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UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND JOHANNESBURG

BLACK RACISM IN ALEXANDRA: CROSS – BORDER LOVE RELATIONSHIPS AND NEGOTIATION OF DIFFERENCE IN A POST APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICAN SOCIETY.

THESIS SUBMITTED FOR FULLFILLMENT OF MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE IN ANTHROPOLOGY, 2009

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this work and ideas contained therein are wholly mine and original.

I declare that full referencing and acknowledgement has been done on ideas and thoughts that do not belong to me.

I am also aware of the University's policy against plagiarism.

Kenneth. M. Tafira

07 June 2010

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We say in Shona: *kutenda kwakiti kurimumwoyo* (the gratitude of a cat is in her mind!)

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To my numerous informants whose contribution made this work possible…Aloha!

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my late mother, who passed on to the other world when I was a baby. You are living and you are watching, Ma Ndlovu!

List of Acronyms

ADAPT	Agisanang Domestic Abuse Prevention and Training
ANC	African National Congress
CD	Compact Disc
COSATU	Confederation of South African Trade Unions
DVD	Digital Video Disc
GMO	Genetically Modified Foods
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
ID	Identity Document
IFP	Inkatha Freedom Party
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
SAB	South African Breweries
SABC	South African Broadcasting Corporation
SAMP	Southern Africa Migration Project
SASAS	South African Annual Social Attitude Survey
UIF	Unemployment Insurance Fund
UK	United Kingdom
US	United States
WNLA	Witwatersrand Native Labour Association
ZCC	Zion Christian Church

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Abstract

My research in Alexandra has looked at the cultural and sexual logic, in explaining black racism and the attacks on non South Africans in May 2008. More particularly the study examines love relationships between South African women and immigrant men in the context of allegations and accusations that the latter are "stealing" South African women. This and the male element of the violence, as a cause of black racism have not been treated with seriousness in the *xenophobic* discourse. Instead it has emphasised on lack of service delivery, poverty and unemployment as the overriding causes. However the research has not disputed this economic reductionism. The findings reveal that black racism in Alexandra can be explained through racialised competition for women and this is an overwhelming source of resentment by South African men towards non South African men. This resentment can be explained in the theoretical context of social formation of races in the township. The pre 1994 internal ethnic differentiation has shifted to the "us" and "them" paradigm, intersecting nationality and ethnicity, defined by racial labelling, naming and stereotyping. A binary racial representations, significations and subjectivity of the "other" and those who belong "here" and "there" are seen in claims to autochthony, thus this kind of racisms.

Introduction

> The capacity to live with difference is, in my view, the coming question of the 21st century.
>
> (Stuart Hall 1993:361).

On 11 May 2008, violence against black African immigrants[1] erupted in South Africa, starting from Alexandra Township[2] and spreading to other areas in Johannesburg and Gauteng. When the violence subsided, sixty two people were dead, others were maimed and injured and thousands more dislocated. The characteristics of these pogroms[3] not only exhibited hatred but were racial in nature. This forms my key argument in this thesis, that the attacks and manifestations of what is called *xenophobia* are in fact ***black racism***[4], which is practiced by black people on other black people who not only belong to the community but are considered to be socially and culturally inferior. I will further argue that racism is not merely based on differences in skin colour (and that it is possible that people of the same skin colour to practice racism on each other), but on culture, language, ethnicity and nationality. My hypothesis is that racism is not explained as a single and generic phenomena (Hall 1993; Goldberg 1993; Gilroy 1987) but a manifestation of multiple and transcendent determinants and causes which are revealed in a particular socio - historical conjecture. This I have explored in the social formation of races among

[1] Throughout this thesis I use the term immigrant to refer to all non South Africans regardless of their legal status I the country.
[2] Alexandra is called by residents Alex or Gomorrah after the biblical place, for its supposed iniquity and sin. It also comes form inter township competition with other locations like Tembisa and Soweto, on whose neighborhood contained the "baddest" people.
[3] The Coalition Against Xenophobia in its Declaration (available on http://www.antix.org.za) describes the May 2008 xenophobic violence as pogroms similar to those seen in Europe. See also Ishmael Lesufi's "On the history and dynamics of pogroms and genocide" in Khanya Journal, Number 19, July 2008.
[4] I will use this term throughout, instead of xenophobia.

black populations in the township and placed it in the theoretical framework of Goldberg's (1986; 1990; 1992; 1993; 2002) racial formation and racial subjectification and Stuart Hall's (1980; 1993; 1996) historical specificity of racism. I intend to concur with Goldberg's (1987; 1990) definition of racism as an irrational prejudice asserting superiority or inferiority of members of races and racism as discrimination against others on the basis of their putatively different social membership.

Before I briefly look at some basic features of apartheid racism, I delve into the genealogical inquiry of predominant (European) supremacist discourses. The three logics as espoused by West (1993) are: Judeo – Christian which emanates from the biblical account of shaming of Ham and blackening of his progeny; scientific or biological with roots in Enlightenment philosophy and the psychosexual which endows Africans with sexual prowess. These logics were the foundation of nineteenth and twentieth century racism. In the apartheid South Africa, racism was more prominently defined by race, class, economy, separation, segregation, inequality and subjugation (Wolpe 1976; Alexander 1979; Frederickson 1982; Marx 1998 and Magubane 1979; 2007). At that time the situation in South Africa led some authors to view it, like in the American Deep South, as a caste system (Beteille 1969). The cumulative inequality which went with status, wealth and power was seen in the binary representation between black and white with the former being socially underprivileged and at the bottom of economic and political scales. Further the apartheid system had strictly enforced rules against interracial marriages, and these were inspired by racism. It is not the intention of this thesis, though, to examine at great length the manifestations of apartheid racism. However some features and effects of

apartheid, as elucidated throughout this thesis, are being felt in the contemporary South African society. My argument in this work then is, though apartheid and post apartheid white racism and supremacy (which though important in the present analysis needs another space of its own which this cannot afford, for further discussion) is economically and class determined my research in Alexandra finds out that indeed there are some trappings of these but this is not enough to explain the situation. I do not entirely dispute the economic reductionist nature of black racism in the township. My work is not an attempt to completely write against the class reductionist idea of "epiphenomenality" of race and local – level violence either. I see it critical to take terms of local – level social realities seriously while at the same time acknowledging larger class context. The two work together to create conditions for racism in places like Alexander.[5]

