, these are effects and manifestations of deployed/delegated racism where the formerly racially oppressed assume traits of white racists and employ them among their own. The signification of the "foreign Other" is the reality of so-called xenophobia. But these matters cannot be fully comprehended without referencing white supremacy and its career in the South African social formation. Frederickson (1981: xi) describes white supremacy as attitudes, ideologies and policies associated with the rise of blatant forms of white dominance over "non-white" populations. When fully developed, it involves colour bars, racial segregation and citizenship rights are reserved only for a privileged group which has a light pigmentation. Furthermore, white supremacy means systematic and self-conscious efforts to make race or colour a prerequisite for membership of a particular group. People of colour are then treated as permanent aliens or outsiders. The racist enterprise also revolves around the notion of difference where defenders of colonial racism used difference and based it on natural order in the process reducing the colonised to sub-human level, treated him as inferior while simultaneously constructing themselves as superior (Memmi 2000). In this logic difference implies inequality – biological and cultural – translating into political and economic inequality. Ultimately, the goal of white supremacy and racism is dominance; it exists in order to reject, injure and oppress and it "illustrates and symbolises oppression" (ibid.: 131). As an active manifestation of domination racism leads to the interiorising of denigration, social and psychological damage and "the scars of the past are not easily healed" (ibid.: 132).

The postapartheid South Africa has witnessed a striking rise in black-on-black prejudices which have often assumed violent forms; a scenario that has often been characterised as xenophobia. In the previous chapter, I have expressed dissatisfaction with the employment of the term xenophobia, in its semantic, academic, and operational use. I have argued rather that it is racism practised by people of the same skin colour. This kind of racism is heavily entrenched in cultural differences enunciated by dissimilarities in nationality, ethnicity, language, dress, customs, social and territorial origins, speech patterns and accents. These differences are deepened by social and economic inequalities, and frustrations among local people are expressed through economic grievances, which, however, mask the preceding cultural contempt and disdain. In addition, some current black-on-black practices

are reminiscent of apartheid white anti-black racism. In many instances, biological conceptions of superior and inferior races are often mobilised to effect prejudices and stereotypical representation of the "foreign Other" during the course of social relations that become racialised.

Current discourses on the so-called xenophobia are synchronic; analyses point out to a phenomenon that is a postapartheid aberration and a society characterised by high levels of socio-economic inequality and a visible presence of other identities from outside national borders. I argue that black-on-black racism, otherwise euphemistically labelled xenophobia, should be traced to the country's roots of racial antimonies and crass white supremacist racism that begins with the 1488 moment when Bartholomew Diaz circumnavigated the Cape, thereby inserting South Africa into colonial modernity. The effects of more than 500 years of white anti-black racism have been permanently etched onto the country's black psyche; such attitudes and behaviours have been delegated onto the psyche of black subjectivities and indeed play among blacks themselves in lieu of intra-black racism which is in many ways very similar to white anti-black racism. The dynamism of racism and its chameleonic and changing nature demands always, new conceptual, methodological, theoretical and, if needs be, political, tools of analyses. Most important is epistemic dishonesty: the majority of analyses of xenophobia tend to a discussion that absolves white supremacy and the country's insidious history of reprehensible rabid racism, of culpability. Rather, what we are presented with is a picture of black-on-black violence, which is short of saying blacks are instinctively prone to violence; blaming of victims of historical racist violence instead of colonial modernity and its racist continuum whose violence was imported onto the colonised and formerly racially subjugated. The 2008 anti-immigrant violence, for example, that gripped South Africa can be explained, as Mngxitama (2010) observes, as hatred of black people, a perpetuation of colonial and apartheid violence which was internalised by blacks. Mngxitama further acknowledges that the security and privilege of whites and the new black elite is fed on violence of, and on, poor blacks. Ironically, whites have and never been considered foreigners but tourists, investors and employment creators (ibid.). However, Mngxitama is reluctant to call xenophobia racism because it absolves white culpability; instead, he prefers the terms Negrophobia or Afrophobia.

South African colonial modernity which begins in 1488 when Bartholomew Diaz circumnavigated the Cape and opened the country to the modern world capitalist system marked the beginnings of her colonial

modernity. As elsewhere, the new system brought blood-curdling genocidal impulses, subjection, religious pedantry, subordination, alienation and a black subject exposed to the coloniality of being. To take a cue from Maldonado-Torres (2007), coloniality of being, which was entangled with coloniality of power, knowledge and racial hierarchies, was part of a broader Western project which became the *raison d'ètre* of imperial conquest. The Manichean misanthropic scepticism (ibid.) of South Africa's conquerors made them doubt the humanity of the people they encountered, thereby setting in process a campaign of war, terror, genocide, murder and rape. Both the British and the Afrikaners are implicated in these crimes. Indeed, South African colonial modernity is etched and founded on blood. Blood comes out of war and attrition and continues to be shed long after the war has ended. Notions and acts of war, murder, death, rape and suffering are fundamentally constitutive of colonial modernity. Maldonado-Torres captures this well:

> The colonial aspect of Being, that is, its tendency to submit everything to the light of understanding and signification, reaches an extreme pathological point in war and its naturalization through the idea of race in modernity. The colonial side of Being sustains the colour-line. (Maldonado-Torres 2007: 251)

South Africa's brand of colonial modernity has seen the most perverse debasement of blacks whose lives, for the entire 500-year span of her modernity, have been subjected to the shadows of physical and social death, a sordid ontological existence and extreme suffering. Colonial modernity, a long-standing pattern of political, socio-economic, cultural and racial relations that survive the formal abolition of juridical colonialism, defines historical and contemporary configurations of matrices of power and race and the ontological position of South African black subjectivity. The hell of the colonial world which is carried over into the postcolonial reflects the naturalization of unpalatable events that happen in a war (Maldonado-Torres 2007). South African black communities are both war zones and death zones. The difference between this state of affairs and the wars of conquest of yesteryear is that the victims and perpetrators are all black (however, white supremacy, the system and its apparatus have receded to the backstage and have become invisible actors). Nevertheless the aftermath of colonial conquest implies that the coloniser implants his ideas, values, thoughts, ideologies and moral bankruptcy on the mind of the vanquished.

That is the reality of colonial domination: it means the exercise of power over the colonised consciousness and mind. In fact, racism is at the core of colonialism. Its greatest achievement is to tamper with the nature of the colonised and make them think exactly like the coloniser. Colonisation is not meant to promote and spread love. On the contrary, it breeds hate and hatred because it is founded on these abominations. The colonised internalise hatred (both internal and external), which they distribute among their own. In Malcolm X's words, incidences of intra-black racism are products of the hate that hate produced. Malcolm X comments on the debilitations of white supremacy:

> We hated our heads, we hated the shape of our nose. . . we hated the colour of our skin, hated the blood of Africa that was in our veins. And in hating our features and our skin and our blood, why we had to end up hating ourselves. . . it made us feel inferior; it made us feel inadequate; made us feel helpless.[1]

Thus self-hatred implies allowing oneself to be brainwashed into hating oneself and all who look like them while showing unconditional love to those who created that condition and enabled this debilitating malady.

Less surprising, pauperisation of Africans, destruction of their society, confinement to labour reserves meant social death (Magubane 1996). Colonial capitalism ushered a whole new dispensation that was perilous:

> The capitalist society has had its toll of self-alienation; the laws passed to the capitalists' benefit have helped him by providing him with the maximum opportunity for hoarding wealth. The black person has ceased to be just a person who is black, he has become a vital tool in the hoarding race; the acquisitive marathon race. The black person has been reduced to a thing. There is no difference between the machine and the black person. They (black people) have been reduced to a mere racial concept of labour by all the sections of the white community.[2]

South African social formation reflects an evolution of the world capitalist system whereby racial inequality is an integral aspect of imperialism and colonialism: economic, political and cultural domination of Africans by white settlers (Magubane 1979). In fact, colonialism and imperialism give rise to development of racial ideas and class inequality. Long before Afrikaner racism took its own shape, British colonialism was already in place, giving precedence to later social processes. Despite Afrikaner and British

antagonism arising out of the former's socio-economic condition, it nonetheless did not deter both from assuming haughty racist attitudes towards blacks.

Scientific racism, which developed rapidly over the course of the nineteenth century, had by the twentieth century become integral to colonial discourse and policy. Under colonialism political domination required suppression of political rights of the colonised and denial of their citizenship rights (Nolutshungu 1982). For Nolutshungu, colonisers depend on the political for the survival of the colony; colonisers of all shades and classes become collaborative in the domination and exploitation of the colonised and are able, through productive relations, to acquire a privileged position in colonial society. As a result, a distinctive division of labour is defined which is integral in the development of capitalism within this social formation.

By the time of the Enlightenment racist academic disciplines had been well established in the Western academies and had achieved canonical status. In this analysis, physical anthropology is important and its findings played a crucial role in future black/white relations both in South Africa and elsewhere (Magubane 1996). The social sciences were mobilised to explain the intellectual abilities, cultures and behaviours and habits of the natives while arranging humans into "inferior" and "superior" taxonomies (ibid.). At the same time, they argued that whites, for reasons associated with their physical and mental characteristics, were capable of accomplishments that were superior to those of all non-white races (ibid.). The scientific basis therefore justified enslavement and colonialism; the "inferior" races could be subjected to "civilisation" where the "superior" races carried the "white man's burden" (ibid.). Magubane further observes:

> With certain intrinsic qualities that qualified you to be a member of either the master race or the inferior race. When the US and the South Africa discovered what a lovely thing a white skin could be, and what a tragedy black skin was, it became the responsibility of the intelligentsia to give racism an aura of scientific authority and that of politicians to institutionalise this dichotomy (that is, to ensure that the white man should rule and dominate the lower breeds of humanity). (1996: 34)

Since the earliest colonial contact, fascination with the African biological constitution has been inherent in white supremacist project. Special emphasis was laid on the savage, bestial and brute nature of the African, with

connections being made with the ape and other primates. Wintrop Jordan observes:

> The startling human appearance and movements of the 'ape' – a generic term though often used as a synonym for the 'orang outang' – aroused some curious speculations. (1968: 29)

And du Bois (1965: 20) buttresses this point:

> The white race was pictured as "pure" and superior; the black race as dirty, stupid, and inevitably inferior; the yellow race as sharing, in deception and cowardice, much of this colour inferiority; while mixture of races was considered the prime cause of degradation and failure in civilisation. Everything great, everything fine, everything really successful in human culture, was white.

Earlier travel literature showed African savagery; his physical form was described alongside his "manners" and "customs" and "African nature" was grounded on colour, shape, and substance of black physique (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992). With the ascendancy of biological and comparative anatomy the reduction of African society and culture took on more authority and subsequently matured into scientific racism (ibid.). As for missionaries they associated Africa with savagery and suffering so they considered themselves to be on a mission of salvation, healing and redemption. The African body as a physical object became a social object that had to be remade and reconstituted to facilitate them as colonial subjects. Evangelists had a special interests in the corporeal of blacks "whose body was seldom far from their thoughts or deeds" (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992: 41). Grooming, comportment and dress was particularly important in this schema. As a means of domestication they interfered with African cooking, principles of hygiene, sexuality and work, which broke the communalistic lifestyles of Africans and produced "free" individuals to consume and be consumed by European commodities (ibid.). Missionaries sought to create bounded and inward looking individuals, physically enclosed individuals who also were colonial subjects (ibid.: 77).

Mapping the Psychological and Mental Pathologies

Let us take David Goldberg's perception on racism, in its deployed and delegated form, as it applies to postapartheid South Africa:

> Racists are those who explicitly or implicitly ascribe racial characteristics of others that they take to differ from their own and those they take to be like them. These characteristics may be biological or social. The ascriptions do not merely propose racial differences; they assign racial preferences, and they express desired, intended, or actual inclusions or exclusions, entitlements or restrictions. Racist acts based on such beliefs fall under the general principle of discriminatory behaviour against others in virtue of their being deemed members of different racial groups. (1990: 296)

I am reluctant to believe that racism is monolithic or remains the same today as it was yesterday. Rather, while its general principle and what informs its practices, articulations, and discursive patterns are the same, its features take, to draw from Stuart Hall's perception, certain forms of modification and gets transformed by a historical specificity of the contexts and environs in which they become active (Hall 1996). Yet it is germane in our case to talk of racisms: "in the analysis of partial historical forms of racism, we would do well to operate at a more concrete, historicised level of abstraction [that is, not racism in general but racisms]" (Hall 1996: 435). Hall further disputes homogenisation of racism with these words:

> It is often little more than a gestural stance which persuades us to the misleading view that, because racism is everywhere a deeply anti-human and anti-social practice, that therefore it is everywhere the same – either in its forms, its relations to other structures and processes, or it effects. (Hall 1996: 435)

The argument here is that racism and racist practices occur in some, but not all sectors of the social formation, their impact is penetrative but uneven (ibid.). It is true that the scourge of racism has infected black populations, and therefore we need to carefully analyse this discourse.

The most enduring and deleterious effect of colonialism and indeed white anti-black racism is the production of a black who is not a man,[3] implying a subjectivity that is non-human, in other words, one that is trapped in the zone of non-being (Fanon 1967). According to Fanon, the inferiority complex is firstly imbued by economic suppression and

exploitation, but there is a gradual internalisation and "epidermalisation" of inferiority whereby the black subject, a slave of the white man, in turn enslaves himself, for he is a victim of white civilisation. In colonial society the black has, in the white man's eyes, no ontological existence (ibid.). The social structure of colonial society effects barriers and makes it possible for the black subject, because of his skin colour, to develop the inferiority complex. The black subject came to accept inferiority as a result of a history that allowed them to imbibe a value system that was meant to deprive them of their being.[4] The corollary of inferiority is the pathological state of self-hatred which is evidenced in the black-on-black violence and nihilism in black communities. Oppression, denigration, the subhuman condition, exploitation for the benefit of a small elite, dispossession, comfort and security of the few is at the heart of naked racism.[5] The virulent nature of South African racism gave rise to an ethos that saw blacks as culturally, intellectually and morally inferior, a concept that has stayed up to this day.

But we decry the economic motivation of colonial racism and argue that it works *in toto*: socially, culturally and pschologically, which as a complete juggernaut, it reduces, the ontological and phenomenological existence of the black to non-existence.

We realise that explicit racial hierachisation, where the racial "Other" occupies the lowest rungs of social ladder, is no longer in vogue. Rather, such hierarchisation is now implicit. During apartheid, the idea was to foster a colour-caste society with white on top followed by Asian/coloured and black at the bottom. Racist ordering is prominent in the South African history of racial relations. Since the classification is central to scientific methodology and the scientific method, the anthropological ordering into a system of races in terms of rational capability established a hierarchy of humankind and behavioural expectation: "The rational hierarchy was thought to be revealed through its physical-natural-correlates: skin colour, head shape, body size, smell, hair texture, and so on" (Goldberg 1990: 302). The aesthetic and cultural norms since the advent of modernity provided the accepted scientific authority justifying white supremacy associated with truth and knowledge (West 2002). Goldberg (2002: 286) argues that while in pre-modernity there was no conception of differences between humans as racial, "modernity comes increasingly to be defined by and through race." It means there was a shift from a religiously defined to racially defined discourse of humans. Observances – the normative gaze –, taxonomies and classificatory devices and categories in relation to skin colour were crucial for white supremacy. Biologically-based characteristics

(phenotypes) employed for purposes of racial signification are necessary in the social and historical process and a "racist project can be defined as racist if and only if it creates or reproduces structures of domination based on essentialist categories of race" (Omi and Winant 2002: 135). Goldberg also stresses that the moral principle of gradation implies that those deemed to be higher in racial hierarchy are more worthy and human than those on the lower rungs. The dire implication is that it enables practitioners of racism to sharpen their skills in asymmetrical power relations and consider those at the lower as species of animal who could be subjected to dehumanising forms of labour and living conditions appropriate for animals. Goldberg (2002) cautions that while it is partly true that racial terms reveal processes where dark people were turned into coerced labour, any reductive approach of racial categorisation and subjugation should be rejected. The reason is that racial definition and discourse have always followed independent logics related to and intersecting with the economic, political, legal and cultural considerations.

Scholarly works by erstwhile epistemic racists in South Africa were fundamental in shaping native policies, administrative control and the general racist attitudes towards blacks. These ranged from eugenicists and anthropologists who propagated respected views on inferiority of blacks. Anthropology, in particular, established grounds of racial difference. Anthropologists used not only criteria like size and shape, climate and environment but also aesthetic values of beauty which served as a mode to determine one's place in the racial hierarchy (Goldberg 2002). Anthropology and its derivatives like eugenics, pyschometry and so on achieved epistemic orderings and rationalised binaries of domination and subordination in multicultural social formations (Robinson 1994).

Comparing the racial schema of both the USA and South Africa, Magubane (1996) asserts that the classification of human beings with certain intrinsic qualities that qualified one to be a member of either the master race or the inferior race was attractive to the white skinned, at the same time tragically unfortunate for those with a black skin:

> It became the responsibility of the intelligentsia to give racism an aura of scientific authority and that of politicians to institutionalise this dichotomy (that is, to ensure that a white man should rule and dominate the lower breeds of humanity). (Magubane 1996: 34)

The joint partnership between the Dutch and the British implied joint exploitation of blacks where colour was used to divide the black serf and the white overlord:

> Thus racism was built into social, political, and economic fabric as an instrument of super exploitation. Racialism is not natural to man. It is deliberately cultivated to facilitate and intensify exploitation as well as to blur the class divisions between the exploiter and the exploited.[6]

The scrapping of the Jim Crow laws in the early 1990s and the ushering in of a democratic dispensation in 1994 gave an illusion that we now live in a colour-blind society known by the name of "rainbowism". In black communities there is a tacit hierarchisation: to begin with, township-born and -bred blacks regard those from rural areas as lesser; local blacks always feel superior to those blacks from outside the national borders. The principle of hierarchisation inherent in racial classification is still alive in today's racial relations and continues to furnish grounds for negative stereotypes and attitudes in black communities. We can confidently say that all of these have been borrowed from white anti-black racism. This historical psychological devastation is succinctly captured in these words, "the black man always protests against inferiority he feels and since he has historically been treated as an inferior, he attempts to react with a superiority complex" and "compares himself not to the white man, the father, the boss, God, but to his own counterpart under the patronage of the white man" (Fanon 2008: 188, 190). And Fanon affirms this point, "Let us have the courage to say: it is the racist who creates the inferiorized" (2008: 73). Thus the black oppressed, given an ounce of an opportunity, assumes the master's attitude, wants to be like the master and exhibits the same attitude towards his own people. Similarly, Cabral (1973) links the cultural alienation posed by colonialism to assumption by the colonised of the coloniser's mentality who see themselves as culturally superior to their people. For Isaac Bangani Tabata, unity is a necessity not only in attaining freedom but in challenging the divide and rule tactics of colonialism:

> It eminently suits the master to foster these artificial differences and supposed superiorities. The curious thing is that he has found no more willing assistants in the game of divide and rule than the slaves themselves, who guard the rigid

> barriers with an almost religious zeal. The master sets the fashion in ideas and attitudes. He is supercilious towards his "inferiors" and the slave in turn looks down his nose at those whom he considers to be his inferiors. . . he is blind to thing which binds all the groups together – a common misery, humiliation, destitution. In a word, common slavery. But it is strange only if we fail to realise the crushing power of that most insidious and most paralysing intellectual disease – slave mentality. (1974: 3)

According to Biko (1987), the value system inherent in Christianity, missionary education and Anglo-Boer culture taught the black subject to be submissive to the white man. The education system is colonialism's surest psychological tool. It leads, simultaneously, to both deculturation and enculturation (Magubane 1979). The alienating effect of education which induces an inferiority complex in blacks reinforces their inadequacy when faced with the white man in white spaces (ibid.). Although Fanon has observed that incidences of inferiority are high and rampant among educated blacks, the *evolues*, it seems the epidemic runs through all black subjectivities that have had colonial contact including illiterate blacks. The irony of the "epidermalization" of that inferiority means, as Fanon (1967) has perceptibly observed, the black behaves differently in the presence of a white man than with a black man and this is rooted in gradation of scientific racism and evolutionary science. Such a black is to a white man a "good nigger" who always acquiesces, shows deference and unquestioningly follows orders and commands and his signature is "yes boss/baas." For Marcus Garvey these blacks are the "Uncle Tom Negroes", "a yes boss negro", "a hoardi massa Negro", "a yes massa Charlie Negro" (cited in Martin 1999: 231).This kind of a black is, according to Fanon, one who "walks behind the quartermaster, trembling at the white man's slightest fit of anger but is killed in the end" (2008: 18). If the white man speaks to the black man or woman he does as if he is speaking to a child. Ironically, the same black who cows before the white man, replicates the very same behaviour and attitude to a black whom they think is lesser or inferior to them. Sometimes this black, among his own people, might be normal but "at first white gaze, he feels the weight of his melanin" (Fanon 2008: 128). In fact, he is a phobogenic object that provokes anxiety. He is evaluated in the lens of whiteness which can only give him self-esteem and status.