My contention is that economic and class reductionism is not adequate in explaining the dynamics of black racism. Thus during my ethnography and stay in the township I have delved deeper and looked at the cultural and sexual logic; the internal sets of relationships between immigrants and South Africans and how racism is manifest in this social world. One question I have arrived at during my field work was: is the pre and post May 2008 violence racism, nationalism, ethnicism or sexism? My findings reveal that one concept cannot be separated from another. Doing so would be an erroneous and inadequate analysis of the internal dynamics in the township. While on one hand there are nationalist, ethnic, racial and sexist sentiments, all these are interlocking and converging, as seen in this thesis. As indicated earlier I use the term black racism rather than *xenophobia* or negrophobia to describe this interlocking system. This is inspired by the fact that

[5] See Chapter One where I discuss this.

definitions and applications of *xenophobia* are inadequate in understanding what happened in Alexandra. Xenophobia as a universal phenomenon has been broadly defined as the intense dislike, hatred or fear of others perceived to be strangers (De Master and Leroy 2000; Crush 2006 and Frederickson 2007) and denotes behaviour specifically based on the perception that the "Other" is foreign to or originates from outside the community or nation (ILO, IOM, OHCHR 2001:2). Negrophobia has also been defined as the fear and dislike of black people and their culture (Fanon 1967; Chinweizu 2005; Gqola 2008). Again 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 arouse both fear and revulsion. These definitions I think are incompatible with the forms of salient, explicit, implicit or hidden black racist practices that exist in Alexandra. Although Gqola (2008) and Mngxitama (2008) have both noted that the May 2008 attacks on immigrants were racialised and had characteristics of negrophobia, I argue that what happens in South Africa is neither xenophobia, negrophobia nor any other phobias, but must be taken in the context of racism, that is, black racism. My supposition is that this kind of racism has to do with one's social membership which includes differences in nationality, ethnicity, social and territorial origin, language, culture, habits, dress and customs. These differences are then mobilised to effect discrimination, prejudice, notions of inferiority and superiority and subsequently violent attacks and pogroms. My renunciation of *xenophobia,* adoption and use of the term black racism is inspired mainly by the following propositions: commentators and anyone who have used the term *xenophobia* may have done so unconsciously and inadvertently or for lack of a better term to describe anti - immigrant practices in post

apartheid South Africa, Alexandra in particular. This is because I assume, it seems incomprehensible to many that racism can be done and practised among populations and people of the same skin colour and commentators may be falling in the conundrum of the biological racism analysis. Take for example a white non – national living among black South Africans and suffers prejudice and discrimination from the latter. I am convinced many would see it as racism. Then take a black African living among the same community and suffers the same fate. Many would happen to call it *xenophobia* rather than racism because the social actors here are of the same skin colour. For me both instances I call racism notwithstanding a social actor's skin colour. I call it racism because it is based on differences in social membership, culture and nationality rather than skin colour. The commentators have not, which I have done, looked at how people of the same skin colour, in this case black immigrant Africans and black South Africans, are transformed into races, become racialised subjects and how they bring each other to racialised subjectivity. At this point I pose a question: are both xenophobia and racism as universal concepts different, although distinct overlapping (ILO, IOM and OHCHR 2001)? My answer is to some extent yes. This is because xenophobia as defined it means a dislike or fear of a stranger while racism to use Goldberg's (1993) definition, is discrimination against others based on their putatively different social membership. Furthermore as indicated earlier, commentators, in my view, assume that when discrimination and prejudice happens among people of the same skin colour (where immigrants are concerned) it is *xenophobia*, not racism. The meaning of racism is contingent on the prevailing social and epistemological conditions. It follows to say that racism as a fluid, chameleonic and delicate term, its conceptualisation assumes a different

meaning at a given time. I insist then, that *xenophobia* does not remain what it is – it changes into racism. How and when it does so is subject to hitherto existing social conditions. Finally I am inspired by Goldberg's (1993) observation that:

> The methodological disposition 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 notes 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 the proper definitional constraints) to racism in particular (1993: 93).

From observations I have made above, I come to a conclusion that in South Africa the era of *xenophobia* in discourse is coming to an end. What is needed now is to analyse, treat and see the so called *xenophobia* as racism: that is, racism as practised by population groups of the same skin colour. For me this is a new paradigm.

I was intrigued by the maleness of the nature of violent practices against immigrants in the recent anti – immigrant attacks. I had some questions that I needed answers to: why is that men (especially the younger group) were at the forefront of the attacks? Are women incapable of exercising violence at a scale that men do? Is there an intersection between township black masculinity and racism and are men (both immigrant and South African) in a fight and competition for women? One of the latent causes for black on black racial

violence in May 2008 has been the allegation by black South African men that black African immigrant men "steal" or "take" local women. I use genital racism to describe this because it has to do with phallic obsessions of the "Other's" (in this context the black male African immigrant male) big penis and sexual prowess (West 1993). This arouses racial jealousies and may lead to crimes of racism (Fanon 1967). It is widely believed in the township (by both men and women) that the black male African immigrant has a big penis[6]. Genital racism therefore is discrimination based on the myth and phallic obsessions of big penis and tremendous sexual powers (Fanon 1967; West 1993). However this, in the *xenophobic* discourse, has not been treated with seriousness. Commentators have said that the allegations that immigrants "steal" South African women, were a mere justification for black racism and thus attacks, though some work on genital racism and black masculinity has been done by Morrell (1998; 2001 ; Ratele; 2001; 2004); Nkealah (2008) and Gqola (2008). On the other, they have not placed black masculinity in the whole context of black racism. As a result my research has attempted to fill this gap, by exploring a close relationship between township black masculinity and what has been called *xenophobia,* in the process of social formation of races among black communities in the post apartheid South Africa. Going into the field, my primary thought was that the resentment by black South African men, of immigrant men having relationships with South African women may have more important social significance than previously attributed to it and needed further investigation for the kind of analysis it might provide to the debates around the May 2008 attacks.

[6] I have discussed this in the chapter "The Immigrant's Penis is Huge – Beauty and the Beast".

As related to me by one of my key informants, Jerrinos who is from Zimbabwe, on May 11 2008, violence against immigrants originated in Alexandra. He is not clear on the prior details leading to the violence but believes there was a meeting at the male, Zulu dominated Madala hostel in the Beirut[7] area. He says gangs of Zulu men went around the township looking for non - South Africans. Apparently they were angered by the fact that they are losing women to immigrants and that immigrants are taking jobs. Their *modus operandi* included asking for South African identity documents, asking suspected immigrants the Zulu meaning of an elbow (*indololwane*) and detecting non - Zulu accents. Within a few hours the whole township was caught in an orgy of violence as the attackers were joined by other men in other areas. The men, heavily armed with a paraphernalia of weapons that included sticks, *sjamboks* (hippo hide whips), stones, bricks, iron pipes, *indukus* (knobkerries) and guns went around "flushing" out immigrants, beating them to death, looting, destroying their properties and asking them to vacate the area with immediate effect. Most non - South Africans had been living in the area for decades, had married South African women and established permanent homes. Other victims were actually South Africans, who happened to be from Limpopo and were seen as non - nationals. Father Cairns from the Roman Catholic Church, who has lived in the area for twenty six years, provided his church as refuge for fleeing immigrants. Prior to the violence he had six hundred non - South African parishioners. In the aftermath of the violence the number was negligible as most of them fled the area and never returned. Jerrinos (who has lived in the township for three years) told me he survived the violence because of his proficiency in South African languages, even his neighbours did not know where he is from. On inquiry on the maleness of the violence, Father Cairns told me:

[7] I discuss Beirut in chapter 1

> The majority of men came from the men's hostels. Women are seen not to have the stamina and power men have. Women are also compassionate and it was heart rending for them to see their fellow women being beaten and raped. Traditionally in South Africa, men are seen as warriors. Another reason is that in a close knit community like Alex, if one doesn't join in the violence, they become a marked person – so one has to go along with the crowd. In this way fear played a huge role among the perpetrators themselves. It's like mass hysteria.[8]

The attacks stimulated a wide range of comments from political and community leaders, the media and civil society (Valji 2008; Neocosmos 2008; Idasa 2008; Faull 2008; Van Driel 2008; Lehulere 2008; Misago, Landau and Monson 2009). One shortcoming is that the studies on what has been called *xenophobia* have largely been based on class and economic reductionism and focused on the macro and structural levels of analysis; causes being widely attributed to poverty, high rate of unemployment, poor service delivery, competition for scarce resource, ineffective migration control, fight for RDP houses[9], and high crime rate. (Dodson and Oelofse 2000; Neocosmos 2006; McKinley 2007; Idasa 2008; Faull 2008; Van Driel 2008; Lehulere 2008; Pillay 2008; Valji and Fuller 2008; Misago et al 2009). In the aftermath of the May 2008 violence, a study done by the HSRC in Alexandra, Tembisa and other townships attributed the causes of the violence to economic and socio - political factors. That is relative deprivation, poverty and inequality, South African exceptionalism and exclusive citizenship (Pillay 2008; Valji and Fuller 2008).

[8] Interview with Father Cairns, 10 June 2009.
[9] RDP houses are free government houses allocated to the poor.

The “micro” causes that are steeped in attitudes, perceptions, beliefs and values that characterise immigrant and South African social relationships have not adequately been dealt with. It is only a thorough understanding of these that we can explain how social relationships between South Africans and non - South Africans, lead to racialisation. My research has found out that Alexandra is a multiethnic society and home to practically all South African ethnic groups and immigrants from many other African countries including Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Malawi, Nigeria, Somalia, Ethiopia, Zambia and Uganda. The mix of different ethnicities and nationalities has led to local forms of racialisation. However, this racialisation has transcended to racism which is seen in differences in ethnicity, language, nationality, cross border love relationships and masculine competition for women.

Aims and Objectives

Going into Alexandra to commence my field work, I was intrigued by the following questions. How would I understand and make an intersection between black township masculinity and black racism in the post 1994 South Africa? Whilst, not entirely denying and disputing the macro causes and economic reductionism, my research was seeking to explore the internal township dynamics, the sexual and cultural logic, the perceptions, values and beliefs in connection with cross border relationships, and potentiality, of genital racism as a primary motivator for black racism and hence the May 2008 violence. My argument here is that racism is not merely an epiphenomenon of economic power but has its own internal dynamics which are rooted in a community. These have and need to be addressed and understood if analysis of racism is to be complete.