Since colonial anti-black racism engenders an irredeemable inferiority complex, the black man strives to whiten himself. This is not surprising: manhood equals, and can only be explained in, whiteness. In other words,

the whiter or closer to it one becomes the nearer they are to being a true human being, to achieve status and self-esteem:

> Out of the blackest part of my soul... surges up the desire to be suddenly white. I want to be recognised not as black but as white. (Fanon 2008: 45)

The black subject is overcome by the desire for whiteness because it is only by being white that one can become a full being. The self-alienation and self-abnegation which is cultivated by a racist society and conditions and factors external to him leads to the black equating all things good with white (Biko 1987). The nature of exploitation and oppression in the South African social formation required constituting the African as species of animal. For Njabulo Ndebele:

> The whole socio-political framework in South Africa is based on the preservation of the superior-inferior relationship between white and black, a relationship essential for the maintenance of white domination.[7]

One feels pity rather than anger towards them: they live and have lived in a racist society that promotes these kinds of inferiority complex feelings, a society that draws strength and inspiration by maintaining that complex, that proclaims superiority of one race over another and creates difficulties for him that he finds himself in a neurotic situation (Fanon 2008: 80). The effects and tentacles of whiteness, its ethos and its invisible norm are wide, far-reaching and enduring. Some black people living in townships have in practice had little actual physical contact with whites. On this point Fanon affirms:

> Very often the black man who becomes abnormal has never come into contact with whites. Has some former experience been repressed in his unconscious? Has the young black child seen his father beaten or lynched by the white man? Has there been a real traumatism? To all these questions our answer is no. (2008: 124)

For Fanon, the answer is found in collective catharsis.

Residues of white supremacy can be seen in colourism. Again, this is unsurprising: societies that have been structured along racial lines where fair skin has always been privileged means that those with darker skin hue are always seen as undesirable. Many immigrants are always defined by

phenotypical appearances (that is, they are seen as of darker hue) thus a motivation of certain prejudices. Of course white supremacy works on the admiration and appreciation of light skin. Malcolm X describes this well:

> We have thought a lot about why I actually believe that as anti-white as my father was, he was subconsciously so afflicted with the white man's brainwashing of Negroes that he inclined to favour light ones, and I was his lightest child. Most Negro parents in these days would almost instinctively treat any lighter children better than they did the darker ones. It came directly from the slavery tradition that the "mulatto", because he was visibly nearer to white, was therefore "better". (1965[2007: 83])

Colourism and critique of black features by other blacks is an attempt by those blacks to deal with their own inferiority by assuming haughty superiority. Societal assessments of human value, a residue of white construction of the black subject, are done through phenotypical features (Blay 2011). Approximation of the white ideal means one gains access to the human and the social status associated with whiteness:

> Within the context of global white supremacy, skin colour communicates one's position to and within the dominant power structure. Given this reality, many people, namely those subjected to white domination, colonisation, and enslavement have historically internalised projected notions that the basis of their inferior condition is their skin colour. (Blay 2011: 1)

These notions have always been challenged, especially by those of a black radical bent. Consider Biko's statement during the BPC-SASO Trial where he explained the essence of the slogan "Black is Beautiful", that it was an attempt to reach humanity and for one to be proud as a human being:

> It is the connotations on the way women prepare themselves for viewing by society. In other words the way they dream, the way they make up and so on, which tends to be a negation of their true state and in a sense running away from their colour; they use lightening creams, they use straightening devices for their hair and so on. They sort of believe I think that their natural state which is a black is not synonymous with beauty and beauty can only be approximated by them if the skin is made as light as possible and the lips are made as red as possible, and their nails are made as pink as possible and so on. so in a sense the term "Black is Beautiful" challenges exactly that belief which makes someone negate himself.

White supremacy, its objectification and reification through the epidermal racial gaze is fundamental to racist relations. The result of the black body's objectification is that the subject is regarded as a non-being. The reality of the ontological and lived experience of being black means "for not only must the black man be black; he must be black in relation to the white man" and Fanon declares that a black man is a victim of objectification: "I am over determined from outside. I am a slave not to the idea others have of me, but to my appearance" (2008: 90, 95). Black corporeality, its relation to worlds where it is subjected to the white gaze, implies the black body becomes a curse: the body schema is attacked severally in ways multitudinal and through the "white gaze he feels the weight of his melanin" (Fanon 2008: 128). Apart from being a curse, the black body is also an anathema hence proliferation of laboratories designed to produce chemicals for "denigrefication" so that the black could "whiten himself and thus throw off the burden of that corporeal malediction" (Fanon 1990: 109).

The epidermal racial schema also includes the social construction of the black in racist terms: as animal, as beastly, as ugly, wicked and so on (see also Magubane 2007). As a result, neurotic fear of whites by the black is induced, and a closer examination of the matter reveals there is actually nothing they are afraid of. The black subject inhabits a world of inhibition and constraint, rejection and dejection. Indeed white supremacy inculcates in the black a psyche in which they accept the status quo of white supremacy and black inferiority as normal.[8]

The impulse of blacks to mete out violence and death on each other is a colonial aberration. Biko (2004: 82) writes:

> One need not try to establish the truth of the claim that black people in South Africa have to struggle for survival. It presents itself in ever so many facets of our lives. Township life alone makes it a miracle for anyone to live up to adulthood. There we see a situation of absolute want in which black will kill black to be able to survive. This is the basis of vandalism, murder, rape and plunders that goes on while the real sources of evil-white society-are sun tanning on exclusive beaches or relaxing in their bourgeois homes.

Biko adds:

> This refers to the degree of violence that one gets in townships, which tends to introduce a certain measure of uncertainty about what tomorrow will bring. When you are in a township it is dangerous to cross often from one street to

> the next... They meet up with these problems; rape and murder are very common aspects of our life in the townships. (2004: 121)

These are the effects of white "civilisation," of colonial excesses and injustices which are contrary to the harmonies of basic African cultural precepts:

> They were communal societies, never societies of the many for the few. They were societies that were not only ante-capitalist, as has been said, but also anti-capitalist. They were democratic societies, always. They were cooperative societies, fraternal societies. I make a systematic defence of the societies destroyed by imperialism. (Cesaire 1972 [2000: 44])

But what happens in black communities is alien to long-cherished African beliefs. For Biko (1987) African culture's most important aspect is its human centredness, group intimacy and an unwavering emphasis on man. Biko declares:

> We are not a suspicious race. We believe in the inherent goodness of man. People are a community of brothers and sisters who work together to solve their problems. Therefore there is no room for individualism which marks the capitalist ethos where people use one another to progress. (Biko 1987: 46)

Although contact with whiteness can be the reason for inferiority, what about those blacks who have not in their lives been closer to whiteness? Fanon's answer is no. The answer is to be found in collective catharsis because black experience is a collective pain. It is this pain that still festers in South African black communities. It is expressed, however, through certain morbidities, nihilism, violence, intra-black tensions and death.

Conclusion

While it is easy to repudiate scientific notions of inferiority and prove that the black man is equal to white, the task is to extricate the black man from complexities engendered by the colonial situation (Fanon 1967). For Fanon, if one is detected or diagnosed to be suffering from inferiority complex, measures have to be taken to safeguard and liberate them from this unconscious desire. As a psychoanalyst Fanon endeavours to help this patient with this strange disease, "consciousnize" his unconscious so that

they should "no longer be tempted by hallucinatory lactification" (2008: 80). Thus, the black man should not be faced with the dilemma "whiten or perish" but must be aware of his existential position. This includes a perceptive identification of his problems and the causer, who is not someone next to, or looks like them but the system, its agents and its representatives. Biko (1987) has written that blacks have to rid themselves of the shackles binding their minds; the need for self-appraisal and digging up the reasons which cause their self-abnegation and negation.

Once we acknowledge that a xenophobe is a colonised being, this therefore means the necessity for decolonising the mind is of the utmost importance, an emergency and an urgent need.

Notes

1. George Breitman, ed. 1965." Malcolm X Speaks: Selected Speeches and Statements," p. 169. New York: Pathfinder Press.
2. Njabulo Ndebele, "Black Development," paper presented at the symposium on CREATIVITY AND BLACK DEVELOPMENT, organized by SASO, 1972.
3. I am aware of the gendered sense given white supremacist appellations. In these terms manhood is synonymous with human hood.
4. Temba Sono, "Black Consciousness and its Significance and Role in the Life of the Community," n.d.
5. Ibid.
6. I.B. Tabata, "Industrial Unrest in South Africa," n.d.
7. Njabulo Ndebele, "Black Development," paper presented at the symposium on CREATIVITY AND BLACK DEVELOPMENT, organized by SASO, 1972.
8. "The State of the Nation," address by R.M. Sobukwe on National Heroes Day, 2 August 1959.

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CHAPTER 4

The Interface Between Race, Nation, Nationalism, and Ethnicism

Abstract This chapter argues that apartheid notions of ethnicity, race, and nation have endured into the postapartheid. These ideas are steeped in the country history of segregation, discrimination and subordination, from the policies of Cecil John Rhodes to their perfection by apartheid ideologues. Given that ethnicity and nationalism are usually related concepts, most nationalisms are ethnic in character, providing an opportunity to draw boundaries in relation to outsiders. In black communities, immigrants are indicted for exacerbating crime, taking jobs and women and utilising national resources meant for South Africans. This is compounded by lack of service delivery and protests around these issues, though genuine, are usually infected with anti-immigrant sentiments. Usually, there is a demarcation of "us" and "them" which verges on differences in national identity and social origin.

Keywords Apartheid • Segregation • Ethnicity • Nationalism • Identity

In this chapter, I argue that apartheid notions of ethnicity, race, and nation have endured into the postapartheid. These ideas are steeped in the country history of segregation, discrimination and subordination, from the policies of Cecil John Rhodes to their perfection by apartheid ideologues. No Sizwe (1979) traces the historiography of the idea of the nation in South Africa, not as a merely ideological phenomenon but with regard to its relation to

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economic and political considerations. J.B.M. Hertzog, who later became the country's prime minister, wrote, "ever since 1903 I have advocated segregation as the only permanent solution of the (native) question."[1] The South African Native Affairs Commission (SANAC) during 1903–5 following the Anglo-Boer War, under Sir Godfrey Lagden set conditions for segregation: land to belong to whites; blacks to be a source of labour; differentials in education and white political representation and control. In general, the SANAC contained the rubric of white supremacy. And at the Treaty of Vereeniging the general agreement among the warring Afrikaners and British was the political and economic subjection of Africans. After the 1910 Union of South Africa blacks were synonymous with labour which was unskilled/semi-skilled while whites were regarded as a source of skilled labour, enterprise and capital (No Sizwe 1979). The explanation was that whites were of superior civilisation and with their European heritage they were destined to rule and on this point both the English and Afrikaners found common agreement (ibid.). In 1913, J.W. Sauer, who was the minister of Native Affairs and is credited with passing the 1913 Natives Land Act, stated that "the bulk of the two races, the Europeans and Natives, should live in separate areas."[2] Jan Smuts, who was a member of the Imperial War Cabinet, delivered a speech called "White Man's Task" at a dinner hosted by Lord Selborne in London in 1917. He remarked that whites and blacks couldn't be governed under the same institutions and legislation because "they are different not only in colour but in mind and in political capacity and their political institutions should be different." Smuts also stressed the character of whiteness of the nation in the following passage:

> The whole meaning of the union in South Africa is this: we are going to create a nation – nation which will be of a composite character, including Dutch, German, English and Jew, and whatever white nationality seeks refuge in this land – all can combine. All will be welcome.[3]

The document "Policy of Apartheid, September 3 1948" outlines that: (a) natives shouldn't be allowed to own land among white people; (b) there should be a system of residential segregation; and (c) in the workplace, Europeans and non-Europeans should not work among one another and certain jobs should be reserved for Europeans. It adds:

> Natives from the country districts and the reserves will in future be allowed to enter the white towns and villages only as temporary workers, and on

> termination of their service contracts they will regularly have to go back to their homes... South Africa is a white man's country and he must remain the master here. In the reserves we are prepared to allow the natives to be masters, we are not masters there. But within the European areas, we the white people in South Africa, are and shall remain the masters.

The compartmentalisation of black Africans into nations and nationalities was merely an apartheid ploy to divide and rule and promote sectarianism and tribalism which still haunts contemporary society. Following military conquest, the breaking of ethnic bonds and the erosion of the power of chiefs who were rallying points of resistance, colonisers faced the dilemma of how to govern Africans, so "policemen-chiefs" were created under an atmosphere of surveillance (Tabata 1952 [1990]). The transition to majority rule in 1994 left intact the structures of indirect rule and with Native Authorities in charge, Mamdani (1996) argues that it is a reproduction of one legacy of apartheid in a non-racial form. Immediately after coming to power, the Nationalist Party (NP) government passed a number of discriminatory legislation.[4] The Population Registration Act of 1950, in particular, classified the South African population into four racial groups. Blacks were defined as "any person who is, or is generally accepted as a member of any aboriginal race or tribe" (Zegeye 2001: 6). In 1951, the NP regime passed the Bantu Authorities Act which abolished the Native Representative Council (NRC) and set up a hierarchical system of tribal authorities composed of government-approved chiefs and advisers. The Bantu Authorities Act was designed to "give the Bantu people the opportunity for enlightened administration of their own affairs in accordance with their own heritage and institutions, adapted to modern conditions." But the policy of "developing along our own lines "only meant that African people continued to be without rights, land, and vote, harassed by pass laws, segregation and the segregated institutions created for a child-race were instruments for their own domination" (Tabata 1952 [1990: 10]).

In 1955 the Transkei central representative body, the Bunga, accepted the Bantu Authorities system, "designed by Pretoria to bolster the conservative position of government paid chiefs" (Karis and Gerhart 1997: 222). Apartheid was just like British indirect rule elsewhere, using Native Authorities to soften racial antagonisms and the ranks of the ruled were fractured along ethnic and rural—urban lines and the British pioneered this model (Mamdani 1996). According to Mamdani apartheid was an upgrading of indirect rule and the racial was shifted into the ethnic whom the NP

borrowed from colonial systems elsewhere; so taking cue from British imperialism "framers of apartheid were the last, not the first, and certainly not only the only ones" (ibid.: 96). Consequently, tribalism was entrenched.

In January 1959 apartheid architect Hendrik Verwoerd announced that it was time for "natives" to be moved towards self-governance in their own areas: the Bantustans. which were provided under the Promotion of Bantu Self-Government Act of 1959[5] (which was, in turn, an extension of the Bantu Authorities Act). The Act recognised eight Bantu "national units", based on ethnicity in which tribal representatives (ambassadors) would be links between a national unit and its members working in urban areas (Karis and Gerhart 1997). The policy of homelands was aimed to reinforce the divisive tribal identities and make them the basis for a system of patronage which could be easily manipulated by the government (ibid.). In order to stabilise and entrench the rule of a racial minority it was necessary to compartmentalise the African majority into tribes controlled within a tribal mode of government and so "by defining every native as a Bantu belonging to a particular tribe, subject to regulation under its own customary law, it would be possible to divide natives into a number of tribes, each a minority on its own, and thereby contain all within the parameters of separate tribal institutions" (Mamdani 1996: 96). The overarching philosophy behind this development was "despotic centralism" (ibid.) and in any case colonial states depended on the employ of various forms of coercion, violence – symbolic or physical – surveillance, discipline and the production of consent (Comaroff 2001). In the Bantustans, the government offered jobs or cash to Africans who performed useful roles in the coercive state apparatus and this spread after 1961. In 1970, the Citizenship Act was passed and made blacks non-citizens; instead they were pushed to areas designated for them. Like in the homelands, the government intended to create an overt apparatus of control in urban areas using black surrogates to minimise potential opposition. After the NP came into power the older township Advisory Boards[6] created in 1922 were gradually replaced by elected Urban Bantu Councils (UBC) under African chairmen.[7] The first UBC in the country resumed work on 1 September 1961 in the Johannesburg township of Daveyton. Its task was the removal of people not lawfully resident in area; regulation of entry into an area, maintenance of good order, control and management of community guard and management and control of the "Bantu Town."[8] In Soweto, the Soweto Advisory Board was replaced by the UBC in 1968, elected on an ethnic basis.

In the aftermath of the proclamation of the South Africa republic in 1961, the NP philosophy geared towards a black and a white nation, with the former having to consist of eight "Bantu" ethnically based national units.[9] In fact after the creation of the white republic of South Africa in 1961 the main focus was the white nation and the black nation(s). This was in sync with apartheid cultural relativism, which promoted the idea of *ethnos* to mask insidious social engineering based on race. In fact, apartheid ideologues and practitioners were thoroughbred race denialists who dishonestly put culture and ethnicity on higher pedestal.

What ethnicity exactly or really means cannot guarantee a conclusive agreement: whether it can determine social activity, or whether its roots lie in primordial consciousness or if it is a reaction to particular historical phenomena and if it is related to class, race and nationalism (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992). Contrary to the Western view that ethnicity has its genesis in primordialism; it can be traced to historical contexts which are both structural and cultural in nature (ibid.). Although collective social self-identity is based on the communal and prescribed by "us" and "them", "ourselves" and "others" which gets inscribed in culture, these are rooted in historical circumstances and changes in the economic and political processes (ibid.). The Comaroffs contend that despite the fact that relations and oppositional identities may be primordial it is not the substance of those identities. It is noted that ethnicity is invented by colonialism just as nations are (Ranger 1996). Similarly, John Comaroff (2001) notes that colonial cartography invented "tribes" and aboriginal "peoples," sometimes ascribing them a collective identity. It also labelled them, classified them linguistically, and placed them in bounded territories with a political authority. This was greatly aided by ethnological surveys that documented African ways of life (ibid.). The European epistemology with its technologies of the body and mind created new signs and practices amongst the colonised and was efficacious in colonising the consciousness of colonial subjects (ibid.). John Comaroff adds:

> Having had their cultures labelled, objectified, and dehistoricised – and differences primordialised – ethnic subjects found themselves all alike depicted as benighted, anachronistic antimoderns. They were said to be by the primal sovereignty of their customs and customary rulers – under conditions that encouraged them to cling unquestioningly, and in the face of all reason, to their ancestral traditions and taboos. (2001: 50)

From the 1870s onwards, the European scramble for Africa coincided with the European invention of tradition in Africa, including ecclesiastic, education, military, republican and monarchical as the colonial nation-state took shape (Ranger 1983). In Africa, they took a different form. In their colonies Europeans invented traditions to define and justify their roles and to provide models of subservience where Africans were offered models of correct "behaviour" and comportment. It was a matter of command and control. The idea was to modernise African thought and conduct where ultimately Africans would become members of the elite in colonial Africa in a neo-traditional context of subordination. Africans of all classes ended up appropriating invented traditions which were a source of prestige:

> The invented traditions of African societies – whether invented by Europeans or by Africans themselves in response – distorted the past but became in themselves realities through which a good deal of colonial encounter was experienced. (ibid.: 212)

The enduring effect of European invented traditions and colonial codification was the belief that African age-old customs had to be respected; as were the so-called customary law; customary land rights; customary political structure; and so on. This included the creation of tribes following the racial thinking being advanced in Germany. Colonial administrators believed that every African belonged to a tribe in much the same way as every European belonged to a nation. Tribes were seen as cultural units possessing a common language, a single social system, and an established common law based on kinship and hereditary traits (Illife cited in Ranger 1983).

For Anthony Smith (2009), by contrast, ethnosymbolists counter the claim that traditions are invented and argue that those cultural symbolic elements that have prior resonance among populations will furnish the content of the nation's political culture. Even though it can be admitted that nations emerged through modernity, there is still need to explore the cultural and ethnic antecedents if we are to explain the distinctive cultural features and geocultural place it occupies in relation to other communities.

Smith (2007) uses the term *ethnie* to refer to those ethnic communities which may be defined as populations with shared ancestral myths, histories, cultures, and also having an association with a specific territory and a sense of solidarity that explains their sense of common origins and relatedness in addition to cultural markers and shared memories. Ethnic consciousness which entails formulation of collective identities, meanings, moral

injunctions and symbolic markers demarcating disparate social groups implies difference is effectively implemented. Crucial in the analysis of ethnicity, nation and nationalism is deployment of collective symbols, memory, myths, language, customs, value systems, ritual and tradition. This helps in fostering cohesion, common consciousness, the sharpening of social boundaries, and demarcation of differences with other communities. As for symbols, "they are particularly important in the rites and ceremonies of public culture, which help to create and sustain communal bonds and a sense of national identity" (Smith 2009: 25). In any case, the idea of ethnicity become dominated by elites who are adept at using symbols, myths and values which strike a chord with the majority of a heterogeneous population and the influence is therefore reciprocal.

In Weberian terms, ethnic groups are those human groups that entertain a subjective belief in their common descent because of similarities of physical type or of customs or both or because of memories as a result of colonisation or migration (Weber 1922/1968). For Weber, there are culturally determined differences where identity is a source of self-definition, affiliation and consciousness which provides for group collectivism and intergroup relations. Anthropologically, ethnicity refers to aspects of relationships between groups which consider themselves, and are regarded by others as culturally distinctive from members of other groups; have common origin; have ideas encouraging endogamy and with their identity being characterised by metaphoric or fictive kinship (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992; Hylland Eriksen 2002). It's not biological differences alone that constitutes an ethnic group but also common customs. Again, it's not only physical or cultural characteristics but also subjective perceptions of these by those who share them or who react against them. For Weber, shared ethnicity leads to group formation and ethnic groups have memories of a common past, attachment or clearly demarcated territory and these survive for a long time in the consciousness of people. Since ethnicity assumes many forms and tends to stress a common descent among their members, the distinction between race and ethnicity becomes a problematic one (Hylland Eriksen 2002). Although ethnicity is commonly rejected by Marxists as "false consciousness", it remains very much alive to ignore, in South Africa and elsewhere. In South Africa, the liberation movement decried ethnicity because ethnic particularisms were used by the apartheid regime as an intellectual and political project, a tool for colonisation, political division and exploitation (Dubow 1994). Under apartheid, ethnicity came to mean population groups, tribe, nation, *volk* and race. At the same

time, culture had connotations of difference. From the 1920s onwards, the anthropological cultural relativism was employed especially by the *volkekundiges* and adherents of Abraham Kuyper and Fichte's ideas of diversity and sovereignty of separate spheres and was used to shape government policy and administration. They crafted the nation in spiritual terms, that is, love for a common fatherland, common racial descent, common culture and common political aspirations. For the German philosopher Fichte, the essence of the nation and its interior frontiers was purity; the community was prone to penetration on its interior and exterior borders and for this reason it had to be preserved. Primordial notions of biological descent, cultural identity and distinctiveness was internalised in the post-1948 period. In the postapartheid, the ruling dispensation and its commitment to universalism and common citizenship found it hard to adjust to multiple identities (Dubow 1994). In fact, back in 1983 a conference on Ethnicity and Tribalism in Southern Africa held at the University of Virginia noted that tribalism and ethnicity in the postcolonial Africa was not disappearing but instead was intensifying, articulated not only by leaders but also from the bottom up. Smith (2009) critiques modernists and perennialists for dismissing the role of ethnicity and underplaying its role in the formation of nations. For Smith, ethnic ties and networks are important in the rise and persistence of nations. He (2009: 29) defines a nation as a "named and self-defining human community whose members cultivate shared memories, symbols, myths, traditions and values, inhabit and are attached to historic territories or 'homelands', created and disseminate a distinctive public culture, and observe shared customs and standardised laws." This definition overlaps with that of *ethnie*, thus showing a close relationship between ethnic communities and nations. Nations are historical communities embedded in specific historical and geographic contexts. This does not mean, however, reifying or essentialising nations. Rather, they are forms of community and movement where members see them as vehicles to further their own interests and visions and as intimate bonds of social and cultural solidarities (ibid.: 14). Ultimately, the aforesaid symbols gel the populations together and an ultimate sacrifice to the nation is required from each and every member.