Research Questions

The allegation made that black African immigrant men "steal" South African women begged a further and in - depth investigation. In this regard, in examining cross border love relationships and genital racism among black populations in South Africa, what are the implications of "stealing" someone's wife or girlfriend in the moral universe of South Africa? Again, is there a relationship and a distinction between morality and racism? Secondly, is there sexual competition between men (that is immigrant and South African men) and does this competition become racialised and in turn leads to black racism? Thirdly, is the resentment by South African men of non - nationals having romantic and marital relationships with "their" women, driven by sexism that the former want to exclusively appropriate and access women's conjugal and marital rights? My study also attempts, in the context of social and psychological dimensions of masculinity, to answer the question: are South African men seeking not to dominate only women but other men as well, who happen to be black African immigrant men, and is this domination both a racial and moral one? Finally, I look at how are differences in ethnicity, nationality, culture and language between immigrants and South Africans negotiated in the township.

Research Methodology

I would like to point out my positionality as a researcher. Being a Zimbabwean and male researching on a sensitive issue was likely to affect my judgment in the field. I overcame this by adopting a neutral and non judgmental stance by realizing i am first and foremost a researcher and that I needed to fulfill my obligations as such. I have in all consideration taken great care not to stereotyping anyone, which is an unenviable task. Most of the

information contained in this work is from the mouths of my informants, although I have my own interpretation and subjectivities.

The methodology employed in the study is largely ethnographic, using different approaches to get perceptions of common people in the community. These included informal conversations, narratives, inquisitive observation, non probability sampling, general observations and in – depth interviews. I interviewed both immigrant and South Africans, from young adults to the elderly, male and female.

Since participant observation as an ethnographic method, is a process that takes a long time to develop, and I working on a limited time line, which is one month of fieldwork, inquisitive observation was a viable alternative. It involved me "parachuting" (Bester 1995), that is dropping in the midst of things from multiple points, tacit observations and interviews, asking questions while at the same time establishing myself as a bona fide researcher through being seen interviewing people, taking notes and hanging around. In this way I was also making and getting people understand the social reality of the research. As a result I was able to harness contacts and networks in the field.

Through inquisitive observation I located key individuals, immigrant and South African, who led me to others and to those in cross border relationships. One such key individual was Jerrinos, a Zimbabwean immigrant who owns a vending stall by a major road in the township. During my "parachuting", knowing practically nobody in the township but determined to establish contacts as I went along in the field, I dropped from a taxi and

went to him. I immediately began a conversation in Zulu, and much later did I realize he is Zimbabwean (he is fluent in South African languages). Jerrinos became a focal point of my research as I spent some long hours at his stall, watching taxis and pedestrians going up and down, to and from Alexandra's major shopping centre; conversing and making friends with many people. As a result Jerrinos features prominently in this project. He also acted as my social sponsor, who played a key role in introducing me to other informants.

Being autobiographical, in –depth, narrative and non – directive, the informal interviews were modeled on the conversation. Apart from traversing the length and breadth of the township, observing their social life and talking to people on the streets, I found myself in numerous taverns where I would write up my field notes, at the same time socializing with patrons. This became a social event that enabled me to form friendships with my informants and facilitated conversations on sensitive topics and them disclosing more about themselves. The in – depth interviews in total were conducted on twenty five immigrants and South Africans, on issues including, causes of the May 2008 violence; their perceptions on cross border love relationships and the general social relationships between the former and the latter. The interviews were also conducted with five couples, with me seeking an in – depth understanding of the dynamics of cross border love relationships, the reasons why they are in such a relationship and how kin and community views them. In addition information was sought on issues like township masculinity and the conception of manhood and manliness, sexism, domestic and gender violence.

Literature Review

a. Black Racism Since post apartheid South Africa

The roots of black racism in the post apartheid South Africa are much broader than can possibly be assumed (Crush 2006; Nyamnjoh 2006; Hadland 2008) as they are a prominent feature of the new state. The rise of 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; Misago, Landau and Monson 2009). With the advent of democracy in 1994, South Africa was opened up to the global economy. The study of globalisation, mobility, citizenship and *xenophobia* shows globalisation as a process of flows and closures, empowerment and enslavement and the reality of exclusion (Akokpari 2000; Alexander 2006; Nyamnjoh 2006; Lehulere 2008). The accelerated flow of labour capital, goods, electronic information and increased migration by African immigrants exacerbated insecurities and anxieties of locals and non nationals alike. The result is the building of boundaries of difference through black racism.

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 materialities of the nation (Hintzen 2007; Goldberg 2002; see also Hayter 2004). 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 transformation of old racism (in South Africa, for example, from apartheid racism to the post apartheid 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 post colonial 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 (Hintzen 2007), 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 (Landau and Haupt 2007:5). In all, the non nationals represent 6, 2% Johannesburg's total population and that the city is a primary immigrant destination (Balbo and Marconi 2005:3). In the period between 1994 and 1996, five million "illegal" immigrants are estimated to have entered South Africa (Bouillon 2001). However, the post 2000 Zimbabwean economic and political turmoil saw a large influx of Zimbabweans in South Africa (Bond and Manyanya 2003), making availability of reliable statistics on the number of immigrants in South Africa difficult. Crush and Tevera (2002:30) point out that the estimates vary from half a million to eight million, whilst the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC 2008) put the estimates at between five to eight million. 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 (Crush and Williams 2001).

Black racist attitudes and racial attacks against non – nationals has been a feature of the post apartheid South Africa (Crush 2008; Hadland 2008; Nyamnjoh 2006, Misago et al 2009). Since 1994 hundreds of people have been harassed, attacked or maimed.
In this context, from 1994, anti immigrant sentiments were being whipped up. Former Minister of Home Affairs, Mangosuthu Buthelezi in his introductory speech, pointed out the threat of African immigrants to South African prosperity (Crush 1996; Landau 2006:228) and that the massive influx of illegal immigrants was "his biggest headache" (Dempster 2003).

The Southern Africa Migration Project (SAMP) 2006 *xenophobia* survey shows that South Africans exhibit high levels of intolerance and hostility to outsiders unlike virtually anything seen in other parts of the world. By the late 1990s, there was hardening of attitudes, with opinions varying from demand on restrictions on immigration; total ban on immigration; allegations of using up national resources by non nationals; allegations of crime and that immigrants are vectors for disease. An annul 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. Incidents of anti – immigrant attacks have since been continuing since the early 1990s and in 2005 and 2006, twenty Somali traders were killed in Cape Town (Hadland 2008). Previously the violence had been geographically constrained. The May 2008 attacks, starting 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.

b. Genital Racism

The preceding section dealt with the largely structural and economic determinism of black racism in the post 1994 South Africa. I will now explore some instances of the sexual logic of racism. 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, structural, cultural and sexual, as I found out, converge in some instances, as explained in Chapter one.

Drawing on Chester Himes' "If Hollers Let him Go" (Himes 1945; Thomas 2006), Fanon (1967) famously argues that racism can be explained at the genital level. In his analysis of Negrophobia, the myth of a Negro's big penis and his tremendous sexual powers, which begets fears in white men, is the basis of genital racism. The archetypal figure of the threatening super sensual dark villain or black beast is old in societies of Western civilizations 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, disheveled but 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: 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 black South African skin versus darker immigrant skin. In South Africa, the defence of manhood is above all demanding the defence of the beautiful South African black woman, who here I call South African goddess, from the dark and "ugly" immigrant. 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; 1974:18; 2000; Stember 1976; Frederickson 2002). The black male sexuality is then seen as bestial and a drive thrusting up from lowers males to higher females and originating from beasts.

Although Cell (1982); Van den Berghe (1970); Frederickson (1982) and Marx (1998) infer the cause of 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 Negroes arose in connection with the master taboo of society, prohibiting any intimacy between the Negro male and a white female (Stack Sullivan 1941(cited in Hoch 1979); Hoch 1979; Frederickson 1981; 2007). Similarly, Fanon (1967) observes that in all cruelties, tortures and beatings (as seen in 2008 black racial violence in South Africa), there are many elements of sexuality. As Fanon, again notes, the viewing of the Negro as a penis symbol, his lynching, like the May 2008 violence, is a sexual revenge. A 1937 survey by Dollard in a southern

American town found a widespread belief that the genitalia of a Negro male were larger than white males (Dollard 1937; Myrdal 1944; 2000). Thus in the American South and Nazi Germany, the fear of sexual pollution or violation by the allegedly subhuman race is close to the heart of murderous or genocidal racism (Frederickson 2007:120). 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 the staple for Nazi propaganda, and his relationship with a German woman would pollute and contaminate the racial purity that Nazis were endeavoring to preserve (Frederickson 2007). However, 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 racism which happened a long time ago is in my view also manifesting in contemporary Alexandra. I think the analogy between Western mythology and contemporary South African black relations derives from racial sexual jealousies. I realize the difference of both contexts but the universality of these kind of perceptions and beliefs requires a similar analysis. For me it reveals that 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, number of one's conquests and the size of their pocket (see also Nkealah 2008; Gqola 2008). Masculinity is often seen as an

almost numerical evaluation of the sexual marketability of the person, largely reduced to genital function and conceived as a commodity and a thing (which Gear 2007:219 calls commodification of sex). Similarly, the sexual act as a sexual relation is a social relation of domination, appropriation and possession (Bourdieu 2001). Manliness and virility in its ethical aspect to increase honour is not divorced from physical virility especially through sexual potency. Again, manliness in many societies is a sexual and social reproduction capacity and capacity to fight and to exercise violence which is a first and foremost duty (Russell 1975; Bourdieu 2001; see also Connell 1987: 2005; Ratele 2001; 2004 and Morrell 1998 and 2001).

Social Formation of Races

By the 1960s and 1970s, the pseudo – scientific Enlightenment notion of race based on biological differences was being widely contested and discredited (Van Den Berghe 1967; Banton 1967; 1977; Dubinin 1975; Leiris 1975). Scientific racism as both a product and historical construction of Enlightenment era has origins in the myths developed by natural philosophers of the eighteenth century to explain man's place in nature (Lyons 1970; Poliakov 1982; Eze 1992; Zack 1996; Brion Davis 1997; Frederickson 2002; Anthony Marx 1998; Magubane 2007). The European supremacist discursive logics, though not inherently racist, were employed to justify racist practices (West 1993). For Goldberg (1990), the principle of gradation and hierarchy of beings (with roots in Aristotle's view of races as natural kinds and essences) was employed to ground racial classification (see also Boxill 2001). Thus the eighteenth century science, rationality, philosophy and religion merged to circumscribe European representations of

others (Du Bois 1965; Semmel 1968; Lyons 1970; Magubane 2007). As a result, the principle of gradation has also a moral implication – higher beings are considered of greater worth than lower ones.