Given that ethnicity and nationalism are usually related concepts, the majority of nationalisms are ethnic in character, granting the chance to draw boundaries in relation to outsiders, and also racism and nationalism are mostly interlinked, with the former deriving from the latter (Anderson 1983). Commonly, racism usually manifests itself within national

boundaries. Ideologies like racism, nationalism, sexism and ethnicism verge on each other and they are connected and overlap. Studies of ethnicity at the local community level and studies of nationalism at the state level stress that ethnic or national identities are constructions. As an imagined political community, members of the nation can only conjure up images of belonging (Anderson 1983). Like other ethnic identities, national identities are constituted in relation to "others". For Gellner (1964), nationalism is not awakening of nations to self-consciousness, it invents nations where they do not exist. Here the idea of the nation and its corollary, nationalism is instructive. Nationalism cultivates particular discrete symbols, the fetishes of an autochthonous national character which must be preserved from external violation (Balibar 1990). Of course, there is a connection between racism and nationalism (it is not our concern here at what juncture it does so) where certain qualities must exclusively belong to nationals. Thus, there is a concern with purity of the nation so as to maintain a true national identity. According to Balibar, this particular nation must therefore isolate the "exogenous", "interbred", "cosmopolitan" elements within and then eliminate and expel them. The result is racialization of populations and social groups whose collective features are deemed impure. Matters related with identity are seen in claims to autochthony where there are "ineffable interests and connections, at once material and moral, that flow from 'native' rootedness, and special rights, in a place of birth" (Comaroff and Comaroff 2001: 635). Nationhood is reimagined by citizens of the nation-state as they reluctantly embrace difference and "multiculturalism", the "rainbow nation", and terms of similar resonance which provide an argot of accommodation even amidst bitter contestation (ibid.). At the same time, there is a heightened concern with borders. Conditions resulting from global machinations and neoliberal capitalism, governments open up to capital and business, pass regulations in order to attract investment but also seek to shut out migrants considered "aliens" and "undesirable." Nonetheless the latter find their way into the nation-state in spite of heavy militarised borders and razor-wires erected; being undocumented their labour is exploited at the lowest and cheapest terms possible.

The nation is the sociohistorical context within which culture is embedded, it emphasises emotional investment of the individual in the elements of their culture, which is a key factor exploited by nationalism (Guibernau 1996). The power of nationalism stems from its capacity to create a common identity among group members. Identity's defining criteria is continuity over time and differentiation from others, which is the basis of national

identity. Common culture allows members to create bonds of solidarity and imagine themselves as distinct and separate from others who are seen as strangers and potential "enemies". Conversely, race is a way of naming the difference between members of a particular collective and the "Other" or the "alien". It establishes a boundary between those who share certain biological or physiognomic characteristics and cultural make-up. Racist practices are inherently steeped in power which is exercised in the dual practices of naming and evaluating the "Other". When a group imposes a worldview that consists of racist elements, society becomes automatically divided between minority and majority groups (Spoonley 1988). Minority groups according to Spoonley are not necessarily numerically smaller but are those groups that face prejudice and unequal treatment because they are seen as inferior in some way. Modernity, modernisation and the establishment of the nation-state, and spread of capitalism have created situations of people known as ethnic minorities and have led to new forms of identity and ethnicity, through local economic and cultural change and migration (Hylland Eriksen 2002). The majority groups have privileged access to state apparatus and the policies it adopts exacerbates lead to disadvantages based on race, ethnicity, nationality and social origin. The majority groups also have the power to determine the status of minorities and in times of crises the minorities receive harsher treatment and are blamed for social ills and vices affecting society. In black communities, immigrants are indicted for exacerbating crime, taking jobs and women and utilising national resources meant for South Africans. This is compounded by the lack of service delivery and protests on these issues, although they come from genuine grievances, are usually infected with anti-immigrant sentiments.

Although nationalism and racism exhibit fundamental differences and oppositions, formulations of nationalism are closely related to racism. Nationalism, by using the terms "us" and "them", constructs not only national identity but also a racial identity, based on national, cultural or phenotypical differences. The "Other", then, is someone potentially inferior. The intersection between nationalism as propagated by the state; micro-level nationalism at the community and how the immigrant is brought to racial subjectivity is the subject matter below.

The pattern of racisms or even nationalism at a community level cannot be studied or analysed in isolation. It is intrinsically linked to the overarching perpetration of a nationalist agenda, anti-immigrant policies and sentiments and harassment by state agents, who include the police, the Department of Home Affairs and other state apparatus. Formulation of

policies by the state inhibits immigrant access to employment, health services and infringe upon their fundamental human rights. State bureaucracy and hegemony is used conterminously with its apparatus to separate populations and to label the "Other". The "Other" is barred from "belonging" through denial of legal status, documentation, police harassment and arbitrary arrest, lack of protection in courts and detention at Lindela Repatriation Centre.[10] At this point, I will briefly look at the state's immigration policy and how it is part of the state's anti-immigrant attitude. The South African immigration policy is rooted in the country's racist history. It is, and always has been, hostile to "foreigners" and current intra-black racism is a continuation of the historical narrative of resistance to "foreign" nations (Leitzes 2009). Between 1913 and 2002, immigrants were seen as contaminating national identity. The 1913 Immigration Act and the 1937 Aliens Act formed a foundation for all subsequent South African immigration legislation until 2002. Though amended, the effects of this legislation have remained in place. The Immigration Act (2002) and its amendment (2004), although not explicitly racially exclusionary, exhibit the linkage between state policy and citizens' attitudes towards immigrants.

One can draw the conclusion that the racial logic that emanates from the top is like drops of water from a gourd suspended upon a tree seeping down, into the community and not only permeating into locals' approach to non-nationals, but also shape their views. This is because the state is not autonomous of society and is actually in constant interaction with it: regulating, ordering and organising. Here I will use Hall's (1982) treatise of the state. For Hall, the state constitutes society and is constituted by it. There exists sometimes a complex interrelationship and interdependency. There is a general willingness of the population to consent to, conform to and support the state's rule, which in turn affects the public attitude. There is the also concept of power: administering society involves policing it. The state's relation to society is hierarchical and those in higher echelons set the rules of the game for those at the bottom. This also entails state's use of force to enforce conformity to its rules, laws and regulations. Hall argues that although the state may be abstract, its power acquires concrete, real and social organisational form which includes the use of resources through a set of practices contained in the state's apparatuses. These apparatuses acquire characteristics of their own and become power bases for distinct interests.

Identification processes done by the police on immigrants are usually "humiliating" and "dehumanising" and the current state policies "smack of apartheid rule" (see Valji 2003). In 2009 one Dludlu, a South African

national, wrote about his harassment by immigration officials who suspected he was not national. This was mainly based on his phenotypical features (see the *Sunday Times Review*, 1 November 2009).

Detection, stopping, searching and detention of immigrants by police, often happens in full view of the community. Consequently, the community acquires a misconception of immigrants and it augments the idea that the latter are "illegal" and have no right to belong to both the community and the country. The manner, in which these operations occur, criminalises immigrants. The community, in turn, views them as such. This phenomenon is not a new characteristic of the post-1994. The state's attitudes towards those perceived as "aliens" have deeper historical roots which can be traced to the apartheid era. During that time black South Africans were seen as "surplus people" and temporary sojourners to the city and the idea of the "alien" was used to deny them citizenship, political and economic rights. That system has apparently been an antecedent to contemporary sociopolitical relations between the state and communities' views on the one perceived to be an outsider. The criminalisation of immigrants and the fact that they don't have "passes" fuels nationalist and anti-immigrant sentiments in black communities. OneA contradiction, however, is that many South Africans do not have the green ID book,[11] because of a variety of reasons, including incompetence at the Home Affairs Ministry. Nonetheless, non-documented immigrants are still seen in a negative light. They are regarded as not "belonging", as being *aliens*, and in this instance citizenship and the whole notion of what it means to be South African are determined by one's possession of the green ID document.

A striking, if not astounding fact is that most community members still use the apartheid lexicon *pass* in referring to the identity document. The apartheid state enacted the pass laws under the Reservation of Separate Amenities Act of 1953 and blacks were excluded from living or working in white areas unless they had a pass, nicknamed *dompas* by Africans (dumb pass in Afrikaans). Blacks who had no pass faced immediate detention, summary trial and deportation to their "homeland". The pass controlled every aspect of African people's lives: access to housing, work and movement. The pass was the most powerful tool and weapon for white domination over blacks. Similarities in the social life of the apartheid pass and the postapartheid identity book are very coincidental. The supposition is that identity and documentation in contemporary South African society are a mere reinvention and repetition of history. This subject is explored further in the next chapter.

Conclusion

Indeed, apartheid and colonialism engendered a closed, bounded mentality, a South African exceptionalism that said South Africa is not part of the African whole; that all those who come from outside national borders are inferior and different. Oftentimes, we hear people, including activists, say "those from Africa" referring to people from outside the borders. The boundaries that this thought fostered are not merely physical, but also mental and psychological. Thus, any attempts to undo the effects mental colonisation have to start by breaking the mental boundaries or what Marcus Garvey (1974) says, "Breaking the kinks binding our minds." Biko (1987) has written that blacks have to rid themselves of shackles binding their minds; the need for self-appraisal and revealing the reasons which cause their self-abnegation and negation. The challenge of intra-black racism in contemporary South Africa demands a return to the Pan-African ethos. We should acknowledge that the length and breadth of the continent is one, its people are one with a shared historical experience and destiny. We should, in this day and age, refuse to acknowledge colonially imposed borders; we should dismantle mental borders governing our minds and we should break down physical borders restricting and inhibiting our movement, our capacities, our possibilities and our imaginations.

Notes

1. Cited in AN Pelzer (ed), "Verwoerd Speaks. Speeches 1948–1966." Johannesburg: APB Publishers.
2. JW Sauer speaking in the House of Assembly, *Debates, House of Assembly 1913.*
3. Cited in No Sizwe (1979: 27), *One Azania, One Nation. The National Question in South Africa*. London: Zed Books.
4. Among the legislation introduced was the Natives (Urban Areas) Consolidation Act (1945) which tightened control of Africans, regulation of contracts, regulation of influx and conditions of residence, prohibition of African acquisition of land except from other Africans; Population Registration Act (1949) to control access to and flow of labour, it also defined and classified racial categories; the Native Abolition of Passes and Coordination Act (1949) which mandated Africans to carry a reference book, establishment of labour bureaus to direct Africans to white employment; the Group Areas Act (1950) which promulgated residential segregation and forced sale of property by one designated racial group to another on deflated or inflated

rates and this created conditions of poverty and overcrowding; the Urban Areas Act (1952) which subjected urban areas to influx control.

5. The Act also removed representatives of African in parliament, a provision of 1936.
6. These were created by the Stallard Commission tasked in solving the urban migration of Africans.
7. This was provided for by the Urban Bantu Councils Act of 1961 with the object of "integrating the urban Bantu into the systems of government of their homelands."
8. "First Urban Bantu Council for Daveyton – Advisory Board Assists at its own Funeral!" *New Age*, August 10 1961.
9. These were based on main South African ethnic groups: Xhosa, Sotho, Pedi, Zulu, Tswana, Venda, Tsonga, Ndebele and Swati. It however didn't include the Khoi and the San who were amalgamated into Colouredness.
10. Lindela, is a deportation in Krugersdorp, west of Johannesburg and in the recent years has gained notoriety for gross human rights violations of detained immigrants awaiting deportation.
11. Nowadays a "smart" ID card has been introduced to replace the Green book.

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CHAPTER 5

Politics of Difference

Abstract In examining the manifestation of racism(s) against immigrants in the post-1994 South Africa, one sees a transmogrification of pre-1994 racism, which characterised black and white relations, into the post-1994 period that defines relationships between black African immigrants and black South Africans. These reflect the nature of South African social formation. Cultural semiotics of signification in Alexandra, representation and negotiation of difference through space, time and social distance is explained by the fact that although immigrants and South Africans live in the same space, their social distance is nonetheless further than near. It is a synthesis of both remoteness and nearness.

Keywords Racism(s) • Immigrants • Semiotics • Difference

The importance of the discovery of gold in the Witwatersrand was its role in the formation of South Africa's social systems which characterised the unique features of the country's racialised class system (Bozolli 1979 [2001]). The beginnings of the modern industrial economy are traced to the discovery of diamonds and gold which, in turn, dramatically changed South Africa's social and economic relations. This, in turn, affected industrial relations, led to proletarianisation and the unequal incorporation of different sections of the population into the capitalist relations of production. From the beginning, the gold mining industry

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was characterised by division of labour on basis of skills which coincided along racial lines.

The emergence of the Rand is synonymous with the rise of the country's black working class and also the growth of townships (ibid.). The townships and the black working class are inseparable, meaning to say, township history is also black working-class history. Thus, townships like Alexandra would be in existence in the second decade of the twentieth century. Since mining was a labour intensive industry recruiting companies were set up. The labour was not only acquired internally but from neighbouring countries like Lesotho, Swaziland, Mozambique, Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) and Nyasaland (now Malawi). Migrant labour has since been a feature of South African political economy and has shaped southern Africa's political and economic history (Crush et al. 1991).[1]

The Post-1994

The association between capitalism and race that emerged in the formation of the new nation-state can be best seen in what Gilroy (1997) calls "a distinctive ecology of belonging", that links territory to identity and, relatedly, sovereignty to belonging. Similarly, the development of the nation state has been characterised by regimes of inclusion and exclusion (Anderson 1991). As a result, the state identifies those with legitimate claims of belonging and forms legitimate exclusion from materiality of the nation. Further, the state, through its exclusively coercive, dominative and conspiratorial attitudes puts it in a role of hegemonic practices and strategies which are related to racist practices. Stuart Hall (1996) observes that this points out to the transformation of old racism (in South Africa, for example, from apartheid racism to the postapartheid intra-black racism). It follows to say that this new form of racism has emerged and it aligns with the old racism. For Hall, this is the prominent phenomenon of the postcolonial state. Inevitably, this produces cultural politics of inclusion and exclusion which are racialised and buttressed by the exclusionary practices of the state. Since race is integrally linked to territorial origins, the black African immigrant Diaspora in South Africa is consequently conceptualised racially and this has to do with differences in nationality, social origin, ethnicity, language, culture and dress.

Between the national censuses of 1996 and 2001, Gauteng province's non-national population increased from 4, 8% to 5, 4% representing a jump of 66,205 to 102,326. In all, the non-nationals represent 6, 2% of

Johannesburg's total population for the city is a primary immigrant destination. In the period between 1994 and 1996, five million "illegal" immigrants are estimated to have entered South Africa. However, the post-2000 Zimbabwean economic and political turmoil saw a large influx of Zimbabweans into South Africa, making the availability of reliable statistics on the number of immigrants in South Africa difficult. The absence of reliable statistics or credible basis to measure migration, and press references of "floods of foreigners" heighten existing fears and help form defensive attitudes by locals.

Black-on-black racist attitudes and attacks against non-nationals has been a feature of the postapartheid South Africa. Since 1994 hundreds of people have been harassed, attacked or maimed. In this context, from 1994, anti-immigrant sentiments were being whipped up. The former Minister of Home Affairs, Mangosuthu Buthelezi, in his introductory speech, pointed out the threat of African immigrants to South African prosperity and that the massive influx of illegal immigrants was "his biggest headache" (Crush 1996).

The Southern Africa Migration Project (SAMP) 2006 xenophobia survey shows that South Africans exhibit levels of intolerance and hostility towards outsiders which are unmatched almost anywhere else in the world. By the late 1990s, there was a hardening of attitudes, with opinions varying from demands for restrictions on immigration, the imposition of the total ban on immigration, allegations of non-nationals using up national resources and also allegations of crime and that immigrants are vectors for disease. An annual South African Social Attitude Survey (SASAS) conducted by the HSRC in 2007 showed a growing anti-immigrant sentiment, rising from 33% in 2003 to 47% in 2007. The May 2008 attacks, which began in Alexandra, spread like wildfire to areas in and around Johannesburg: Cleveland, Diepsloot, Hillbrow, Tembisa, Primrose, Ivory Park and Thokoza. Further violence followed in KwaZulu Natal, Mpumalanga and Cape Town.

Alexandra Is Africa[2]

In understanding the so-called phenomenon of xenophobia in South African black communities in the postapartheid era, it is significant to analyse how people get constituted into social membership and how immigrants get racially discriminated.[3] In this section based on ethnographic research conducted in 2009, one year after violent anti-immigrant

attacks in the township, I consider community life and its own internal sets of social relationships. The fact that Alexandra is a multi-ethnic society with a large presence of different identities does not mean that these relationships is harmonious. Some frictions are bound to emerge. This is seen in the use of language, naming, renaming and use of racial labels on immigrants. For me, the cultural semiotics of signification and representation interfaced with ethnicism and nationalism play an important role in understanding Othered identities.

Alexandra has for a long time been a primary destination for both internal migrants and external migrants since the foundation of the township in 1912. Migrants and immigrants were coming from areas like Natal and Transkei, and neighbouring countries like Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) Mozambique; Lesotho; Swaziland and Nyasaland (now Malawi). Many settled in the township permanently, married local women and set up homes.

The rise of black-on-black racism in the 1990s cannot be isolated from the country's apartheid past, of racial and class divisions, animosity, racist immigration policies, siege mentality and attitudes of uniqueness and superiority towards the rest of Africa (Crush 2008). Here I am inspired by Hall's (1980) assertion which is relevant in the context of contemporary South Africa:

> Different racisms have each been historically specific and articulated in a different way within the societies they appear. Though it may draw on the cultural and ideological traces deposited in society by previous historical phases, it always assumes specific forms which arise out of present – not the past – conditions and organisation of society. (1980: 336)

In examining the manifestation of racism(s) against immigrants in the post-1994 South Africa, one sees a transmogrification of pre-1994 racism, which characterised black and white relations, into the post-1994 that define relationships between black African immigrants and black South Africans.

In the post-1994 Alexandra, the first incidence of violence against African immigrants was reported in late 1994 (Crush 2008). Gangs of South Africans, under a campaign code named "*Buyela ekhaya*" (Go Back Home), tried to evict immigrants from Zimbabwe, Mozambique and Malawi, accusing them of crime, sexual attacks, unemployment and other

social vices. All of this despite the fact that most of these victims had been resident in the township for decades.

Racial Labelling and Racial Mapping

Emile Benveniste (1971) observes that the linguistic status of a person is the very foundation of subjectivity. The process of interpellation, thus, is when individuals are called to subjectivity and signification by others. The interface between language and race/ethnicity shows a close affinity. Language and its use becomes a social marker of ethnicity and or claims to an ethnic identification. The "speaking" subject exists in culture. If that culture leans more on racist inclinations and ethnicism, then that "speaking" subject uses language to that effect. Similarly, language is not a mere reflection of the world but produces meaning through articulation of linguistic systems upon real situations and relations (Saussure 1983). Further, language is not a mere correlation between signifier and the signified but a domain of articulations. It is through a more in-depth familiarity with the use of speech, language and expressions and articulations that one can thoroughly understand the dynamics of black-on-black racism in Alexandra.

Goldberg's (1990) view on racial subjectification demonstrates how social agents are defined or define themselves as racial subjects. This entails both the racially formed (racialised) and racially forming (racialising) subject. The entities constitutive of racism fall under the category of expressions. Racist expressions include beliefs and verbal outbursts. These transcend to acts and consequences which involve the anti-immigrant violence, as is shown by the May 2008 attacks on immigrants in Alexandra.

Immigrants refer to where they come from with a singular term – Africa – which is regarded by locals as synonymous with backwardness in terms of civilisation; where there is pervasive poverty, war, hunger and other deprivations. South Africa is construed as some kind of European country: developed, industrialised and laden with opportunities. Some progressives in the township I came across, in polite demeanour, refer to immigrants as "our brothers and sisters from Africa." The mere fact that they come from "Africa", unconsciously and inadvertently overrides this "politeness." As indicated above, Africa is a place where terrible things happen and everything that can be terrible is terrible.

Alexandra's South African residents give certain descriptions to African immigrants which denote social origin. Since the immigrant has come to be identified by a label, it lasts for duration of their stay in the township and the

country as a whole. Even when they go to sleep, in the privacy of their quarters, where there is no one to label them, they are still *amakwerekwere*. In the morning, they wake up and still carry the same label. In other words, the label has become part of them, and they have become part of the label. Sensibly, they are not proud of these labels, because, firstly, there is nothing to be proud of them. Secondly, they are derogatory, insulting, dehumanising and debasing. Thirdly they remind the immigrant that they are not welcome "here" and they don't belong "here." The "here" is a metaphor for a place and space, and the place and space are an abode and preserve of the Alexandra autochthons. The right to belong to this particular space is determined by who belongs "here" and is intricately connected to national identity.

If there is a "here" there also must be a "there." The "there" is where immigrants belong and "must go." These are two contrasting and different places and spaces. The Alexandra autochthon doesn't and won't care where this "there" is, because, firstly, that is where the immigrant belongs and the autochthon is not really sure of the physical, geographical and social location of it. Secondly, it is an alien space, strange and surreal, like the immigrant himself. Thirdly, in the autochthons' imagination, that place must be inferior, undeveloped, and, in terms of civilisation, lesser than both Alexandra in particular, and South Africa in general.

Naming as a social practice perpetrated by discriminators who are social actors, ultimately means a social action of discrimination. The actors wield the power, embedded in language which can be both an object and means of social discrimination (Van Dijk 1984) and these often overlap. Through use of verbal insults and verbal violence, they both empower themselves and discriminate the Other. The power asymmetry generally inhibits the less powerful to discriminate against the more powerful (Riesgl and Wodak 2008).

The use of names and labels emanates from distinguishing features or a peg on which to hang the discrimination. These are related to social identity markers such as gender, race, skin colour, birth, hereditary factors, ethnic, national, language, religion and so forth. It is not merely racialism which is the reason for this discrimination, but racism which lies behind the social construction of race categories.

Labels like *amakwerekwere* can be understood through a discursive pattern of signification and representation (Wetherell and Potter 1992). They are part of collective symbols as espoused by the Duisburg analysts Sigfried Jager and Margaret Jager (2001). These are cultural stereotypes

which are in the form of metaphorical and synecdoche symbols that are immediately understood by members of the same speech community. This is similar to what Riesgl and Wodak (2008) calls discrimination by nomination, whereby persons are named and referred to linguistically and are discriminated at by means of discursive practices (which are nomination strategies). This can take many forms – some are explicit like verbal slurs employed in an insulting speech, acts or verbal injuries. The construction of the Other, therefore, is through naming, labelling, nouns, verbs and adjectives. A group in a power-asymmetrical position employs collective symbols to stigmatise, marginalise and exclude minority groups. As a result the analysis of racism is tied to power and hegemony.

Hegemony and Signification

Cultural semiotics of signification in Alexandra, representation and negotiation of difference through space (which is Alexandra), time (which determines manifestations of different racisms) and social distance is explained by the fact that although immigrants and South Africans live in the same space, their social distance is nonetheless further than near. It is a synthesis of both remoteness and nearness. These significations speak of cultural symbols and signs encompassing language, pointing (like with a finger), the eye (as visual racism); the indexicality of "you", "me", "us", "them", "here" and "there." Though these only explain difference, racisms feature when the Other is discriminated, prejudiced and seen as inferior. The significations have a deeper meaning that reveals the underlying nature of social relationships between nationals and non-nationals. More importantly, they manifest the dominant linear patterns of power and hegemony. For instance, when somebody shouts: "*Hey wena kwerekewere*!" the social actor, who the verbal outburst is intended, just imbibes the insult silently; they may neither respond back verbally or physically.

The use of these labels is an intrinsic part of societal knowledge stored through generations and through time which determines individual or collective doing and formative action that shapes society, thereby exercising power (Jager and Jager 2001). Within this approach, discourses are understood to be historically determined, trans-individual, institutionalised and regulated social practices that become material realities *sui generis* (Riesgl and Wodak 2008).

Stereotyping the Other

Stereotypes play an essential, yet unacknowledged role in social relations in Alexandra. Stereotypes define the Otherness, either who they are supposed to be or suspected to be. In both cases they necessarily do not have to be true. The implications of such stereotyping give prominence to these racisms. As defined by Quasthoff (1998), stereotypes are verbal expressions of a certain conviction or belief directed towards a social group or an individual member of that social group. The stereotype is typically an element of common knowledge shared, to a great extent, in a particular culture.

I went around asking people (both South Africans and immigrants) about the common stereotypes associated with immigrants and South Africans in Alexandra. Below are some of the stereotypes used by South Africans:

(a) immigrants are criminals and have exacerbated crime in the township
(b) immigrant men have big penises
(c) Immigrants are bad. They do bad things
(d) they do not have any manners and respect, they don't have any culture
(e) they take all the jobs and locals no longer have access to employment
(f) they take all the women, including the most beautiful ones
(g) Immigrants' *banuka amakwapa* (they smell).
(h) foreigners brought AIDS to South Africa

Reverse/Counter Stereotyping

Stereotyping in Alexandra is not a one-way process. Immigrants themselves have, in their repertoire:

(a) South Africans are lazy, they don't want to work and are "dumb"
(b) The Zulus are not educated and hate school, all they know is driving taxis
(c) South Africans are not skilled, all they know is *ukubamb' inkunzi* (robbing or mugging)
(d) South African women are "loose" and they all are HIV infected
(e) South Africans are alcoholics and are prone to violence
(f) South Africans don't like bathing

Most prejudices against non-nationals are used in accusations, metaphors and metonyms, which include name change and renaming (Jager and Jager 2001). In many instances, they are in the form of derogatory metaphor and fears of miscegenation. Ethnic and racial cleansing employed in racist and ethnicist utterances is interpreted by psychoanalysts in terms of anal regression and the cleanliness mania (Quasthoff 1998). For example, the prejudices against immigrants' sexual superiority and sexual potency and being carriers of disease are related to psychoanalytic theories related to fantasies of a phallic threatening subject. These prejudices are steeped in attitudes, convictions and prejudices. Quasthoff (1998) also identifies convictions as being central in that they ascribe qualities to others and provide rationalisations for negative attitudes to other people.

One man I conversed with said:

> Zimbabweans... ummm... okay... at least some are hard working. But Mozambicans, no *Bayabheda* (they are bad) and are *stoort* (stubborn). They come here and do all bad things. They break into our homes and mug us in the streets. And these people have no passes.[4] They do crime and their fingerprints are not known anywhere even in Pretoria. When they commit crime, they hide from the law and are never caught.

Racisms, Plurality and Multi-ethnicism

Given its long history of migration, Alexandra is a place where different ethnic groups reside. These are both internal and external migrants. They live side by side in the yards and shacks. As a result of this proximity, there is close social interaction. At one instance it might imply that social relationships are more defined and well refined, thereby giving credence to cultural diversity or a cultural melting pot. It is through this presupposition, that the May 2008 attacks, led many people to seek for answers as to the causes of the violence. More perplexing was just how neighbour can turn against neighbour, even if they had lived together for a long time. From my conversations with people, it is apparent that some immigrants (as I indicated earlier) have stayed in the area for decades, married South African women and established permanent family structures. Those immigrants had lost contacts with their homeland, their families and their kin. The families they established in Alexandra were *de facto* their only kin.

This brings us to the following question: Does the absence of violence mean that there are no prejudices and other intolerances? Do racisms

manifest themselves only in violent ways? What about the other nuances and logics steeped in stereotypes, culture, habits and even verbal outbursts? Of course, salient black-on-black racism has been an integral part of immigrant/South African relationship, at least in the post-1994 period.

One man had this to say:

> All of a sudden there was a takeover of Alexandra by foreigners. . . thousands and thousands of them. It was like an invasion. All these foreigners set up shacks all over. We no longer had any yards to put our gardens; no space at all, every space is filled with shacks. Some started selling and hawking on the streets and pavements and in front of shops. We started getting tired of these people.[5]

The problem of overcrowding and proliferation of shacks has been laid on immigrants. Most South Africans think this has to do with government's failure to curb mass immigration of "these people".

Another person expressed it as follows:

> They (foreigners) are uncontrolled. When we (South Africans) were in exile fighting apartheid, we were put in camps. We could not just move around like these people are doing. Some of them have, especially Somalis have a bad attitude, and they think they own this place. These foreigners started not respecting us South Africans and that's when our anger began rising.[6]

Alexandra as a multi-ethnic society means social relationships are defined by conflict and tension and are rarely harmonious. Unlike other communities where attitudes towards non-nationals have occurred, Alexandra is a situation with its own specifics. It is a community with its own beliefs on non-nationals, which is seen in the long history of migration and presence of different identities. Cultural myths and symbols endure through time and are reproduced generation after generation, notwithstanding changing material and historical conditions. Cultures that are seen in these differences operate within the context of both the social and the spatial, which cannot be separated from the time dimension (Massey 1994). Individual and collective identities, which are specific forms of cultural narratives, constitute commonalities and differences between the self and others (Yuval Davis 1997). These often relate to myths of common destiny and origin. An immigrant in Alexandra, therefore, cannot breach the line of naturalised psychological and cultural difference existing between non-nationals and

the locals. This line demarcates the national and non-national and has to do with issues of identity and difference (Wieviorka 1997). These are determined by national borders in which people construct their collective identities and meanings and form as a base for social interaction.

One question may be asked: are racisms in Alexandra a result of nationalism, ethnicism, sexism or purely racism? It is not only nationalism, sexism, ethnicism or racism, but all four combined. These four, in turn, constitute racisms and they converge, concur, interface, cross-cut, intertwine and sometimes overlap and are definitely entangled. Alexandra, as a place where many and different identities live, makes it possible for these factors to come into play.

The May 2008 pogroms were racial, gendered, masculine and sexist in nature, more than merely an expression of ethnicism or nationalism. The latter two concepts were nonetheless heavily intertwined in both pre- and post-violence and in social relationships in general. The question is: To what extent is the violence or these social relationships racist, sexist, ethnicist or nationalist? This question will be addressed latter in this section. Presently, let us take a look at the social relationships among different ethnic groups in Alexandra.

The Common World

As a multi-ethnic/multicultural society, all those residing in Alexandra live in what I call a common world. This world is home to people from different areas, regions and countries. They "co-habit" in a mutual territory and space and apparently live happily side by side. In many homes, like the one where one of my key participants from Zimbabwe lived, are made up of South Africans (Xhosas, Zulus, Sothos, Pedis, Vendas and Tsongas/Shangani). Non-nationals living at the house are from Zimbabwe, Ndaus from the eastern border between Zimbabwe and Mozambique and one man from Malawi. Most South Africans living in the house have families with them. Immigrants, who are mainly male, have families back home, and one man from Zimbabwe, has a relict wife who visits him intermittently. This typical microcosmic world has its own specifics. On the surface, the social relationships are not strained, all residents show each other, not only some kind of respect and courtesy, but also a muted show of acknowledgment of each other's presence. For example, one day I observed a Zimbabwean man who occupies a room behind the main house, while passing in the front where some tenants were sitting and conversing, just went by

without offering a greeting. Here the social distance in these social relationships needs to be emphasised. Though the inhabitants are near each other by virtue of living together, their relationships are distant. Living together might not necessarily mean that their social relations are smooth. These relations are marked by *silent tensions*, which originate from differences in ethnicity and nationality and sometimes complications of language. Here I may use Gluckman's (1942) distinguishing concepts: of *endoculture*, which refers to the culture of social personality or group as perceived by them; and *exoculture*, which is the culture of a social personality or group as perceived by other members of the same social system. In reacting to these relationships as defined by cultural differences, social actors in Alexandra value others with feelings that vary in ways they perceive people from outside with whom they come to associate. This forms the basis in which cultural differences are defined which are embedded in linguistic differences as well. The far-reaching consequences as a result are racisms which are an integral part of these.

This does not mean, however, that these relations are entirely characterised by *silent tension*. During my long hours of observation at the house, sitting on a wooden bench, just outside the fence, by the stall where my key participant sold his wares, these relations are sometimes cemented by the use of terms of address that are reminiscent of kinship relationships. Consider another situation. My key participant is a man who is conversant with most South African languages because he hears them being spoken all the time and also because he once worked with South Africans who were speaking only local languages. After all, he lives at a house which contains members of practically every South African ethnic group They address him as s'*bali*.[7] They would leave keys with him and later ask for them:

> *Sawubona s'bali.Umntwana ushiyile is'kiye?* (Hello brother in law, did the child leave the keys with you?)

He would also say:

> *yebo s'bali.*

Those addressing him as *s'bali* include men, women and their children.

The terms of address may also take the form of joking or playful banter. My key participant (a young man of about twenty-three) would address an elderly Venda man (of about fifty-five) as:

My baby, shoo my baby!

The elderly Venda would also say:

Shoo my baby!

In this way, these different groups foster kinship relations in a new urban setting. Kinship or even extended kinship patterns are broken as a result of migration. The networks found in a family life (such as addressing each other as s'*bali*) often occur within, and depend upon, artificial structures (Rex 1997). Having left their families back home, immigrants in this situation ideally become part of the common world that assumes some tenets of family life. Tenants from the same region, area or country immediately form kinship relations that extend back to their home area, by virtue of coming from the same place. As a result, they have a sense of identity that is both shared and similar.

The extent to which primary social relationships become integrated into the entire societal network of relations is inhibited by the larger manifestations of racisms in the public sphere. While the private domain plays an important role in socialising individuals for participation in the public sphere, the public domain is shaped by a morality which is inculcated in the family (Rex 1997). In the aftermath of the 2008 attacks on immigrants in Alexandra, the *Star* newspaper ran an article, with a picture of a group of schoolchildren jeering at displaced immigrants:

> Their (kids) faces contorted with hatred and contempt, the schoolchildren shout and jeer and torment and laugh at a woman refugee in Alexandra yesterday. This perhaps, of all pictures that have come out of Alexandra, is the most disturbing. This is the lesson children have learnt from their elders. . .xenophobia, even if they never heard the word. (The Star, 15 May 2008)

Although children live with immigrants and interact with them on a daily basis, the private sphere of this common world is characterised by greater social distance. Here I imply that proximity can also include social distance. The situation specifics of Alexandra leave people with no option but to live in close proximity. Living side by side can nonetheless give the illusion that all social actors are in a harmonious world devoid of racial or ethnic tensions. This situation I have termed *coerced co-habitation*. Social actors live

together, not because they desire it, but because they have nowhere else to stay other than where they are. As a result, they grant each other some "concessions", which allow them to live together. These tolerances are presupposed by both situation specifics and *coerced co- habitation.*

This primary community cannot succeed in becoming a functional subsystem of the whole. First, the diversity of the private domain of this multicultural facet becomes radically altered in the public sphere where the unitary single culture that divides South Africans and non-South Africans seems to be dominant. This is when the idea of geographical and national origin and national identity comes into the picture.

In Alexandra, generally all ethnic groups (both South African and non-national) live side by side, with the exception of one area which residents call "Maputo", which is entirely inhabited by Mozambicans.[8] During my fieldwork I could not ascertain how and why this kind of demarcation. Although the "Maputo" area is almost entirely inhabited by Mozambicans, there are also many others living in the greater Alexandra community. The "Maputo" area has a huge concentration of shacks and people who live there have formed a bond of old, new and existing social networks that are held together by identities emanating from common social, geographical and national origin. This Diaspora identity is a response to the cultural politics of difference though there is no rigid and explicit separation of areas where different ethnicities live. The identity is framed by memories of a collective history rooted in common origins which are shared by Mozambicans from "Maputo"

Is the situation in Alexandra a nationalist, ethnicist, sexist or racial one? Describing racial, ethnic and interrelationships in the township is fluid. The concomitant effects of culture contact as a result of the presence of other identities are seen in anti-immigrant sentiments that have traces of nationalism, ethnicism, sexism and racism. I reiterate my emphasis that these concepts are entangled, interpenetrating, interrelated, intertwined and cross-cutting. One cannot attribute the social situation exclusively to nationalism, rather than either ethnicism or racism. Doing so would be inadequate and incomplete. Therefore, the Alexandra situation can be seen as either a spider or a sticky web. It is sticky because racisms in the township cannot be explained by a single factor: instead the causes are multiple, multidimensional and relational. Isolating one factor and analysing it will not help one to understand the nature of racisms, any more than it can explain social relationships in Alexandra. Like a spider web, all factors are woven into, and demand a subtle and intricate analysis for a deeper

understanding. The implication is that a holistic approach is necessary to unlock social dynamics in the township. Since racism(s) doesn't move unchanged in history and assumes new forms and articulates new antagonisms in different situations, it exists in a plural form (Gilroy 1987).

There are intricate and interlocking sets of factors like ethnicity, nationalism, racism(s), the public and private sphere, binary representation, racial labelling, naming and renaming and interpellation. All these factors mark and influence the nature of social relationships between immigrants and South Africans.

It is common, in Alexandra, to hear conversations of this nature between nationals and non-nationals:

> Eh baba, do you think this is Zimbabwe? Here in *Mzansi* (South Africa), my friend, we don't do the *kak* (shit) you do where you come from. . ..

References to each other's nation of origin or even nationality fundamentally might appear not wrong; it shows differences in nationality between these social actors. These differences as exhibited in speech tend to carry offensive racialised overtones because they are mainly references of not only differences but inferiority. The other actor is seen as belonging "there", a different social origin determined by nationality and the other belongs "here." It also not only shows superiority of those who belong "here" but their uniqueness, distinctness, exceptionality and "betterness."

Consider this kind of conversation:

> Eh baba, do you think this is Maputo?

Mozambicans are seen as coming from "Maputo", just as Nigerians are seen as coming from "Lagos." This does not mean, however, that all Mozambicans and Nigerians come from Lagos or Maputo, because they come from different parts of these countries. Maputo and Lagos, as used in quotidian conversations and speeches, become derogatory, condescending and places become linked to nationalities. In abstract terms, an analysis of social actors using this kind of speech might, on the one hand, be deemed to be unfamiliar with the nationality of people from "Maputo" or "Lagos." In reality, they know that these immigrants come from Mozambique or Nigeria. But one explanation is that they might be unfamiliar with the geographical location of these places. At this juncture the social origins

of these immigrants become abstract, except the fact that they are not South African and therefore don't belong "here."

Some labels carry racial connotations that are intricately linked to the semantic space, place and national origin and determine claims to autochthony. Labels like "MaNigeria", "MaZimbabwe" or even "Maputo" or "Lagos", in their meaning, transcend mere space, place and national origin. They link the bearers of these labels to their places of social origin, thereby defining cultural, ethnic, national or even phenotypical differences (their skin is seen as of darker hue). This is the basis of "us" and "them" and in this current social scenario it assumes a binary racial representation.

Ethnic groups are those human groups that entertain a subjective belief in their common descent because of similarities of physical type or of customs or both or because of memories as a result of colonisation or migration (Weber 1922, [1968]). It is not biological differences alone that constitute an ethnic group (in Alexandra, immigrants, including local groups like Tsongas/Shangani and Vendas are seen to be uglier and of darker hue), but also common customs. It is not only physical or cultural characteristics but subjective perceptions of these by those who share them or who react against them. For Weber, shared ethnicity leads to group formation and ethnic groups have memories of a common past, attachment or clearly demarcated territory and these survive for a long time in the consciousness of people.

Ideological articulation shows how ideologies like racism, nationalism, sexism and ethnicism verge on each other and they are connected and overlap (Miles 1993). Studies of ethnicity at the local community level and studies of nationalism at the state level stress that ethnic or national identities are constructions. Like other ethnic identities, national identities are constituted in relation to "others".

The nation, as the sociohistorical context within which culture is embedded, emphasises the emotional investment of the individual in the elements of their culture, which is a key factor exploited by nationalism (Guibernau 1996). The power of nationalism stems from its capacity to create a common identity among group members. Identity's defining criteria is continuity over time and differentiation from others and which is the basis of national identity. The common culture allows members to create solidarity bonds and they imagine themselves as distinct and separate from others who are seen as strangers and potential "enemies." Conversely, race is a way of naming the difference between members of a particular collective and the "other" or the "alien." It establishes a boundary between those who share

certain biological or physiognomic characteristics and cultural make-up. Racist practices are inherently steeped in power which is exercised in the dual practices of naming and evaluating the Other. In Alexandra, immigrants are blamed for exacerbating crime, taking jobs and women and utilising national resources meant for South Africans. This is compounded by lack of service delivery and protests on these, though genuine, are usually infected with racial sentiments.

Nationalism, by using "us" and "them", constructs national identity but also a racial identity, based on national, cultural or phenotypical differences. The Other, then, is someone potentially inferior. The intersection between nationalism as propagated by the state, micro-level nationalism at the community level and how the immigrant is brought to racial subjectivity is explanatory to these community dynamics.

Conversations with immigrants reveal dismay with the ill treatment they receive form state agents, particularly the police:

> I don't have legal documents to stay in this country. Every time I see a police van patrolling around I have to run away or hide. The police might stop me and ask for an ID or passport which I don't have. I came here to look for better opportunities and support my family back home. If I am deported they will starve.[9]

The state and its policies affect relationships between immigrants and locals. At the community level, the state is represented by agents like the police. They are not merely an extension and representatives of the state. In the community, they assume two complimentary roles: they are the state themselves and, since they are operating in the community, they are also part of the community's logic. For example, one Zimbabwean immigrant who was stopped and searched by police informed me that they crudely told him he should go back to "Maputo".