As race has come to be understood, it is a social construction, there are no races (Rex and Mason 1986; Miles 1993; Brion Davis 1997; Van Den Berghe 2001). Instead there is only a belief that there are such things, a belief used by some social groups to construct an other and therefore the self (Miles 1993). On one hand a racial group is defined on the basis of physical characteristics such as skin colour, hair texture and so on and culture specific association of certain behavioural, moral and intellectual traits with physical phenotypes (Essien – Udom 1975; Van den Berghe 2001). This is not entirely adequate because on the other hand it is a belief about race and social actors based on these, and racial prejudices are expressed in ideologies of cultural, social and intellectual inferiority. For Goldberg (1990:275) racism is generally considered to be discrimination against others by virtue of their putatively different social membership. Further it is an irrational prejudice asserting superiority or inferiority of members of races on unwarranted groups of physical or mythical properties, such as skin colour, blood and so on (Goldberg 1986).

i. David Goldberg's Racial Formation and Racial Subjectification

For David Goldberg (1984; 1990; 1992; 1993; 2002), race is neither a static nor a monolithic concept with a single given meaning. Its adaptivity defines population groups and social agents at various historical moments. Race insinuates itself into the paradigmatic views of group formation of the day. In race formation, Goldberg argues that this is transformation over time of what accounts to be race, how racial membership

is determined and what sorts of exclusion it entails. Though the principle of racial hierarchy and gradation is now obsolete, the concepts of inferiority and superiority implicit in racial hierarchy are now part of the buried scientific paradigm. Although hierarchy may not be implicit in the concept of racial classification, the synonym "racial differentiation" and identity is inherent in the concept of race. It furnishes the grounds for racial classification. Racism therefore cannot only be explained in terms of neither economic nor biological determinism – historical analyses must not only extend beyond economic relations, but also to systems of values and appropriation. These values converge at a given sociohistorical conjecture to formulate terms and claims in scientific, legal, political and moral concepts, leading to ways of seeing, expressing and acting that are distinctly racist. As a result the prevailing meaning of race at a given historical conjecture is embedded in, and is influenced by prevailing social conditions of that time.

Similarly, in the historical specificity of racism, Stuart Hall (1980; 1996) observes that different racisms have each been historically specific and articulated in a different way within the societies they appear. Though they may draw on cultural and ideological traces which are deposited by previous historical phases, they always assume specific forms which arise out of present – not the past – social and material conditions, and organization of society. Emphasizing on the historical specificity of racism, Hall also posits that the general features of racism are significant: they are modified and transformed by historical specificity of the contexts and environments in which they become active. Precisely, in history there is no racism in general but racisms. Hall also warns us against assumptions that since racism (s) are anti – social and anti – human

there are the same everywhere and homogenous. 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 and unevenness of these racisms.

ii. Racial Identification

In racial subjectification (identification), Goldberg (1984; 1990; 1992; 1993; 2002), observes that in using race and terms bearing racial significance, social subjects racialise people and population groups whom they characterize and refer. Entities constitutive of racism fall under categories of racist expressions which include beliefs, verbal outbursts, slurs, acts and consequences (which may also be violent)[10]. In racial subjectification, social agents *subject* themselves and are *subjected* to modes of expressions, in most cases by means of language which Benveniste (1971) calls interpellation. This is the use of language to racially refer to other people in ways that are derogatory and debasing. It is from these, Goldberg argues, that a thorough understanding of racism can be made.

Similarly, once a racial label is applied to people, ideas about what it refers to, come to have their social and psychological effects (Appiah 2000). By constructing the ways people conceive of themselves and others, these racist labels shape identification. Identification is central to what Ian Hecking (1992) calls "making up people". This is synonymous with use of terms like "amakwerekwere" [11]and "amagrigamba" which are

[10] My emphasis

[11] Amakwerekwere and amagrigamba means a person who can't speak or master local South African languages, and who comes from a country assumed to be economically and culturally inferior to South Africa (Nyamnjoh 2006). I discuss racial labels in chapter 3.

used by South African blacks to refer to African immigrants. Not only are they derogatory, they carry racial connotations as well and with reference to civilization, "makwerekwere" would qualify for a subhuman race (Nyamnjoh 2006).

Cultural Racism

The discrediting of the nineteenth century scientific racism which said race is based on biological theories of superior and inferior races was no longer viable in the intellectual and public discourse (Modood 2001). Instead what emerged was racism based on cultural differences. Balibar (1991) argues that this "new racism"[12] is a part of racism in the era of decolonisation as seen in the problem of assimilating and integrating culturally "primitive and backward" people into modern civilisation. Similarly, Goldberg (1993) observes that:

> Since the World War two, especially in the last fifteen or twenty years, the cultural conception of race has tended to eclipse all others. It has become paradigmatic (1993:71).

While biological racism is based on exclusion and unequal treatment of people on the basis of their physical appearance or other physical differences, cultural racism builds on biological racism to vilify or marginalise cultural groups which are seen in racial terms (Balibar 1991). While colour racism may become negligible, it is possible for it to operate in conjunction with cultural racism, leading to cultural antagonisms and prejudices. In Alexandra, while immigrants are defined by physical appearance (they are seen as of darker hue), they are also a racialsed group with distinct cultural identities and as a result defined as "aliens" and for this reason suffer discrimination and prejudice. Michel Wievorka (1997) notes of two logics of racism: classical or inegalitarian racism and differential racism. The former considers the "other" as inferior who occupies the

[12] The New Racism has its roots in Britain

lowest place in society; it denotes legitimisation of domination, discrimination and separation based on overt doctrines in support of genetic and biological inferiority. My analyses of the situation in Alexandra lead me to apply differential racism. This is a kind of racism which is cultural racism where the "Other" is fundamentally different, which means s/he has no place in society, is a danger, an invader, should be kept at a distance, expelled or destroyed. Synonymous with cultural racism is the emphasis of cultural differences including lifestyle, customs, and manners and paints a threatening picture of mixing and interbreeding of cultures and ethnic groups. Though cultural differences implicitly seem to avoid hierarchisation, inferiorisation of the "other's" cultures is always presupposed by social, economic and political inequality between members of the local culture and those of the "Other's" culture.