One of the major crimes an immigrant could commit, as I was informed by immigrants themselves, is beating up a South African woman. While a South African man may abuse or beat her, he might, with impunity, get away with it. For the immigrant it is a different matter altogether:

> Uh my brother, the moment an immigrant steps his foot in Alexandra, the first thing he is told is never beat a South African woman. If you do so you will serve a jail term, where you might get out an old man. If she reports the assault to the police and says the man who beat me is a foreigner that is enough to

> cause much commotion and interest in the police station... the police would come with three vans to pick you up.[10]

Centrally, the non-documentation of immigrants and the state's reluctance to document them and its anti-immigrant policies, has a ripple effect on the community level:

> Foreigners do a lot of crime here; we are tired of crime in Alexandra. They are housebreakers and *bamb'inkunzi* (they are muggers/robbers). Now you see my brother, these people don't have ID's or any form of identification. When they do crime they run away or just disappear and they are never caught. This is because since they have no ID's, their fingerprints are not in the records in Pretoria.[11]

This phenomenon is not a new characteristic of the post-1994 state. The state's attitudes towards those perceived as "aliens" have deeper historical roots that can be traced to the apartheid era. During that time black South Africans were seen as "surplus people" and temporary sojourners to the city and the idea of the "alien" was used to deny them citizenship, political and economic rights. That system apparently has been an antecedent to contemporary sociopolitical relations between the state and communities' views on the one perceived to be an outsider. Criminalisation of immigrants and the fact that they don't have "passes" fuels nationalist and anti – immigrant sentiments in the township. The contradiction, however, is that many South Africans don't have the green ID book, for a variety of reasons including ineptitude at Home Affairs. Nonetheless non-documented immigrants are viewed in negative light. They are seen as not belonging and are *aliens*, and in this instance citizenship and what it means to be South African, are predetermined by one's possession of the ID document.

During the apartheid era, blacks who had no pass faced immediate detention, a summary trial and deportation back to their "homeland". The pass controlled every aspect of African people's lives: access to housing, work and movement. The pass was the most powerful tool and weapon of white domination over blacks. Similarities in the social life of the apartheid pass and the postapartheid identity book are remarkably striking. Identity and documentation in the contemporary South African society are a mere reinvention and repetition of history.

The green identity book has had concomitant effects in many spheres. Firstly, one's identity, social and territorial origins are determined by a document. This is the defining basis of nationality and nationalism and because immigrants don't have the South African identity document they are seen as outsiders and not "belonging here". As a result, this fuels racisms which are based on national and cultural differences as determined by the identity document. Secondly, since immigrants are not documented, they are used by owners of capital as cheap labour, working long hours for low wages. The fact that they will accept lesser pay is a source of intra-class conflict between South African and immigrant workers. This is compounded by the non-unionisation of the latter and trade unions are unwilling to unionise them either. Thirdly, immigrants are then denied political, social and economic rights and citizenship. This merges well with the idea of the "alien".

Non-possession of the ID book[12] has other social consequences that, to a large extent, affect social relationships between nationals and non-nationals. To get South African citizenship, some immigrant men enter into contractual and convenient love relationships with South African women and get married at the Home Affairs. This phenomenon, as I was informed, is most common with Mozambican men. South African male participants feel that, in these arrangements, non-South African men are being used by South African women. The latter blackmail the former by making monetary and material demands; that the immigrant must do everything she asks because it was her who facilitated his South African ID and consequently citizenship. Acquisition of IDs and citizenship in this manner is a bone of contention between nationals and non-nationals and leads to hatred, tension and conflict.

It is easier for unemployed South African men to blackmail immigrants because they are seen as having an "illegal" Status. Participants informed me that on Fridays or at the end of the month, when immigrants are paid, they are waylaid by South Africans who extort money, cigarettes or beer from them. They threaten the immigrants, saying that they would report them to the police because they don't have "papers". In a similar vein, Somali traders, operating in the area around a major shopping centre in Alexandra, are victimised in varied ways. Residents borrow goods and items from them and later renege on payment. When the Somalis ask for their money, they are either victimised or threatened with a report to the police that they don't have ID's.

Though many immigrants are qualified, their lack of an ID book greatly reduces their prospects of finding employment that is commensurate with those qualifications. They either resort to vending and hawking or being underemployed by assuming menial jobs shunned by locals. The existence of unwanted, stigmatised and low status jobs which local workers are not keen to take means immigrant workers can easily be assimilated into them; in which they are both a pariah working class and scapegoats (Wieviorka 1997).

One immigrant from Zimbabwe told me:

> When the job I was working ended, I decided to claim my UIF money because when I was working they used to deduct it from my pay. When I went to the offices I was told to produce a green book and I don't have it, and the officials started to be rude and dismissed me like a dog. Up to now I am still fighting to get the money.[13]

The same man also said:

> After my job ended I applied for another job and I was invited for an interview. The guy who was doing the interviews was a black South African, and when he realised I am a foreigner, he told me there is no job for me, because I don't have a green book.

This is in sync with the whole discourse of discrimination. According to Riesgl and Wodak (2008), discrimination means putting an individual or individuals who are considered different in some way or other at a disadvantage, implying an ethical and normative dimension inimical to the principles of justice and human rights. It also means the persons and groups are treated unfairly, unjustly, repressed, suppressed, decried, discredited, debased, degraded, defamed, excluded unjustifiably in the social and economic, and other inequalities are established.

Discrimination at both the community and the state level cannot be discussed fully without reference to the idea of hegemony. In Gramscian terms, hegemony is a state of total social control (Gramsci 1971). This is closely intertwined with ideologies which are material relations, which Lenin (cited in Hall 1977) has called ideological social relations, that shape social actions and function through concrete institutions and apparatuses and become materialised through processes. Ideologies operate by constituting individuals as "social subjects" of ideological discourses which

Laclau (1997) calls "interpellating subjects". Ideologies cannot be reduced to a situation where one class imposes its unitary "world vision" upon all other classes, but by taking elements of the old ideology into the new doctrine and ideology (Gramsci 1971). In South Africa (as indicated earlier) the history of the "alien" which began in the apartheid era was used to deny "outsiders" political, economic and residential rights. This system has been used as antecedent for the hitherto existing sociopolitical configurations and has shaped the state's and nationals' views on outsiders.

Following the Gramscian model, Hall (1996), shows how an old conception of the world is gradually replaced by another mode of thought that is internally worked and transformed. Therefore, culture is a historically shaped terrain on which all "new" philosophical and theoretical currents work. The complexity of deconstruction in this historical phase is by which old alignments are dismantled and new alignments are effected in different discourses and between social forces and ideas. Moreover, the state has been consistently seen and defined by its exclusively coercive, dominative and conspiratorial nature. In Gramscian terms, the state's domination, its "educative" role and its position in construction of hegemonic practices and strategies is related to racist practices (Hall 1996).

Conclusion

In this chapter I have examined nationalism, ethnicism, racisms and state racism and how they manifest at the community level. I have shown and argued how all these are interwoven into an interlocking system of racisms packaged as black-on-black racism hitherto prevailing in Alexandra. These reflect the overarching picture of racisms in contemporary South Africa and in my understanding they influence anti-immigrant sentiments. I have shown how one's social membership is used for inclusion and exclusion. I have also presented how cultural semiotics of signification lead to differentiation. Differentiation becomes racial in the sense that it is used to refer to the "otherness" and their inferiority. The "Other" is therefore discriminated and faces prejudice because of their place of social origin. The signification and representation through use of language is usually debasing, humiliating and dehumanising. My argument, thus, is that cultural semiotics helps one to understand the depth of racisms in Alexandra and elsewhere. In considering this, black-on-black racism is both structured at the top (that is the state) and at the community level.

Notes

1. The Native Labour Regulation Act (1911) established control over migrant labour, contracts and the compound system; the Mines and Works Act (1911) gave white workers access to better jobs and pay.
2. Colin, who worked at the community radio station Alex FM, told me that Alexandra is Africa because of its multinational and multi-ethnic dimension (conversation with Colin, 7 July 2009).
3. I have contested the term xenophobia in depth elsewhere (see Chap. 2 of this book). I would rather prefer black-on-black racism, as part of the motley of racisms, to describe anti-immigrant attitudes in South Africa townships which are similar to white anti-black racism that has characterised the country's historiography.
4. Most residents still use the apartheid lexicon, *pass*, to refer to the identity book.
5. Conversation with a South African man, 10 June 2009.
6. Interview with a South African man, 10 June 2009.
7. *S'bali* is Nguni word that might mean brother-in-law. However, it can be used interchangeably by both sexes.
8. South African residents were the first to call the area "Maputo". However everyone including immigrants and Mozambicans themselves call it by the same name.
9. Conversation with a Mozambican immigrant, 23 June 2009.
10. Conversation with an immigrant man, 1 July 2009.
11. Conversation with a South African, 30 June 2009.
12. The Green ID book is currently being replaced with a smart ID card.
13. Interview with a Zimbabwean immigrant, 26 June 2009.

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CHAPTER 6

Local Woman and Immigrant Lover

Abstract Love relationships between black South African women and immigrant men have not been given adequate attention by researchers of migration, refugee studies, and those concerned with anti-immigrant attitudes and violence. This chapter argues that cross-border love relationships provoke sexual jealousies between the two sets of men: South African and black African immigrant. These are eventually expressed in anti-immigrant violence, such as the events that occurred in May 2008. The chapter contends that in order to gain a full understanding of this kind of violence, one needs to grasp the dynamics of love relationships between black South African women and black African immigrant men and the influence of pervasive community myths such as immigrants stealing jobs and taking local women.

Keywords Migration • Anti-immigrant • Cross-border relationships • Community

Love relationships between black South African women and immigrant men have not been given adequate attention by researchers of migration, refugee studies, and those concerned with anti-immigrant attitudes and violence. In this chapter, I argue that cross-border love relationships provoke sexual and racial jealousies between the two sets of manhood: South African and black African immigrant. These are eventually expressed in anti-immigrant

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violence, such as the events that occurred in May 2008. Intermittent poverty and unemployment also play a role in this drama. Incidents of hatred based on competition for women and resultant resentment by men who lose out deepen. I contend that in order to have a full understanding this kind of violence, one needs to grasp the dynamics of love relationships between black South African women and black African immigrant men and the influence of pervasive community myths such as immigrants stealing jobs and taking local women.

The Dynamics

One of the most undertheorised and underresearched phenomena in postapartheid township communities is that of love relationships between black South African women and black African immigrant men. Despite their historically intrinsically embedded and inherent relatedness in South African townships, these love relationships have received little scholarly attention. Similarly, their role in fomenting and agitating attacks against black African immigrants has also been unacknowledged. In June/July 2009, I talked with a proportionate number of both immigrants and locals, male and female. The responses I obtained initially surprised me and reveal the pervasiveness of myths and negative stereotypes on social actors. My research deduces that there are indeed jealousies, sexualisation of hatred and masculinisation of violence towards black African immigrants. I maintain that while there are a myriad of factors causing this kind of violence and influencing the quotidian social relationships in general, sexual jealousies and the competition for women is a solid cause of racialised, masculinised and sexualised attacks in Alexandra. Apparently, the widespread and ingrained belief that immigrants are "stealing our women" and other perceptions that have come to be taken as truths are simply based on myths. All that these groups believe about each other, while containing some elements of truth, remain what they are: myths. Ferguson articulates the social function of such stories:

> First there is the popular usage, which takes a myth to be a false or factually inaccurate version of things that has come to be widely believed. Second, there is the anthropological use of the term, which focuses on the story's social function: a myth in this sense is not just a mistaken account but a cosmological blueprint that lays down fundamental categories and meanings for the organisation and interpretation of experience. (1998: 13)

Elsewhere I have decried the use of the term xenophobia to describe anti-immigrant attitudes in South Africa, rather these attitudes are a reflection and refraction of white anti-black racism inherited from apartheid, which has persisted up to the present day. The rise of black on black racism in South Africa, or the prevalence of violent attitudes towards African immigrants, can neither be explained nor analysed with a singular focal lens. Instead, there are multiple causes at play which converge to give rise to tensions. One prominent feature of black-on-black racism is seen in the fight and competition for women by black African immigrant and black South African men. Also at play are myths which largely mark social relationships between immigrants and South Africans. Myths and beliefs, and their expressions through everyday language, interactions, and relations, are deeply ingrained in the societal psyche.

There is a well-established link between poverty, unemployment, and men's relationship with women. These interact closely and influence the social relations between immigrants and South Africans in the township. A close analysis of these links gives a deeper understanding of the May 2008 anti-immigrant violence. This analysis reveals the uniqueness and specificity of ethnic and social relations in Alexandra, which take a very different pattern to other instances of violent anti-immigrant incidents seen in other parts of the country, for example, Khayelitsha, Gugulethu, Durban, Bothaville, De Doorns, or Balfour. I am aware that each of these areas has its own specific situation and internal dynamics. This implies that any analysis of the so-called xenophobia can neither be generalised nor universalised, but must be undertaken in relation to each area and its own sets of social relationships.

The link between poverty, unemployment and competition for women explains how immigrant and South African men "jostle" and compete for women. This is not to say, however, that there is any shortage of women in the township. Indeed, women are plentiful; it depends on whom the woman goes for and whom she leaves.

One consistent response from the South African females who participated in the study was the prevalence of the masculine nature of the violence which initially emanated from the male Madala hostel in the Beirut area.[1] Beirut is named by residents after the city in Lebanon, because of its apartheid-era inter-ethnic and sectarian violence. On inquiry, I was told by participants that the violence around the area had a long history, which began during the apartheid period. Beirut is mainly Zulu dominated and

IFP aligned.[2] During apartheid there was heightened political violence between the IFP and the ANC, which developed along ethnic lines.[3] Father Cairns from the Roman Catholic Church, who has lived in the township for over twenty-six years, told me that during that time, Beirut was something of a no-go area. With the advent of a new political dispensation in 1994, the violence subsided, except for common criminally motivated incidents. During my numerous sojourns in the area, I passed by a sorghum beer outlet and I was struck by an inscription on the wall:

> *Sicela nisuke ma ses'fikile. By AmaZulu.* (We ask you to leave when we arrive. By AmaZulu.)

On further inquiry, I was told by the patrons that this inscription had been written during the May 2008 anti-immigrant violence. The area, of course, was characterised by its own large wave of violent killings, rapes, and the destruction of immigrant property.

When I was walking around asking women what they thought of xenophobia and the violence, the first thing they told me was: "Local men are saying immigrant men are taking their women. For sure, South African women are going for immigrants."[4] Another younger female participant said: "South African women are having relationships with men from outside. South African men don't like this. This was the cause of xenophobia. I think it is racism. It is jealousy. Zulu men went around beating immigrants and sometimes those who are not Zulu."[5] Father Cairns corroborated: "The thing about stealing our women is racism. . . it is jealousy. The thing that I am a South African and you are a foreigner, is the same as the division between blacks and whites in the past, it is race based, not on colour but on ethnicity."[6]

Black African immigrants are often excluded from employment opportunities because of the country's stringent labour laws. Both documented and undocumented immigrants are cloistered in this same category as they face barriers in their endeavours to find employment. As a result, they end up either trading as street hawkers and vendors or occupying unwanted, low-status, and menial jobs shunned by local workers. There they are employed as cheap labour, earning little or lesser wages than local workers would accept. It is possible for an immigrant to work for R50 a day, but a South African worker would not accept that amount and therefore decides not to go to work:

> You see my brother, when we go to look for work in the firms around here, be it Kew, Marlboro or Wynberg you find all the jobs are taken by AmaKalanga.[7] All these people are working for little money. I can't work for that small amount. I find it better to go and stay in the location.[8]

Consequently, most South African men either do not consider looking for work or spend their time sitting in the township and idling their time away. While these South African men are accusing immigrants of taking all the jobs for less pay, immigrants and South African women generally say South African men are "lazy," do not like to work, and "kill" their time drinking, sleeping and playing dice, where they may win a couple of Rands and drink the earnings. Given this background, Alexandra women are not keen to have relationships with these kinds of men. Unemployed men are seen as both *dom khanda* (thick-headed) and *omahlalela* (loafers) unable to provide and both inadequate and not "real" men. Women, rather, are looking for men who are either employed or are seen to make money in other ways. This kind of man happens to be the immigrant.

If the immigrant, as discussed earlier, is underpaid in the relations of productions, does that make him financially stable? One explanation is the widespread perception in the township that immigrants are making money – a lot of it – for that matter, although this is not necessarily true. The second explanation is the *use value* of the money, however little. One of the male South African participants hypothesised that if both sets of men (South Africans and immigrants) were earning, say, R400 a week, by the end of the week one man's money would be finished and other would still have some left. The former man might have drunk it all or "wasted it" while the latter, lived frugally during the week, bought some necessities and, therefore, still had some savings. This scenario is what was presented to me by immigrants. Cognisant that they are in a foreign land, they have to save money to send back home and still save some to spend on their South African girlfriends. Again, on most Fridays and month-ends, non-South African men are seen carrying plastic bags full of groceries from the Pan Africa shopping centre. The perception in the community is that they are making money. Some of the immigrants, those who are involved in small businesses and trading, attract women because they are seen as "kings."

A number of reasons compel many women to look for men who are good providers: household poverty; the depredations of the slum-like conditions; chronic deprivation; and the lack of food, money and other necessities.[9] Since most South African men are unemployed, women go for immigrants.

In this context, it would appear as if men are competing and fighting for women. The fact that South African women are having love relationships with immigrants is a source of deep resentment by South African men, particularly those who are unemployed. This has led to jealousies in the township.

Intra-class Conflict

The perception that immigrants are depriving locals of jobs and are prepared to accept lower pay is a source of intra-class conflict in the township. Writers, including Castles and Kosack (1973), Hylland Eriksen (1993) and Miles (1993), have written on the uneven development of capitalism. This situation has identified immigrant workers with specific socio-economic functions, namely fulfilling the undesirable jobs vacated by local workers in the course of the periodic reorganisation of production. Immigrant workers come to constitute a "lower stratum" of the working class which becomes fragmented. In Alexandra, the immigrant worker has a double and contradicting status. While he may be occupying an undesirable position at the workplace where he works longer hours for less pay, in the township he has a totally different status. There, women desire him, first because, he is working, regardless of how little he earns, and second, by working he is perceived to have wealth. The paradoxical status of the immigrant lies in the belief that he is able to get any South African woman, including the township belles who are pursued by everyone. Some local men think immigrants from Zimbabwe and Mozambique who are not that wealthy use love charms to get the "hot" women desired by all kinds of men.

The fact that immigrants do not have a green ID book means they are exploited and underpaid by owners of capital.[10] This situation is compounded by COSATU's reluctance to unionise immigrant workers.[11] Conflicts between immigrant and domestic working classes take the form of racism and rioting and the kind of pogroms seen in May 2008. Hylland Eriksen (1993) argues that this is "functional" to the system as a whole because these conflicts divert attention from the fundamental contradiction between labour and capital. Race and ethnicity continue to differentiate various sections of the working class with respect to capital, creating specific forms of fracturing and fractioning that intersect class relations and thereby internally divide the working class (Hall 1982).

While the Marxist position is that ethnicity is a false consciousness which would be replaced by a common consciousness of shared and opposed interests, that view remains unattainable. In the present milieu, the unity of the working class as a social movement is incapable of achieving unified collective behaviour and action (Wieviorka 1997). Decades ago, Wolpe (1976) wrote that racial divisions amount to nothing more than the fractionalisation of the working class, common to all capitalist modes of production, of which the South African social formation is a part. There are consequences to this decline: some workers' actions become infiltrated by the nationalist agenda and ideologies, where they develop populist discourses and racist attitudes (Wieviorka 1997). The result has been anti-immigrant sentiments and the despising of ethnic minorities. National identity has thus been loaded with xenophobia and racisms and in Alexandra it has gained impetus with the emergence and presence of other identities. These identities are signified, Othered, and represented and defined in racial terms.

The Dynamics of Cross-Border Relationships

From interviews and conversations with participants, apparently South African women in Alexandra are involved in love relationships with immigrant men and many women seek an immigrant as a partner. The question one can pose here is: Why do South African women long for relationships with "strangers"?

Male migration into Alexandra, which has been occurring for many decades, has meant that the newly arrived immigrants have had to find female partners to cater for their sexual needs and other comforts. Initially, the immigrants were mainly men, who had left their families and even relict wives behind. Immigrant men being involved in love relationships with South African women in Alexandra is not a new phenomenon. This has been happening ever since the advent of migration, as one elderly woman put it:

> *Ntoyakudala le. Abekoko bethu babeyenza.* (This is an old thing, our parents were doing it.)[12]

My conversations with elderly residents revealed that immigrant men from neighbouring countries like Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), Nyasaland (now Malawi), and Mozambique, who were recruited under

the Witwatersrand Native Labour Association (WNLA) to work in Johannesburg mines, settled in the township permanently, married local women, and set up homes. Some even changed their surnames and adopted Zulu, Sotho and Tswana names and never returned home. Such categories of men in Zimbabwean parlance were called either *muchoni* (those who went to Johannesburg and never came back) or *mujubheki* (Johannesburger); they were seen as disconnected from their homes and having been swallowed by the delights of the "Johannesburg lights," the various entertainments and merriments found across the city. These entertainments included beautiful women with soporific powers for seduction and attraction; immigrant men would be caught in these satisfactions and "forget" their homes and families.

Most of the cross-border relationships are the *masihlalisane* (let's live together) or *vat en sit* (snatch and squat) type. One explanation, as I was told, is that the woman has the accommodation and the immigrant stays with her in her domain and it is his duty is to provide for the household. The major reason, however, is that *lobola* (bride wealth) is exorbitant, and these alliances are convenient for both parties. The man and the woman just live together as husband and wife, the man providing material needs, and the woman, conjugal duties. Normally, none of the party is known to the other's respective kin and, as they say, it is a "Jo'burg arrangement." The immigrant usually comes to South Africa alone, is a single man or has left a relict wife back home, and as I was told is "desperate" and needs a woman to provide him with sexual and marital services. On the other hand, the woman is looking for a man to cater for her material needs, would get involved with the immigrant in this ideal transactional arrangement that satisfies both parties. Participants told me women in these kinds of relationships do not like going to the men's countries; for fear that they might never come back. This, in consequence, may lead to tensions in these relationships.

Why Do South African Women Enter into Cross-Border Relations?