From the literature, my inference is that it is important to look at racism not only at the structural level but at the "micro" nuances, which are however, not given time and study though they are important in understanding the racist phenomena

Chapter One

Poverty, Unemployment and Women

This chapter examines the link between poverty, unemployment and fight and competition for women between immigrant and South African men. Though there are some trappings of economic determinism, my argument is that this is extrapolated further to the cultural/sexual logic. I will also look at the intra class conflict between immigrant and South African working class and how it leads to racist, nationalist and anti - immigrant sentiments. Finally I argue that economic and class determinism is inadequate in explaining the situation in Alexandra.

The rise of black racism in Alexandra or moreover violent racism cannot be explained nor analysed with singular focal lens. Instead it is multi - causal with all the factors at interplay and working together to give manifestations of this kind of racisms. A prominent feature of black racism is seen in the fight and competition for women by the two sets of manhood: immigrant and South African. This fight or competition is not merely just a *prima facie* incident: there are other factors that are at the foundation of these masculinities; sexisms; gender relations and ultimately racisms. These will be discussed in detail as a focus of this part of this thesis.

The link between poverty, unemployment and women, work in close affinity and have a bearing on social relations between immigrants and South Africans in the township. A close analysis of this link gives a deeper and intricate understanding of the May 2008

racial violence. It shows the uniqueness and specificity of ethnic and social relations in Alexandra, so different to other racisms seen in other parts of the country, say Khayalistha, Gugulethu, Durban, Bothaville, De Doorns or Balfour. I am aware that each area has its own situation specifics and internal dynamics that are different from the other. This implies that analyses of racisms cannot be generalised but must be done in relation to each area and its own sets of social relationships. I am inspired by Goldberg's (1993) assertion that they 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.

Though the causal factors seen in the economic and class determinism conspicuous in the *xenophobic* discourse (for example Misago et al 2009; Dodson and Oelofse 2000; Faull 2008; Lehulere 2008; McKinley 2007; Neocosmos 2008), are still, and remain relevant, they are however inadequate and incomplete in explaining these dynamics. The concomitant results of the link between poverty, unemployment and women are seen in the cultural and sexual logic; contestations of the two sets of manhood; myths and beliefs and stereotypes. It is only when we analyse these and their expressions that a thorough understanding of racisms in the township can be made.

The link between poverty, unemployment and women converge, concur and explain how immigrant and South African men, "jostle" and compete for women. This is not to say, however, that there is a shortage of women in the township. Instead women are plenty; it depends on whom the woman goes for and who she leaves. The behaviour of men in the township reminds me of animals in a jungle: male animals can brutalise and fight each other to death for the sake of monopolising mating rights with females. The dominant male (s) is not keen on competition; access and rights to females is a cause for such fights.

One of consistent responses by my female informants was the conspicuous male element of the racial violence, emanating first from the male Madala hostel in the Beirut area. Beirut is named by residents after a city in Lebanon, because of its violence. On inquiry I was told by people that the violence around the area has a long history, beginning during the apartheid. Beirut is mainly Zulu dominated and IFP[13] aligned. During apartheid there was heightened political violence between IFP and ANC[14], which assumed an ethnic bias. Father Cairns from the Roman Catholic church near a major local shopping centre, told me that during that time, Beirut was a separated and a no go area. Anyone seen (including a dog) straying there would be shot by Madala hostel residents. With the advent of a new political dispensation in 1994, the violence subsided, except for common criminal motivated incidents. During my numerous sojourns around the area I passed by a sorghum beer outlet and I was struck by an inscription on the wall written:

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

[13] IFP is a major political party in South Africa
[14] A liberation movement which is now the ruling party in South Africa

On further inquiry I was told by patrons that the inscription was written during the May 2008 racial violence. The area of course shared its own huge amount of violent killings, rapes and 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.

Another younger female informant, told me:

> 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.[15]

Father Cairns from the Roman Catholic Church 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.[16]

Intriguing is why South African women would "dump" or leave "their" men and go for immigrants? This question is answered later on. Presently it would be appropriate to look at the Spiral and see how it plays a part in answering this question.

When immigrants come to South Africa and are undocumented, they are excluded from 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

[15] Interview with a South African female, 25 June 2009
[16] interview with Father Cairns, 10 June 2009

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[17] or amaChina. 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.[18]

Consequently most South African men either don't go to look for work or spend their time sitting in the township doing nothing. Informants told me others loath a nine to five job where they are paid at the end of the month. Instead they prefer piece jobs, when they finish, get paid and drink the money[19].

While South African men are accusing immigrants of taking all the jobs for lesser pay, immigrants and South African women generally say South African men are lazy, don't like to work and "kill" their time drinking, sleeping and playing dice, where they may win a R30 and drink it. Immigrants say South African men because of their laziness have no "direction".