Most love relationships between South African women and immigrant men are understood to be materially based. The latter provide money, pay rent, buy groceries and look after the women's child or children, and do it in such a way that the women are well cushioned and comfortable. As seen earlier, immigrant men are perceived to be wealthy and this is a belief that is

widespread across the township. Again, most South African men are unemployed, and the poverty in the township leads women to look for better "opportunities" by finding men who can provide for their needs and wants. Therefore, they are looking for immigrant men because "*bayasupporta*" (meaning they provide, or literally "they support the women with their various needs"). This might have emanated from Nigerian men, who, of all the groups of immigrant men, are seen as the best providers. As a result, all immigrant men are seen to be wealthy like Nigerians. One immigrant man told me:

> The moment you start charming a South African girl, the first thing she asks is: are you Nigerian?[13]

Female participants say Nigerian men are wealthy and have assets. Unlike South African men, Nigerians can easily pay *lobola* of say, R60, 000 without hesitation and though *lobola* is expensive, women desire a man who "marries" them. Some women believe that Nigerians come to South Africa, loaded with US dollars, and since US dollars have more value than the South African Rand, they have more money. Most Nigerians do not live in the township and once they marry the woman, they spirit her out of the township, and live with her in the affluent suburbs. The houses where the women live with their Nigerian spouses are a source of envy to those left in poverty. Not only are they well architectured, with crisply-manicured lawns and gardens, and beautiful interior décors and furniture; the fridges are well stocked with all kind of food and refreshments. Some female participants say a woman with a Nigerian spouse lives in "heaven". A Nigerian man does not mind buying a woman, say, R1,000 shoes, expensive designer clothing and giving her R500 to fix her hair, while a South African man would mumble in parting with his R30. Again, the Nigerian can take a woman to any supermarket and, ask her to fill up the trolley and pay for all the groceries. When I asked how men proposed to women, I was informed that Nigerians use promises of money and wealth upfront saying: "Come on baby, let's eat my money."[14] Instantly the woman would fall for him. The Nigerians also say to the woman: "What are you doing with that poor man? Come to me I will give you everything."[15]

Some female informants told me that women are naturally born gold-diggers who love material things in life: "Non-South African men have money and women love money, that's why they go for them. But women are not the same, it's not that they love money, it's because they love to be treated well and spoiled."[16]

One other reason women enter into cross-border relationships is to escape the physical violence which is perpetrated by South African men. This violence is an internalised norm, sanctioned and substantiated by patriarchal expectations. One female participant told me that South African men are "brought up like that" and are taught to use physical power to show that they are real men, whereas non-South African men show their manhood by providing for the woman with material things. Some women view physical violence against them by their men as an emotional commitment and expression of love. On the other hand, a majority of women are seeking "escape" from this entrapment, hence their attraction to cross-border romantic relationships. Immigrant men are seen as not culturally socialised to beat women. This is the perception of many women, although one female participant informed me that her mother told her that Zimbabwean men have a tendency to beat up their women. Interestingly the fact that immigrants do not beat women may be due to a couple of reasons: the immigrant is in a foreign country where the first thing he is told is: it is a "serious" crime to beat a South African woman. The immigrant is thus governed by fear of the state's legal and judicial machinery and apparatus, which includes the police, the Department of Home Affairs and the courts. The immigrant men generally said that in their home countries there are no perpetual structures of violence that have characterised South African history and configured perceptions of masculinity. Some immigrants think that although in their societies some men beat women, the practice is not morally sanctioned. The veracity of these latter claims is, however, subject to question.

South African participants reported that immigrants have a habit of "showing off", especially in taverns, where they buy women beer, fill tables with bottles of alcohol, play and bet on snooker tables, and are said to be a noisy and boisterous lot. Women say South African men do not know how to provide for a woman; they are stingy and all they want is sex. What I found contradictory is that while immigrants say South African men are misusing money because of their fondness for alcohol, participants also reported that immigrants love going on drinking sprees. Clearly, alcohol is imbibed in huge quantities in the township. This gives rise to the idea that South African men or even immigrants "waste" their money on drink. On one street in Alexandra, I counted seven *shebeens* and taverns, not including many others in adjacent streets. For immigrants, South African men "waste" their money on alcohol. One may pose a question: what is the value attached to "waste" and how is it that there is huge consumption of alcohol in Alexandra?

While immigrants – "*bayasupporta*," – South African men are said not to provide for their women and spend money on alcohol and their friends (as discussed above):

> Immigrant men are much better. They give you money without squabbling. When you ask South African man money, he starts mumbling and says he will get a *skolodo* (credit) somewhere and then give you the money. He never does. They just want to drink their money. It's not that we love material things, we love being spoiled.[17]

Contestations of the Masculinities

The allegation by South African men that immigrants are "stealing our women" is pervasive in the country's townships. In this sense, as I indicated earlier, it seems both sets of men are in a sexual competition for women. The ultimate winner, apparently, is not only the one with a, big, long penis but the one who can provide for the woman, family and dependants. This is the point of distinction between immigrants and South African men. Certainly, there are some "things" – qualities and values – that women are looking for. Despite being labelled gold diggers, for Alexandra women, the man is not just a penis symbol but must come as a "complete package". He must not only meet her sexual and material expectations but also her emotional needs. It seems to me it is the latter that forms the crux of South African women's dissatisfaction with South African men. Again, it is this factor that emerged prominently in my extensive conversations with female participants. This also leads to other outlying forces at play in love relationships in Alexandra: sexism, gender violence and abuse. Women are not only after money, but also keen to escape these oppressions. Immigrant men are seen as better lovers than South African men and the consequences are bitter contestations between the two sets of manhood, which are manifest in racisms and their corollary violent forms.

Being a man in Alexandra encompasses the big penis which many in the community, including men and women, believe the immigrant to be endowed with, and being employed and able to provide for the woman, therefore rendering one lovable. South African female participants say South African men are afraid of independent and competitive women who are superior to them. They would prefer "dumb blondes", who stay at home and do not argue or oppose them and just do whatever they say without question or resistance.[18] Such a woman would run his bath, cook and do

laundry for him while he sits and watches television. South African men, female participants also reported, demand absolute conformity in a woman – that she performs traditional roles and makes babies. Some men look for a trophy woman they can display in public as a means of boosting their manly egos and masculinities. Certainly, women are dismayed by this kind of arrangement. Female participants told me that women go for immigrants because of unpleasant experiences they have or have had with South African men. They say the latter want to dominate women, abuse and isolate them from their families. Non – South African men are said to have more love, that is, they spend more time and money on the women and buy them material things.

Some women said a real woman must provide for her family, clean the house, and wash and cook for her man. One female participant argued that though she is a working woman, she still finds time to do household chores. Nowadays, people employ nannies and "house girls", but she does not like the idea of another woman cooking for her man or washing his underwear. She feels a man must eat food his woman has prepared.

The definitive essence of being a man in Alexandra also means being able to get a *cheri* (girlfriend) and, concomitantly, the ability to sex her, *ukunyoba*. The sexual experience is associated with initiation into manhood, which is socially recognised among the man's peers. In addition, it means having concurrent, multiple partners, with all of whom sex is a major factor. For this reason, an unemployed Alexandra man who cannot access women because of his social position suffers a deep injury to his manhood. The broader connection between unemployment, poverty and masculinity means two things: one, as seen earlier, the contestation between the two sets of manhood: that is, immigrant and South African. Second, it would seem men are involved in sexual competition for women and the one able to provide for her becomes the ultimate winner.

What Do Women Look for in a Man?

One consistent response from female participants was that women look for respect, honesty, communication and love. These women love long-lasting relationships and *bafun' umuzi* (they desire a home and a family). Apparently, South African men do not provide that, according to local women. I was told all they want is to fool around, "gallivant" and *bayajola* (they cheat) and are not serious. The female participants believe all men in Alexandra are *jolling* (cheating and having multiple partners). Some men, however, say

that if men are cheating it means something is seriously wrong with South African women, mainly because they are materialistic and they do not love the man but his money. The implication was that South African women need to be taught to love somebody for who they are and not their material resources.

An elderly woman told me that what makes a woman is her bearing a child. Only once she has had a child can she call herself a woman. That explains why most women would first have a baby before a long-term relationship. Similarly for men: only after giving a woman a baby can he call himself a man and after that he can be involved in a serious relationship. It seems men only use the woman, give her a baby, and dump her. In response to the question of what a relationship should be like, the same elderly woman said that love must be balanced and should not be just about sex. Some South African men were critical of these behaviours; as one man said:

> A man must face his responsibilities. If you damage you must fix it. He must take his woman and kids as a first priority before anything else. Some men in South Africa, as old as fifty are taken to maintenance court by women because they don't look after their kids.[19]

The same man said a man who does not work is the one who mostly creates problems in the house. When some men are unemployed, they start thinking that the woman no longer respects them, so they leave her and get another *cheri* (girl). He said men are charmers and use their tongue to get their way into the new woman's heart. They give her a baby and run away. For immigrant men, it is different because *bayabheja* (they freely give out money; *ukubheja* in township lingo is akin to betting) and are seen as "portable ATMs" and "easy come easy go". This man further said that if South African men do not take responsibility, immigrant men will come and takeover. Women say the dismay and disapproval of South African men over cross-border relationship emanates from jealousy:

> South African men must do a soul searching and ask themselves why they are failing to please their women. If South African men knew how to treat a woman nobody would be complaining. South African men are jealous, they beat up women and they don't trust them.[20]

When I posed the question of whether non-South African men were "taking South African women", Nomxolisi, who has an immigrant lover, said:

> I think they (South African men) deserve it. They are full of nonsense. The rate of cheating among them is higher. They just say to you: come on don't expect to be the only one. But a non - South African man would think twice before he cheats and if he does and his partner finds out, he goes down on his knees apologising. But South African men just say ah dammit and they beat you up and get violent. I think South African men should learn from these guys (non - South African) and what make women go for them.[21]

Are Women Complicit in Their Domination?

The material compulsion for women to be complicit in their own exploitation and abuse is reduced, but not eliminated by the opportunity to develop relationships with immigrant men. While gender violence and abuse of women is common in societies like Alexandra, women themselves partake in activities which lead to objectification of their bodies.

Two-Rand Sly[22]

The chronic poverty and widespread unemployment means women go around looking for money and food and a man who can buy a *two-rand sly*. This is a common food in Alexandra, made up of slices of bread, filled with potato chips, fried eggs, cheese, Vienna sausage and polony. The cost ranges from R5 to R14, depending on the items included (it's called two-rand sly because for some time it used to cost R2). The *sly* is a corruption of the English word slice. It is highly coveted by women. Anyone seen holding or eating it has a certain prestige or status. Any man who can buy a woman the *sly* or an ice cream, which is also widely consumed in the township, can win her heart and consequently sleep with her. Men also propose to have sex with women based on the promises of buying her a *two-rand sly*. Apparently, the *sly* has assumed a more intrinsic value than the normal staple diet of pap (thick maize meal porridge) and it has become a centre of love relationships and abuses. A man can get a woman by buying her the *sly*. At the same time, he can abuse her based on that.

Patriarchy and Abuse

Female participants believe men in general have an ingrained perception of an infallible sexual right to women's bodies. When their advances are turned down, men would use coercion and this has led to many instances of rape, which is a major concern in Alexandra.

Nikezwa from the community radio station, Alex FM, told me that many women are abused and they do not report to the police because either the man is the breadwinner or the relationship is a coercive one, and she is afraid of leaving him because he might assault or even kill her. However, some women think that a man who beats her loves her and the beating is an expression of that love even if he is *snaaks* (nasty). This phenomenon is also exacerbated by huge consumption of alcohol and its abuse.

In many societies, men are the primary agents of violence (Beinart 1992). This is a gender identity construction, determined by social norms, and influenced by historical factors (Morrell 2001). Further, masculinities like femininities, are not only historical but multiple, relational and contradictory as well (Hodgson 2001). Domestic violence in Alexandra is pervasive and a daily reality. Often the distribution of power in intimate relationships is disproportionate. Men are not keen on women who talk back or challenge them. They do so at the risk of a physical assault.

An unemployed man feels shame because the normative expectations of the community are that he should provide for the family. His failure to meet these expectations is a source of stress and is compounded by alcohol abuse. Thapelo from ADAPT, a community organisation working on domestic abuse, believes that because men are unemployed, they are derided and abused by their women who tell them: "You don't want to go and look for work. All you want to do is sleep and drink." The result is that they vent their anger through physical violence, not only on women but also on other men. Of course, for a long time women have been single mothers and providing for their families and raising their children by themselves. That independence ends, and oppression begins when she gets into a love relationship. He starts saying, "Baby, don't work, I will provide for you." But when he becomes unemployed, problems set in, often related to the man's inability to provide for his family. Men's use of physical violence to, hurt vulnerable people, like women and children who have less power, is a frequent and daily occurrence in the township. In fact, for the man to be a "real man" he has to use violence. Women resent the fact that men want to dominate, abuse and give them babies which the men do not support. Far

from being inured to the apartheid structures, black men are still caught up in and support the oppressive discourses those structures created, as Ratele (2004) argues. Manliness as a sexual and social reproductive capacity, and capacity to fight and exercise violence, is a first and foremost duty for a man in many societies (Bourdieu 2001) and Alexandra is no exception. As a result the genderisation of male and female bodies reflects relations of domination which become naturalised. This, of course, emanates from colonial contact and colonialism itself is a masculine and patriarchal system.

Conclusion

Migration into Alexandra has been going on for over a century. Initially, it was mainly men who left behind wives and families in their home countries. Many did not return home, instead setting up permanent family structures in the township. That trend continues in contemporary society, albeit in changing social and economic conditions. The ingrained belief that immigrants are "stealing our women" is an important reflection of social relational and mundane interactions in South African townships. It needs further interrogation and research. The challenge is to find out what it really means to "steal our women"? What moral and social implications does it have in the moral universe of black communities and, finally, what ramifications does it have for attitudes and violent attacks on black African immigrants? One cannot have conclusive answers to these questions, some of which I have attempted to answer in this chapter. Most importantly the study dealt with and revealed the operation and functions of myths in Alexandra, and illuminates the neglected case of cross-border love relationships in contemporary South African townships. They do help us understand township social relationships and it is from such myths that social actors develop perceptions, prejudices and at times outright resentment.

Notes

1. The 2008 violence first emanated from the male Madala hostel and spread throughout the township. The hostel is one of many apartheid creations which housed single-sex migrants.
2. IFP (Inkatha Freedom Party) is/was a major political party in South Africa.
3. African National Congress (ANC) is a liberation movement which is now the ruling party in South Africa.
4. Conversation with Mrs. Dlomo, 9 June 2009.

5. Conversation with a female South African woman, 25 June 2009.
6. Conversation with Father Cairns, 10 June 2009.
7. AmaKalanga is one of many insulting terms used by South Africans to refer to non-nationals.
8. Conversation with an unemployed South African young man, 26 June 2009. Kew, Marlboro, and Wynberg are industrial areas surrounding Alexandra.
9. There are, of course, women who are employed in various occupations. It seems to me that doesn't displace the need for their security and comfort.
10. In the past two years the South African government has offered a special dispensation for Zimbabwean nationals to acquire legal status in the country. I am not sure if this has had any significant impact on the relations of production. The ID book has a social life that determines exclusion and inclusion and is reminiscent of the apartheid era. Alexandra residents continue to refer to the ID book with apartheid lexicon as pass. It is significant in the construction of citizenship at both local community and governmental levels.
11. Confederation of South African Trade Unions, South Africa's major trade union.
12. Conversation with an elderly South African woman, 10 July 2009.
13. Conversation with one of my key participants, 14 July 2009.
14. Conversation with a female South African, Nosizwe, 11 July 2009.
15. Ibid.
16. Conversation with a female South African, 13 July 2009.
17. Conversation with a South African woman, 13 July 2009.
18. I heard the term "stupid blondes" from one middle-class female participant I conversed with, who grew up in Alexandra but has since moved up the social ladder and now lives in the suburbs. I have not heard this term used in the township, though.
19. Conversation with a South African man, 30 June 2009.
20. Conversation with a female participant, 7 July 2009.
21. Conversation with Nomxolisi, 4 July 2009.
22. In different townships it's known by different names – for example, *kota* (quarter) and *spatlo* and there is also a variant of this meal called *spykos*.

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CHAPTER 7

The Immigrant's Phallus

Abstract This chapter is about the discourse on the immigrant penis and its role in arousing jealousies and violence, especially among South African men. It discusses the discourse on male sexuality in Alexandra, which rests upon the idea of stereotypes. This helps explain the male element of the anti-immigrant violence seen in May 2008 and even before this time. The chapter argues that it is not only the discursive patterns with regards to the genitalia that are a cause: the causes are entangled, multidimensional and all converge to have an impact on the relationships between immigrants and South Africans.

Keywords Penis jealousies • Violence • Stereotypes • Genitalia

The preceding chapters dealt largely with the structural, cultural and economic aspects of love relationships in the post-1994 Alexandra township. I will now explore some instances of the sexual logic of intra-black racism that have inflected onto black populations in township communities. Importantly, these have relevance in the contemporary social relationships between immigrants and South Africans in the country, in Alexandra in particular. These three ideas, that is, material, cultural and sexual, converge in very definite instances. The previous chapter dealt largely with poverty and unemployment and how these lead to masculine competition for women. As I indicated earlier, this is not enough to explain the level of

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intra-black racism in the township. I now look at the sexual logic and how it is part of these social relationships. This chapter is about the discourse on the immigrant penis and its role in arousing racial jealousies and racial violence, especially among South African men. It discusses the discourse on male sexuality in Alexandra which rests upon the idea of stereotypes. This helps explain the male element of the anti-immigrant violence seen in May 2008 and even before. I argue that it is not only the discursive patterns with regards to the genitalia that are a cause: the causes are entangled, multidimensional and all converge to influence the relationships between immigrants and South Africans. In the previous chapter I went further and examined the dynamics and types of cross-border relationships, exploring why South African women desire to have an immigrant as a partner. Again I looked at the contestations between the two sets of manhood, that is, immigrant and South African, and what it means to be a man in Alexandra. Taken as a whole, a discussion on immigrant genitalia excites animated conversations among both men and women. Myths regarding the immigrant male's phallus are extensive.

I must reiterate here that this aspect of my research, and moreover certain contents of this book, are not stereotyping South African men and their penises. The information presented here is drawn from the interviews I conducted during the course of my study.

Fanon (1967) famously argues that racism can be explained at the genital level. In his analysis of Negrophobia, the myth of a black male's big penis and his tremendous sexual powers, which begets fears in white men, is the basis of genital racism. The black man's penis is attached to his corporeality, is seen as a biological danger and, ultimately, "it is his tangible personality that is lynched" (Fanon 2008: 142). In addition, the black man is genital as well as representing evil, ugliness, baseness and sin (ibid.). The archetypal figure of the threatening super sensual dark villain or black beast has been prominent in Western civilization for many centuries and the threat of a dark villain to the white goddess features prominently in Greek mythology (Hoch 1979). Transcending to the medieval Christian theology, the devil is depicted as a super sensual and lascivious black male with large penis capable of super masculine exertion. This villain is not only darker or black but also dirtier, hairier, ugly, dishevelled and also threatening and immoral. The conflict between the hero, who defends the white goddess, and the dark villain, becomes a struggle between understandings of manhood, which can be expressed in a series of contrasts: human versus animal, white versus black, spiritual versus canal, higher versus lower and noble versus base. The

dichotomy, therefore, is the superiority of the morality and manhood of the "civilized", the barbaric and base villains and the good versus evil. In this context it also means the lighter hue of the black South African lighter hue compared with the darker immigrant. In South Africa, the defence of white manhood has historically meant the defence of the white woman. That logic has now been transferred into black communities. The reductionism of the black male to an animal, in the sixteenth, seventeenth centuries and later, was in the context of him being forged to a sexual link to animals and therefore viewed as lewd, lascivious and wanton (Jordan 1968; Frederickson 2002). The black male sexuality is then seen in bestial terms and a drive thrusting up from lesser males to higher females and originating from beasts. Sex, sexual relations and sexual domination is inherent in white-anti-black racism. Wintrop Jordan observes:

> In West Indian islands and to less extent South Carolina, racial slavery consisted of unsheathed dominion by relatively small numbers of white men over enormous numbers of Negroes, and it was in these colonies that Negro men were most stringently barred from sexual relations with white women. Sexually as well as in every other way, Negroes were utterly subordinated. White men extended their dominion over their Negroes to the bed, where the sex act itself served as ritualistic re-enactment of the daily pattern of sexual dominance. (1968: 141)

The representation of the black male as lusty, virile and lascivious gave some justifications for sanctions against sexual intercourse with the white woman. The black male was attributed with the large phallus, which was bigger than the white man's, and this belief "blended flawlessly with the white man's image of the Negro" (ibid.: 158). Anxiety and feelings of sexual inadequacy aroused sexual jealousy and envy in white men, implying that "perhaps the Negro better performed his nocturnal offices than the white man. Perhaps, indeed, the white man's woman really wanted the Negro more than she wanted him" (ibid.: 152). In any case, "... there was probably some objective basis for the charge, since sexual intercourse with a white woman must in part have been for Negro men an act of retribution against the white man" (ibid.: 151) The consequences were ghastly for the black male, as manifested in castrations, emasculation, and lynching. Of course, in Lacanian terms the phallus is a signifier and not just simply an organ of insemination. It symbolises power and, in common with other objects and insignia, it enables the subject who acquires them into positions

in which they exercise power; at the same time, it is synonymous with power (Žižek 2006).

Although many writers attribute racism in both South Africa and American South to economic determinism, in the American Deep South, where genital racism was strongly manifest, the occasions of great violence towards blacks, particularly male, arose in connection with the taboo of society prohibiting any intimacy between the black male and a white female.

Similarly, Fanon (1967) observes that in all cruelties, tortures and beatings (as seen in 2008's anti-immigrant violence in South Africa), there are many elements of sexuality. As Fanon again notes, the viewing of the black male as a penis symbol, his lynching, like the May 2008 violence, is a sexual revenge. Surveys in the 1930s in southern American towns found a widespread belief that the genitalia of Negro males were larger than those of white males. Thus, in both the American South and Nazi Germany, the fear of sexual pollution or violation by the allegedly subhuman race is close to the heart of displays of murderous or genocidal racism (Frederickson 2002). In Nazi Germany, Jewish males, like blacks, in the racist imagination, were seen as potential seducers and violent sexual predators (Dingwall cited in Hoch 1979). The notion of the male Jew as a cunning seducer and violent rapist was a staple of much Nazi propaganda, highlighting the fear that his relationship with a German woman would pollute and contaminate the very racial purity that Nazis were endeavouring to preserve (Frederickson 2002). Fanon (1967) argues that the whilst the Negro was feared for his perceived large penis and posed a biological danger, the Jew was an intellectual danger, resented because of his potential for acquisitiveness and deemed to control everything, including wealth and positions of power. This kind of genital racism which happened a long time ago is in my view also manifesting in contemporary South African black communities. The analogy between Western mythology and contemporary South African black relations derives from racial sexual jealousies. One may realize the difference of both contexts, but the universality of these kinds of perceptions and beliefs requires a similar analysis. Genital racism transcends time, place, spatial location and social context.

Hoch (1979) writes that the development of a masculine hierarchy is closely associated with unequal access to women who are conceived of as sexual property. The main significance and market value of masculinity is a symbol and is measured by length of one's penis, economic status, sexual opportunity, the number of conquests and the size of their pocket. Masculinity is often seen as an almost numerical evaluation of the sexual marketability of

the person, largely reduced to genital function and conceived in terms of a commodity. Similarly, the sexual act is not only a sexual relation but a social relation of domination, appropriation and possession (Bourdieu 2001). Manliness and virility is about increasing honour which is not divorced from physical virility, especially sexual potency. Again, manliness in many societies is about the capacity for sexual and social reproduction; the capacity to fight and to exercise violence which is a primary duty (Bourdieu 2001).

There is a widespread belief in Alexandra that the immigrant is endowed with a big penis. This also includes men from Limpopo, Vendas and Tsonga/Shangani in particular. The immigrant's big penis is a subject of discussion among women, on street corners, in homes or wherever they gather. These kinds of discussion bring curiosity to women, who want to find out for themselves and partake in this "second to none" sexual experience. The women I conversed with informed me that they love big penises and would shun a man with a smaller one. One woman told me:

> All women say foreign men are good in bed… they use *muti* to get hard erection and the penises are big because they eat *muti*. Women love big penises.

Apart from the big penis, I was informed, immigrants are said to be better performers in bed, capable of engaging women in an unforgettable sexual experience and bringing them to a "maddening" orgasm. Endowing the immigrant with a big penis becomes a reductionism akin to beast-like sexual capabilities. Further, it is synonymous with the occult. In southern African societies, the *tokoloshe*, a small hairy familiar used by witches, is believed to have an extra-large penis and overwhelming sexual potency. The immigrant's genitalia is a metaphor of the same. Of course, the persecution of immigrants, destruction of their property, burning and looting their homes, killing and maiming them is a particular form of witch hunt.

During the colonial era, Fanon (1967) observes that the black male was seen as a penis symbol, whose sexual potency was hallucinating to the white woman and that this was a basis for lynching and violent racial crimes emanating from racial jealousy. The same views are apparently still prevalent in the communities of contemporary black South Africa. The contradiction is that they are manifest among black populations. The black African immigrant is attributed with a big penis and sexual potency and is seen, therefore, as a threat to the South African woman. Naomi Nkealah (2009) and Pumla Gqola (2008) have both conducted analysis of the penis

discourse in contemporary South Africa and in their articles they articulate how the myth of the immigrant penis is a source of stereotyped masculinities and jealousies from South African men.

During my ethnography, I could not clearly establish how the immigrant came to be associated with the big penis. My female participant, Tumi, who at the time of the interview was in a relationship with a Nigerian man, said that this myth emanated long back, beginning with Nigerian men, who were said to be endowed with large genitalia and to be better performers in bed. Neither could it be known if this belief is true or simply a figment of the imagination of local people. Of course, nobody has used a tape measure or a ruler to measure any man's (both immigrant and South African) penis – erect or flaccid. Despite this, both South African men and women believe the immigrant has a big penis. Although Tsongas/Shangani and Vendas are South African, they have been notoriously excluded from the mainstream South African identity are seen as minorities like immigrants and are put in the same cluster.

The *Muti* Logic

It is widely believed in the township that immigrants, Tsongas/Shangani and Vendas have big penises because they use *muti* for hard erection or were given *muti* to eat by their elders when they were young. I conversed with some immigrant men if they were really given *muti* to lengthen and thicken the penis. One participant from Sudan told me:

> In my culture, from a young age, elderly women, pull, and play with the boy's penis. It ends up getting big and long. If they overdo it, it might end up getting so long that when the boy becomes a man, he has to roll it inside his underwear.

Another man from Zimbabwe said:

> When I was young, a goat was slaughtered at our home. My elders, including my mother's brother, were sitting by themselves chatting and eating some roasted goat meat. Then my mother's brother called me over to eat some meat. The other elders protested, saying this meat is not for young boys like me. But my uncle insisted. He gave me some piece of roasted goat testicles and he said: eat boy, you are a man. That meat was sprinkled with some *muti*. I think that is the reason I am always horny like a goat. All women who have come across me can testify that.

The immigrant men talked of several issues, from being made to lick a vagina of a girl; that immigrants have a lot of strength which has to do with their diet and that South Africans are weak because they eat a lot of genetically modified organisms (GMOs). S'busiso, a Zimbabwean who sells CDs and DVDs at a shopping centre in Alexandra, said that they smoke good marijuana. He says when he smokes it he can make a woman go crazy. But when I told him South Africans smoke marijuana too, he was noncommittal. Nonetheless, he told me:

> We, foreigners have made all these locals girls cry with pleasure and they love us for that.

I asked South African women who are in, or have had, relationships with immigrants if they indeed have big penises. The responses were varying. One, who is involved with a Nigerian man and previously been dating a Zimbabwean and a South African, said of the Nigerian:

> His penis is wholesome. . . he is good.

Some South African women informants were evasive on this question, instead saying that men are men, there is no difference.

I had a couple of conversations with some herbalists and "doctors" who give out pamphlets on the streets of Johannesburg. I wanted to find out the extent to which men seek penis enlargement *muti* and creams. One pamphlet I got had "testimonies" from men who had seen benefits of these *muti*:

- The size of my *4/5* (penis) had actually ruined my relationship; I tried a lot of doctors and exercise but failed. After using Chinese formula, I gained a size I wanted.
- Before using Delay Chinese cream and powder my friends called me a "1 minute guy" but now I am happy, thanks to life solution.
- My penis was small; I was shy to propose love to a woman! I was scared they will laugh at me. I used Chinese herb remedies and in seven days my penis grew bigger.

I conversed with three "doctors" and they told me that they get regular visitors from both immigrants and South African men in need of help. The "doctors" said that their *muti* is strong and does "wonders" and clients have

to apply it on the penis every day until it gets big. While the immigrants said their *muti* is sometimes a one-off treatment and a lifetime "guarantee", apparently the "doctors" *muti* has to be constantly applied for results.

I paid a visit to a "doctor" operating around Johannesburg's Braamfontein area. He led me into his office with modern furnishings, the reception area had comfortable sofas, a telephone and Dr. Phil was being broadcast from a 21-inch colour television. He told me to remove my shoes and led me to his "surgery", which was a total contrast to the modern setting of the reception. The "surgery" was a microcosmic world of its own, a traditionally designed space in the shape of a hut, walls plastered with reeds and animal skins and surrounded by wide paraphernalia of tools of his trade. He gave me a counter book in which I wrote my age, full name, address and telephone numbers. I reiterated that I was doing research, but he insisted on asking me if I had some problems. He asked me if I was "strong" and he could give me some *muti* to that effect. I managed to get some information from him. He said though clients come to consult on problems caused by occult, bad luck or recovery of stolen goods, many men who come for his services, are looking for *muti* to enlarge their penises and make them "strong". Apparently the need, demand and market for this kind of *muti* are wide. The "doctor" said a man must not just last for less than five minutes in a sex session but should go for at least thirty minutes, before he ejaculates and he has that *muti*. The price range of the *muti* depends on the age of the man which is put in categories: 18 to 30; 30 to 50; and 50 and above. The older the man the more expensive the *muti* because he is much more in need of it than a younger man.

The immigrants said they complement penis size by drinking concoctions, which are unavailable in South Africa. In Zimbabwe, it comes in different forms: some is powder that is sprinkled on cooked cow feet and some is drunk with sorghum beer. There is a Zulu concoction called *imbiza yamaZulu* and people say its drunk mainly by taxi drivers and that, accordingly, women flock to them. At this point, the whole penis discussion becomes mired in ambiguity. Is it that South African *muti* is "weaker" than immigrants'? In Alexandra, there is, of course, a general and widespread belief that *muti* from across the borders is stronger (this includes *muti* from Limpopo, possessed by Vendas, Tsongas and Pedis). Nonetheless, whether *muti* from across the borders is more potent than that which comes from South Africa it cannot be entirely validated because these assertions are ingrained in societal knowledge and belief systems. Or is it a question of the art of lovemaking and are immigrants tutored in this art

form? I conversed with a Ugandan man who said among the BaNyankole, a man has to know some "tricks" and his failure to satisfy his woman is a great source of embarrassment. She would report him to her parents that he is a "chicken" or if it's in the village, to the chief. I also talked with a BaNyankole woman and she said, a man has to know what needs to be done to satisfy a woman, and if a woman has not been tutored by her people, he will teach her. She said that she has not been exposed to such tutoring and it was her husband who took her through the process. I am also aware that some South African ethnic groups send boys to the "mountain" to be initiated as men and girls also undergo the same process. I could not get much information on what happens there. However, one female participant, said:

> Initiation schools don't teach them how to make love. What they know when they come from there is to beat up a woman.

The big penis myth remains what it is – a myth. Its ambiguity serves a functional and social purpose in the township. Ferguson articulates the social function of myths:

> First there is the popular usage, which takes a myth to be a false or factually inaccurate version of things that has come to be widely believed. Second, there is the anthropological use of the term, which focuses on the story's social function: a myth in this sense is not just a mistaken account but a cosmological blueprint that lays down fundamental categories and meanings for the organisation and interpretation of experience. (Ferguson 1998: 13)

Conclusion

Although immigrant men and some South African women collude in the big penis myth, this cannot be entirely verified because in my fieldwork I have not seen the penises of either the immigrant or the South African men. These myths (like immigrant men "steal" local women and jobs and do crimes and so forth) do not just remain myths. They become beliefs and social realities that shape people's lives and experiences in these social relationships. Further, these become stereotypes and if the immigrant man is believed to have a big penis, in that sense he is being stereotyped. Paradoxically, the immigrant doesn't see this as such: he boasts of his big penis and uses it to "make amends" to his lost manhood, status and

inferiority. Since his daily experience, is a subjection to hate and prejudices, he uses his penis as a symbol to assert his manliness and to avenge by having relationships with South African men's "women" and "fucking them to a point of craziness." In this emergence of phallocentricism, the immigrant becomes a man because of his penis and his ability to provide for the women and uses that to assert his status. While bell hooks (1992) asserts this sexually defined masculine ideal is rooted in physical domination and the sexual possession of women, whether or not this statement applies to the Alexandra context is debatable. For the reason that South African women enter into cross-border relationships not only for the immigrant's big penis but to escape physical domination and sexual possession they feel South African men subject them to.

Some male immigrants told me that many women enter into relationships with them because of the delirium of the terrific sexual experience they have with the immigrant in bed. It is not that they love the immigrant. They are hallucinated and fascinated by his penis, which is an object, a thing, and also the sexual potency, orgasm and sexual satisfaction he brings. After getting the satisfaction she yearns for, she may leave him or victimise him and go on with her life, and leave him used, abused and broken-hearted.

The immigrant's big penis has led to some consequences, the most acute example being the May 2008 violence. The belief that the immigrant is "gifted" with a large penis and that South African women go for him for that reason gives rise to racial jealousies. Further, if the South African man despises the immigrant for the reason that he has a big penis and that women love him for that, then he might be yielding to a feeling of sexual inferiority (Fanon 1967). By viewing the immigrant as a penis symbol, the penis as a symbol of manhood and moreover masculinity, the contestations between these two sets of manhood (that is immigrant and South African), come into play.

The discussion in this chapter has been on immigrant genitalia. Nonetheless this cannot be examined in isolation. There are other factors that combine with this if the understanding of cross-border love relationships and how they cause racisms in Alexandra is to be complete.

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CHAPTER 8

Particularisms and Relationships

Abstract Love relationships between male immigrants and South African women are often infected with certain cultural prejudices. Differences in culture and nationality play a role in how these relationships play out. Both males and females have their own beliefs with regard to these relationships and these borders on myths and legends. This is in addition to the material values which are attached. Love relationships between male immigrants and South African women are a major source of resentment, tension and xenophobia in the township. There is however, always room for negotiation and that is circumstantial. Stereotypes, culture, difference and certain particularisms weigh heavily in these relationships. These do not only abide to immigrant males but South Africans of different ethnic origin. All these comprise a gamut of historical constructions of identity and difference.

Keywords Prejudices • Nationality • Relationships • Identity • Difference

Love relationships between male immigrants and South African women are often infected with certain cultural prejudices. Differences in culture and nationality play a role in how these relationships play out. Both male and female have their own beliefs with regard to these relationships and these often border on myths and legends. This is in addition to the material values which are attached.

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Nice Time Girls

During my conversations with female informants I was led to one tavern that is frequented by Alexandra "nice time" girls. As I discovered later, this place is a microcosmic representation of some cross-border love relationships in the township. The girls who drink in the tavern are mostly young women, some aged only fifteen or sixteen. They "specialise" in going for male immigrant patrons because they are seen as *dom* (dull) or they are *obhare* (fools) who think with their "balls". The *dom* and *obhare* men are principally from a small number of groups: Malawians, Zimbabweans, Mozambicans and Vendas and Tsongas/Shangani. One of my female informants, an elderly Tsonga woman, told me that the girls also consider her *dom* because she is from Limpopo and sometimes they want to drink her beer and she has to use a "strong" hand to ward them off.

The immigrant men are *dom* because they open their wallets easily and *bayadliwa* (are eaten). When I related the nice time girls' scenario to one Zimbabwean immigrant, S'busiso, told me that immigrants are seen by South African women as "portable ATMs" and as "easy come easy go". When the immigrant is paid, he declares all the money to the woman and she only gives him some for transport or beer. The result is he ends up "forgetting" his family back home and neglecting the moral duty of providing for them.

Of course, the girls work their way into the men's hearts and once it's open, he opens his wallet. It is usual to see tables where the immigrants are sitting, surrounded by beer bottles. The perception is that they have money. After some inquiries, I was told that some of them get the beer on credit and pay the owner at the end of the week or month, depending on when they are paid. When a local girl gets an immigrant boyfriend it is called *ubamb' bhatshi* (This is a term that is difficult to translate. Literally, it means "to hold a coat"). Metaphorically, it means she has hit the jackpot; she will "eat" the man until his pockets are empty. I was told that when she gets the man she calls over her friends to partake in the merriment. Once she has made the man buy her drinks and food, and sometimes pinching his pockets, and realising his money is finished, she leaves him and go to another table for a new "victim" or alternatively moves on to the next tavern. Some of the girls also have South African boyfriends who would also be drinking in the same bare. Sometimes she introduces him to the immigrant boyfriend as her

brother. The immigrant would also start buying the s'*bali* (brother-in-law) drinks. The reason why the girls go for immigrants may be twofold: first, the immigrants are seen as *dom* and can do anything to please the woman and can be "eaten" easily. Secondly, South African men are seen as "clever" because they are "stingy" and cannot easily be "eaten". Again, once the woman has "eaten" the South African man's money, she can't in any way evade him or refuse to go and sleep with him because *bayashaya* (they beat up women). When it's time to go, the woman has to fulfil the sexual obligation, there is no negotiation.

These relationships are transactional in nature; the immigrant provides for the woman in return for her fulfilling sexual obligations. In many instances, that is not the case. After "eating" the immigrant, she will refuse to go with him for the night, thereby confounding his expectations. Neither can he force her because her South African boyfriend and his friends get involved and say:

> Hey *baba*, don't force the woman. She doesn't want to go with you that is it.

Or they may say:

> Hey *baba*, this is our woman, where do you want to go with her?

The immigrant cannot offer an argument nor force the woman because he fears a beating from her boyfriend and his friends. Neither can he beat her because the worst crime an immigrant can commit is "beating up a South African woman": the police will come with three vans to collect him. Arrest and detention are things he fears most, especially if he doesn't have "papers".

Oftentimes the women engage in brutal fights with each other that include broken bottles and knives over immigrant men. This happens when one woman accuses the other of having "snatched" her boyfriend. This boyfriend would usually be the one who freely gives out money and buys a lot of drink. Fighting in the tavern is generally pervasive. I witnessed one fight the girls had with a male worker of the tavern. They told me that the men have more power because they are men and women are powerless and also that the men carry guns and they can easily subdue women.

Types of Cross-Border Relationships

Casino Type

Immigrant men are said to be *bayabheja*. In the township lingo, *ukubheja* is synonymous with betting, either on the horses or at the casino. Like all betting or forms of gambling, there are two possible outcomes: win or lose. The immigrant might win the woman's heart on the basis of him freely opening his wallet and emptying his pockets. She provides him with some comforts, sexual and conjugal rights or even bears him a child. In some cases, he might secure South African citizenship and that would broaden his employment prospects. On the other hand, he might lose, just like in a casino. After doing everything for her, the moment his money is finished she might leave him and run away. While this kind of incident is related to "nice time" girls, it's also prevalent in relationships in the wider community.

A greater stereotypical perception in the community aligns Xhosa women with materialism, with regard to cross-border love relationships. As one female informant told me, when a Xhosa woman, mostly those coming from rural areas, gets an immigrant man, she calls home and says, "Mama, I have some good news."

The mother says, "what good news *sana* (daughter)"?

The girl says, "Mama, I found a job in Johannesburg."

In this sense, a man has many similarities to a job; she takes his money and sends it home. As a result, some immigrants I came across said they would tell their countrymen to be wary of South African women, especially Xhosas, because they are: *"fast, they can come with a lorry and take all your property when you are away and disappear. Where will you look for her? She is from the rural areas and you don't even know her people. Or she can kill you and take all your money and property".*

Many women I talked to said that Xhosa women love money and don't mind going with all kinds of nationalities as long they fulfil financial obligations. One woman, who is Tswana, told me:

> I am afraid of Nigerian men. But Xhosas don't mind going out with them. I can date all kinds of men but not Nigerians. Xhosa women, in terms of temperament are close to our West African brothers, they can sort each other out.

Some immigrant men are said to give the woman a baby and leave her for good; they either return to their countries or they go and stay in another

place where they get themselves another woman. Consequently, women are dismayed as they have to raise the babies by themselves and the community has many complaints about these phenomena. This is exacerbated by the fact that no *lobola* has been paid; the couple will be living in the *masihlalisane* type of arrangement and neither of them has been introduced to their respective kin. The men would also have left relict wives back home. When they come to the community they do not tell the women that they are married, meaning that they can dump the women easily. The feeling is that it is difficult for a man to support two households for a sustained period of time. Again, if the man does something terrible to the woman, such as beating or killing her, he runs away and nobody would ever locate them because they don't have "passes."

Bribe and Take

Following my observation of "bribe and take" relationships, I likened them to one travelling on a highway at high speed or travelling on a car without headlights. The police stops them and say, "Eh what's happening here?" and one says, "Officer, let's talk. I give you something, it would be good for you, it would be good for me and it would be good for all of us." One bribes the officer and drives on.

These "bribe and take" relationships are characterised by *ukudhiza* (bribery) and they often happen when the woman's parents are poor. Though they may not approve of the relationship, they give a tacit consent, so long as the man, at the end of the week or the month or whenever he is paid, meets certain obligations. These include buying groceries, giving them money and other acts of kindness. In this sense the man is bribing the woman's parents for him to have the right to stay with her. Seemingly, when he fails to meet these obligations, he abdicates that right.

In my study, I met a Mozambican man in overalls who does some odd jobs. He told me he was staying with a South African woman. He was complaining that when he takes R20 from his pay she gives him "hell", accusing him of drinking the whole pay. Of course, she expects him to surrender all his earnings. She goes around telling her friends what an irresponsible man he is and that is very damaging to his ego. He said that whenever he is drunk, she searches his pockets and steals his money and that he is not happy because she buys beer for other men (and she loves drinking a lot) with his own money. She expects him to buy her expensive things because she loves *izinto ze top* (expensive and high-status items). He knows

her parents, but he has since ceased complaining to them because each time they tell him: *asizingeni indaba zenu* (we don't interfere in your matters). He can't beat her because a South African woman should "never be beaten". The parents don't have a problem with the relationship, however, because the man *uyadhiza*. The previous night he had not slept at home, because she also doesn't sleep at home many nights.

Not all relationships are material-based in quite this way. Some are premised on genuine love with both parties loving the other for who they are. **No,** a South African woman who had been in a relationship with a Nigerian for three years, became attracted to him long before she knew where he was from. Phenotypically, he doesn't look like an outsider because he is "light skinned like South Africans." This is her fourth relationship: previously she had been involved with a South African, a Zimbabwean and a man from Botswana. Consequently, she cannot make general remarks about South African men because she had had little involvement with them. Though the one she was dating was an arrogant type who kept telling her, "You think you are the only girl? There are millions more out there." She felt he thought she was doing him a favour by becoming his girlfriend. The Zimbabwean and the Nigerian are very humble people: they feel she is doing them a favour by being in love with her. What she treasures most in the relationship is that he respects her, her opinions and values and involves her in his plans. For her, material things are not prerequisites and were not the reason she got into the relationship in the first place, even though this is what some women do.

Tshidi, who is involved with a man from Zimbabwe, got into the relationship because she felt it was best for her. She was looking for a man who would meet her emotional needs and she found him to be the perfect match. Being an ambitious person, she needed somebody who could handle her sense of independence, and who would also be supportive and reliable. Apparently, he is a good father to their two-year-old daughter and acts as a co-parent whenever she is busy somewhere. There is a belief that South African women are involved with non-South African men for monetary and material benefits. In her case there is no money involved because he has limited finances and she feels this misconception to be unfair. Sometimes, though she gets into arguments with her man when she is short of money and wishes he could earn a little bit more but that's not an everyday thing. Previously, she has dated men from other countries. When she dated a Congolese, and because he is of darker hue, she used to get strange looks from people who thought that she was "eating" his money.

When they would go into a restaurant, she would pay but still people would say she was not interested in him as a person, but was only after his money. For her it was like: there is another foreign man dating a beautiful South African woman… she is dating below her status, below her level.

The Cultural Logic

Most women believe that non-South African men, Nigerians in particular, have a "culture." The Nigerian "culture", they say, stipulates that a man should never argue with a woman, and worse still fight with, or beat, her. One female participant said that if a woman has not swept the house or done household chores, the man does all that quietly. Immigrant men are said to be afraid of maltreating the woman because of unknown repercussions associated with spirits of the woman, in her cultural domain.

Others find it strange that Zimbabweans pay *lobola* late at night while in South Africa it is paid during the day. For this reason, most parents are hesitant to have their daughters marry non-nationals. However, I could not verify where the participant got this story, because, being from Zimbabwe myself, *lobola* is not paid late in the night.

Though cross-border relationships are generally accepted in the community, it was revealed that men, and unemployed men in particular, resent them because of the conception that immigrants are "stealing our women." Some parents do not approve of these relationships because they are afraid of embarrassment from neighbours and unsure what they would say if their daughter is in a relationship with a non-South African whose origin and culture is unknown. However, one of my participants, S'busiso from Zimbabwe, has had a steady relationship with a South African girl for a year and is known to her mother and she doesn't have a problem with that.

In 2008 there were rumours going around in the township of a 16-year-old South African girl who married a Nigerian man. The Nigerian had supposedly paid R60 000 *lobola* and took the girl to Nigeria. She is said to have come back in a coffin. The Nigerian reported that she had got sick and died there. When the coffin was searched at the airport, her body was stashed with drugs. People in Alexandra believed the man had killed her so that he could smuggle narcotics into the country. As a result of the circulation of such stories, there was an intensification of prejudicial attitudes towards non-nationals and an increased resentment of cross-border love relationships.

Another dimension of these relationships is that when non-South African men have a child with the woman, the offspring uses the woman's surname. This is mainly because in these cases the father doesn't have "papers." Culturally it means, therefore, that by virtue of the child carrying the woman's name, she belongs to her and the man doesn't have control over the child. In the patrilineal systems of most African societies, this is a deep injury to the man and a source of contestations in these relationships.

For **Tshidi**, who is Tswana and is in a relationship with a Zimbabwean man, the problem with her people started when their baby was born. Mainly it was to do with the naming of the child and damages. The man had broken into the family (*ho thobela*) without the consent of Tshidi's father, by impregnating their daughter. Therefore, he did not do it in a legitimate way and was liable to punitive measures to correct that. This doesn't imply, however, that he must marry her, but that if she happens to meet another man, she would be bringing the child into this new relationship. Again, the child would carry the mother's name until the outstanding damages have been settled. This means he had to pay *lobola* for the child, rather than the mother. Unless and until he does that, the child carries the mother's name (which ironically is the name of Tshidi's father). In the traditional sense, Tshidi still belongs to her father and for a man to break in is like tearing a child from its parent. Upon birth, the child's first name was given by Tshidi's mother, the second by her and the third by the baby's father. The first two names, however, are the ones appearing on the child's birth certificate.

Tshidi attributes this state of affairs to cultural particularism that is synonymous to prejudices. Her people are afraid of people who are different from them. Though her man is Zimbabwean, the worst ethnic group she would have brought into the family are Xhosas. She told me:

> If I had brought in a Xhosa, my mother would have said, oh my God Tshidi! But bringing a Zimbabwean, she said, oh my Gooooooooooood!

Her mother used to say that Xhosas cut off baby fingers and feed their children to snakes. She doesn't feel comfortable in the presence of her relatives during family gatherings and doesn't mention her man's name at all because she feels embarrassed as her relatives say she has brought shame on the family. The perception is that their ethnic group is superior and jokes are made about her man. Her aunt always tells her that she would go and live in *Zimbabweeeee* and in her imagination Zimbabwe is some strange and

peculiar place. Tshidi might have done "better" though, if she had brought in a non-South African man who is coloured, Indian, white or a black American or a black man from the United Kingdom. A black African immigrant, however wealthy he might be, remains a non-starter.

Another participant, **Tumi** informed me that her grandfather used to tell her that South Africans are like domestic cows whose meat is tender and whose blood is soft. Immigrants are like the wild cow, the Brahman, with wild blood. When these two cows mix their blood, the offspring inherit the wild blood of the Brahman. Thus marriages with immigrants were discouraged and dissuaded at all costs.

Parents of the woman generally are dissatisfied with their daughter's decision to be in a cross-border love relationship. Nasty stories and rumours circulate about how immigrants steal the woman's money; how they would eventually hurt and lie to her; that they have wives back home and are just fooling around and have no real commitment. On the other hand, parents of immigrant men also disapprove their sons marrying South African women because all South African women are "HIV positive."

Conclusion

Love relationships between male immigrants and South African women are a major source of resentment, tension and xenophobia in the township. But there is always room for negotiation and that is circumstantial. Stereotypes, culture, difference and certain particularisms weigh heavily in these relationships. These do not only abide to immigrant males but South Africans of different ethnic origin. All these comprise a gamut of historical constructions of identity and difference.

CHAPTER 9

Postscript

Abstract What is called xenophobia in South Africa is a consequence of neo-apartheid social relations and poses a major concern to all those preoccupied with Pan-Africanism and liberation and decolonisation politics. This book shows that what is called xenophobia, which in fact is intra-black racism practised by people of the same colour, is not a postcolonial aberration. Rather, it has its roots deep in colonial interstices. Thus, to understand this phenomenon it is theoretically and politically proper to comprehend the machinations of colonialism and how it produces certain kinds of subjectivities which endure into the postcolonial. It is also proper to understand the postcolony and contradictions and abnormalities engendered during colonialism which continue to persist. The continued particularisms like white anti-black racism, black-on-black-racism and tribalism demand a serious indictment of the postcolonial dispensation and show the pitfalls of decolonisation.

Keywords Pan-Africanism liberation • Decolonisation • Colonial subjectivities • Postcolonial

What is called xenophobia in South Africa is a consequence of neo-apartheid social relations and poses a major concern to all those preoccupied with Pan-Africanism and liberation and decolonisation politics. We have shown in this book that what is called xenophobia, which in fact is intra-black racism

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practised by people of the same colour is not a postcolonial aberration. Rather, it has its roots deep in colonial interstices. Thus, to understand this phenomenon it is theoretically and politically proper to comprehend the machinations of colonialism and how it produces certain kinds of subjectivities which endure into the postcolonial. It is also proper to understand the postcolony and contradictions and abnormalities engendered during colonialism which continue to persist. The continued particularisms like white anti-black racism, black-on-black-racism and tribalism demand a serious indictment of the postcolonial dispensation and show the pitfalls of decolonisation. This is a result of the underconceptualisation of the struggle and the lack of any deeper study of the nature of colonialism and a lack of vision about the kind of future envisioned (Cabral 1979; Chinweizu 2009). For Chinweizu, independence is not about "sewing a flag and singing a national anthem and having your leaders move into the colonial masters' jobs and houses" (2009: 20). Chinweizu contends that in South Africa, as elsewhere in Africa, the black elite became black comprador colonialists, a role devised for them by the imperialism and the Broederbond, "so in the new 'South Africa' white supremacy and imperialism live on, wearing a mask of black majority government. Just as in the rest of black Africa, it is white power behind a black mask" (ibid.: 20). The teleology of the liberation struggle, not only in South Africa, but throughout the continent was reduced to the right to vote. In fact, the importance of the vote has always been given a prominence by the early nationalist leaders. They have always linked the vote with citizenship in such a way that the denial of the right to vote was synonymous with citizenship. At the time of independence, African people got exactly what they had expended a lot of sacrifice, human expenditure and suffering – the right to vote – but not liberation.

What is disquieting is how the formerly colonised mimic colonisers' culture, a major condition of neo-colonialism. Ironically, this colonial subject remains imbued with ontological difference and is mired in the web of inferiority complex which has, historically, been crucial in forming and continues to form their identity. Of course, continued and extended colonialism is a tetchy topic, inherited discourses about colonial residues like tribe and tribalism, artificial boundaries and effected differences need a robust battery.

Colonialism and the apartheid idea of difference meant, according to de Kock (2004: 19), "an overwhelming desire, in the struggle against apartheid, for a unitary political identity and for suppression of difference. This desire has been formally translated into the new South African constitution,

which indeed enshrine equality for all regardless of race, gender or class, does make us all the 'same' legally and constitutionally." The new master narrative of the "rainbow nation" which implies that South Africa, given its history as an international pariah during the apartheid era, is now a moral example to the world, its miracle of peaceful transition to liberal democracy and commitment to human rights, seen as a paragon of virtue of humanness, is decried by crude facts characterising its social position. Under neoliberalism there is separation of the economic and political where socio-economic inequality and exploitation coexist with civic freedom (Ntsebeza 2007). Thus, the right to citizenship is not determined by socio-economic position; formal democracy leaves intact trappings of colonial exploitation. So in South Africa political equality in the form of periodic and regular elections doesn't translate into economic equality (ibid.). On the contrary, the government holds a different view, as is shown by President Jacob Zuma's address at Freedom Day celebrations at Union Buildings on 27 April 2012:

> The past 18 years have seen huge progress towards building a truly non-racial, non-sexist, democratic and free South Africa... together we have built from the ashes of apartheid, a country that is dedicated to patriotism, nation-building and reconciliation. The creation of a stable democratic system has opened conditions for us to tackle socio-economic development challenges.

Since South Africans have multiple identities which sometimes appear in common contexts, cross-cutting and/or sometimes oppositional and tensional, the challenge is these identities despite often times glued by familiarities like nation and nationalism, are often fragmented and fractured, among South Africans themselves, let alone other identities emanating from the African continent. Rainbowism, non-racialism or multiculturalism imply a politics of identity, being true to one's nature or heritage and seeking others of the same kind for public recognition (Modood 2001). It also denotes recognition of group difference within the public sphere of laws, policies, democratic discourse and national identity (ibid.). It creates new forms of identity, citizenship and belonging; supports cultural difference, discourages hostility and remakes the public sphere in order to accommodate other identities. All this is in tune with liberal democracies, of which liberal constitutions provide a legal backdrop. The idea therefore, according to Modood, is to encourage a vision of commonalities, of what is shared across difference, so as to remake citizenship and national identity.

This conception of multiculturalism is premised on the idea that national identity and multiculturalism are not conflictual, rather they are mutually reinforcing.

The consequence of the human rights and anti-apartheid movement is that citizenship is attached with rights; the state is supposed to protect, serve and provide for the citizens, implying that citizens are turned into legal liabilities of the state (Harrington 2008). This means that citizenship and equality are synonymous. Within these lenses national laws and jurisprudence are based, in legal terms, on a culture of justification, that help to shape a shared future based on critical examination of the past (Fritz 2008). The assumption is that a real multiculturalism postulates that each can demonstrate their difference and diversity equally where members see beyond narrow precepts of religion, race, and ethnicity as markers and signifiers of identity (ibid.).

The irony is that legally citizenship is based on the both principles of *jus soli* (right/law of the soil/place of birth) and *jus sanguinis* (right/law of blood/descent) and this may make other identities proscribed outside the nation and citizenship rights. In addition, democracy is equated with multiculturalism. Will Kymlicka (1995: 76) argues that multiculturalism aims at rights for persons belonging to distinct cultural groups, meaning that such cultures "provide members with meaningless ways of life across the range of human activities, including social, education, religious, recreational and economic life, encompassing both private and public spheres." The assumption is that the prerequisite to such citizenship is rich and secure cultures and structures that have their own languages, histories, cultures which give them the means to make choices.

Robinson (1994) traces the history of multiculturalism to the Greeks, pre-modernism and modernism and the contemporary times. In recent times, multiculturalism has become associated with the struggle over issues pertaining to national identity, construction of historical memory, schooling and meaning of democracy (Giroux 1994). Giroux notes that it is important to acknowledge that multiculturalism in its liberal and conservative forms has placed the problematic of white racism, social justice and power off limits. Multiculturalism is a discourse that seeks to conceal the prerogatives of power, to conceal the humanity of the Other and to conceal the reprehensible policing techniques of subordination (Robinson 1994: 389). As a discourse on race and identity, multiculturalism reveals that it is not only about racialised identities, but also about the issue of whiteness as a mark of racial and gender privilege (ibid.). Giroux calls for the need to challenge the

narrowness of national identity, culture and ethnicity, "as part of pedagogical effort to provide dominant groups with the knowledge and histories to examine, acknowledge, and unlearn their own privilege" (ibid.: 327). While it is about deconstructing centres of colonial power and reversing master narratives of racism, multiculturalism must affirm cultural differences while also refusing to essentialise and grant immunity to those in subordinate positions. Nonetheless, there is a need for a multiculturalism that addresses "the context of massive black unemployment, overcrowded schools, a lack of recreational facilities, dilapidated housing and racist policing" (ibid.: 327).

But the idea of democratic citizenship is equated with simulated identities whose dreams and desires are tuned to artificial generations of liberal capitalism (McLaren 1994). Its roots can be traced to colonial representation of the Other. It seeks to construct a common culture and conservative/corporate multiculturalists have not weaned themselves from colonialist legacies of white supremacy. Although they distance themselves from racist ideologies, they, in the United States in particular, see unsuccessful minorities as coming from "culturally depraved backgrounds" and lacking strong family values (ibid.). On the other hand, cultural differences cannot just be seen as a form of signification if they are detached from social and historical considerations. For McLaren, conservative multiculturalism should be decried because: it sees whiteness as a norm by which other ethnicities should be judged; as a politically constructed category whiteness seeps into daily life; it is an invisible norm that is parasitic to blackness; it is an "enormous totalization" that arrogates itself the right to represent all other ethnic groups; it uses the term diversity to cover up the ideology of assimilation; it posits that anyone can reap the economic benefits of the nation but on condition that to able to do so one should become "denuded, deracinated and culturally stripped" (ibid.: 49). Conversely, critical or resistance multiculturalism stresses a transformative political and economic agenda and it is not just another accommodation into the larger social order. Critical multiculturalism doesn't see culture as nonconflictual, harmonious and consensual; it doesn't see diversity as a goal, but rather must be affirmed within politics of culturalism and commitment to social justice. Further, though attentive to the notion of difference, which of course is a product of history, culture, power and ideology, it questions the construction of identity and difference in relation to radical politics. It also has to examine how racism in its various forms is produced historically,

semiotically and institutionally at various levels of society (Giroux 1994). Finally, a critical multiculturalism, "needs to testify not only to the pain, suffering, and 'walking nihilism' of oppressed peoples, but also to the intermittent epiphanies, ruptures and moments of *jouissance* that occur when solidarity is established around struggles for liberation" (McLaren 1994: 67). As for black nihilism, it can be traced to the origins of racism in the political, social and cultural dynamics of white supremacy (Giroux 1994).

Given the brutalities and excesses committed during apartheid, a Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) headed by cleric Desmond Tutu was set up to investigate apartheid crimes (perpetrated both by apartheid apparatchiks and by the liberation movement) and grant amnesty to those who had shown atonement and plausible contrition. The amnesty was part of political compromise written into the interim constitution, of which, in the absence of an amnesty for the political leadership of apartheid, there would not have been a political compromise (Mamdani 2000). Mamdani argues that the TRC should be understood as a moral and truth institution reinforcing a political compromise with a moral posture while obscuring the larger compass of truth. Secondly, the commission focused on perpetrators rather than beneficiaries of apartheid. Thirdly, it didn't interrogate the legal machinery of apartheid under which gross violations of human rights took place. Fourthly, it didn't focus on apartheid as a form of power and finally it neglected the victimhood of vast majority of South Africans and failed to build social justice. Given that apartheid was maintained by heights of violence and dispossession while benefitting whites, its beneficiaries could not be accountable as far as moral responsibility is concerned. Mamdani reflects:

> While beneficiaries do not bear moral responsibilities for gross violations of apartheid, they do bear moral responsibility to redress its consequences. In the absence of that education, the tragedy is that, even after the work of TRC, the beneficiaries can still say: we did not know about!. (2000: 183)

He also adds:

> To reflect on the experience of the TRC is to ponder a harsher truth that it may be easier to live with yesterday's perpetrators who have lost power than to live with beneficiaries whose gains remain intact. (ibid.: 183)

Crucial to liberal democracies like South Africa is the constitution, hailed as among the best in the world. Constitutions such as the South African one derive their pedigree from the United States Constitution, which control the way government exercise power by curtailing and diffusing it (Fagan 1998). As an instrument for transformation the constitution had to heal the ills of the past and include, on paper, everyone into a singular nation-state. Of course, the 1970 Citizenship Act proscribed blacks outside the South African polity, restricted them as citizens and pushed them to areas designated according to ethnic identity. South African constitutionalism as both backward and forward looking sought to address the injustices of the past by looking forward to a shared future where a single national identity is shaped in and within diverse identities (Fritz 2008).

Constitutional negotiations before independence implied the transfer of political power while preserving colonial economic interests, social and cultural systems put in place by colonisers (Nabudere 2001). Nabudere adds:

> Old and new unequal colonial interests were preserved and encrusted in the new constitution. The old colonial repressive institutions such as the military and the police as well as repressive laws such as detention laws were preserved and continued. The new political class needed these powers for their "nation-building" project. The culture of "maintenance of law and order" was reinforced with the new black police, army and security officers in order to maintain the status quo. This status quo includes the social relations created by colonial capitalism, which weighed heavily against the interests of the majority of Africans. (2001: 48)

Negotiated settlements which are akin to political compromise have been a bane to African life in the postcolony. More than sixty years ago, I.B. Tabata cautioned about this spectre:

> Now we maintain that in politics there can be no such thing as a compromise between oppressor and oppressed. There can be a compromise only when the contradicting parties meet on a footing of equality. The so-called "compromise" under the conditions of such gross inequality as between white ruler and Black oppressed, could only be tantamount to a capitulation or a political "sell-out". (1974: 22)

Given that the main essence of negotiated settlements is compromise, the NP had a major say in the outcome of the constitution (Fagan 1998). In other words, it was co-authored by the oppressed and the oppressors:

> This was the quid pro quo for the National Party's surrendering power. In the result the constitution would be typified as a liberal democratic rather than a social-democratic one with an emphasis on individual rights and limiting the scope the ANC could redistribute wealth. (ibid.: 261)

The postapartheid South African constitutional property clause sets the parameters in which the state may legally interfere with private property. For the NP, the inclusion of the property clause in the constitution and the protection of existing property rights was critical since it meant that the property of white owners would not be jeopardised in a future democratic dispensation was NP's major victory (Ntsebeza 2007).

Fagan adds, "Thus the ANC was obliged to compromise its own history and the history of the struggle in South Africa, in which human rights had always been linked inextricably with guaranteed economic empowerment" (Fagan 1998: 262). The ANC's position was actually not opposed to the property clause in the constitution. Ultimately, property and mineral rights remained entrenched and buttressed the unequal nature based on race. Less surprisingly the issue of individual rights and right to free enterprise and contract, property and landed property as inscribed in the context of rights has its roots in missionary activities and colonial legalism. On the one hand, missionaries encouraged the spirit of capitalism as defining subjectivity, identity and personhood in a moral community, on the other colonisers saw individual as equal to modernity. The law of contract was considered naturally "not African" so it was easier to dispossess Africans of their land and also much easier to extract labour and legitimate African subordination (Comaroff and Comaroff 1997). For the Comaroffs (1997) the career of South African liberal constitution and liberal democracy has its roots deep in the colonial era, in the advent of missionary and evangelical liberalism. They argue that both the ANC and Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) are heirs to registers of colonial discourse of rights and the ANC has stuck to the ideology of liberal modernism first espoused by Nonconformists. ANC's predecessor, the South African National Native Council (SANNC), was formed in 1912 to protest the Land Act spoke the language of civil and constitutional rights relying heavily on the rhetorical styles learnt in the mission (ibid.). The Comaroffs add "The ANC retains much of the

disposition and political ideology of its predecessor – albeit energetically toward the present," and it continues to talk the language of rights and universal citizenship but, "it has sustained its commitment to a classically European form of nationalism and nationhood" (ibid.: 401 & 402).

After an analysis of the tragedy of xenophobia, we can surmise the need to finish the business of decolonisation where the populace is freed from captive colonialism and its derivatives. When we gaze towards the bright stars of the future we can get caution from what Fanon said:

> Yes to life. Yes to love. Yes to generosity. But man is also a negation. No to man's contempt. No to indignity of man. To the exploitation of man. To the massacre of what is most human in man: Freedom. (2008: 197)

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Note: Page number followed by 'n' refers to notes.

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