Given this background, Alexandra women are not keen to have relationships with these kinds of men. Unemployed men are seen as *dom khanda* (thick headed) and *omahlalela* (loafer) who can't provide and therefore they are inadequate and not real men. Women are looking for men who are either employed or seen to be making some kind of money. This kind of man happens to be the immigrant:

[17] Refers to immigrants. I have discussed racial labels in chapter 4
[18] Interview with an unemployed South African young man, 26 June 2009.
[19] On how alcohol shapes masculinities and relationships, I have discussed in Chapter Two

> South African men don't like to work. Non South African men have a plan. They may earn R50 a day but they move around with a nice car. During the day he is seen wearing a dirty, paint smeared overalls but look at his car - a nice car.[20]

If the immigrant, as discussed earlier, is underpaid in the relations of productions, is he making money? One explanation is the widespread perception in township that immigrants are making money, a lot of money, for that matter. Though, this is not necessarily true. The second explanation is the **use value** of the money, however little. One of my male South African informants, hypothesised that if both sets of men (South African and immigrant) are earning R400 week, by the end of the week the other man's money is finished and other still has some left. The former man might have drunk it all or "wasted it" and the latter, during the week lived frugally, bought some basic necessities and therefore still have some saved. This scenario is what was presented to me by immigrants. Realising that they are in a foreign land, they have to save money to send back home and still have 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 Alexandra's major shopping centre. The perception is that they are making money. Immigrants, however, say South African men don't buy groceries and spend their money on drink.[21]

Some immigrants, who are involved in small businesses and trading, attract women because they are seen as "kings". From my observations, people involved in this line of

[20] Interview with a South African female informant 13 July 2009
[21] I discuss alcohol and "waste" in the chapter 2

business, that is, hawking and street trading, are predominantly immigrants. They are some South Africans though, mainly members of the ZCC, who are also traders and come mainly from Limpopo.

Household poverty, which is intermittent in the slum like conditions, is a chronic deprivation, with women lacking food, money and other necessities. They, therefore go around looking for money, food and men to provide for that. Since most South African men are unemployed, women go for immigrants. In this context, it would seem 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 and this has led to racial jealousies in the township.

Intra Class Conflict

The perception that immigrants are taking all the jobs and accept lower pay is a source of intra class conflict in the township. I am aware that some writers like Miles (1993: Castles and Kosack 1973; Hylland Eriksen 1993) have written on the uneven development of capitalism. As a consequence this situation has identified immigrant workers with specific socio - economic functions, namely to fulfil undesirable jobs vacated by indigenous workers in the course of the periodic reorganisation of production. Immigrant workers thereby come to constitute a "lower stratum" of the working class which becomes fragmented. However 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 lesser pay, in the township he has a totally different status. There, women desire him, because, first he is working, it doesn't matter how little he earns, and secondly he is seen to be making money. He therefore does not occupy an underclass position in the township. He is seen as well resourced, and South African men perceive him as taking all the money that the country should be given to South Africans. The status of the immigrant is seen in the fact that he can get all the South African women, including the township belles who every man is after. However some think immigrants from Zimbabwe and Mozambique who are not that rich use love charms to get "hot" girls who every man is after. It is not only because the immigrant is making money that women go after him: there are other dimensions as well, that are discussed in the later chapters.

The fact that immigrants don't have a green ID book[22] means they are exploited and underpaid by owners of capital. This is compounded by COSATU's reluctance to unionise immigrant workers. Conflicts between immigrant and domestic working classes take the form of racism and rioting (Hylland Eriksen 1993) and the kind of pogroms seen in May 2008. Hylland Eriksen 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 continues to differentiate between different fractions of the working class with respect to capital, creating specific forms of fracturing and fractioning which intersect class relations and thereby internally dividing the working class (Hall 1982).

[22] An in-depth analysis of the social life of the green book is discussed in chapter 4.

In similar vein, the emergence of ethnic groups and awakening of their consciousness are products of historical processes and structural relations of inequality (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992) between discrete social entities in which their distinction is experienced in everyday life. While the Marxist view 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 a unitary and single collective behaviour and action (Wieviorka 1997). Decades ago, Wolpe (1976) had written 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 part. There are effects for this decline - some workers actions become infiltrated by nationalist agenda and ideologies where they develop populist discourses and racist attitudes. The result has been anti - immigrant sentiments and 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, represented and defined in racial terms.

Economic and Class Determinism as Inadequate

Approaches employed by Marxist orientation take economic relations and structures to have an overwhelming determination on social structures of those formations (Hall 1982). In this paradigm, social divisions assuming a racial or ethnic character are explained with reference to economic structures and processes. Although I, above, have made references to poverty and unemployment, this still remains insufficient in explaining racisms in

Alexandra. I argue, though, that these social relationships are directly linked to economic processes because of the historical context of the country. Economic determinsm, however, doesn't provide an adequate explanation of racial features in these social formations. In societies like South Africa which historically have been structured in dominance, in which identities and identifications have been established in racialised terms; with a long history of racial creation and discrimination in these historical phases where different race and ethnic groups have been inserted; these relations have tended to erode and transform or have preserved these distinctions over time, not simply as residues or traces of the past or modes but as active structuring principles of the present organisation of society (Hall 1982; Goldberg 1993). The societies with a history of being "structured in dominance" are more readily open to racist discrimination than societies not so historically defined (Goldberg 1993).

Racism doesn't necessarily follow one path and single logic (Gilroy 1987; Goldberg 1992; Hall 1982). There is no generic racism, only historically specific racisms (Goldberg 1993), with its own sociotemporally specific causes. Racism is fluid and manifests itself in covert and subtle forms. Its transforming natures are deeply connected to cause and manifestation; restructured and reconstructed identities and changing social structure and organisation. There is no single transcendental determinant of these racisms, be it nature, mode of production or class formation. Instead there are values, specific interests and cultures out of which racist expression arise. Racisms assume some particular characteristics with different entailments and ramifications in relation to class constitution, gender, national identity, region or political structure (West 1990).

Economic or class determinism tends to reduce racism to an epiphenomenon of some basic component of the social structure, whether economic or political (Goldberg 1993). Economic or class determinism is unable to explain racist expressions that are not economic by nature and that do not manifest themselves in class terms. As discussed above, immigrants and South Africans occupy a similar class; what differentiate them are perceptions, myths and beliefs. Immigrants are not richer, though they are seen to be better off and making money. This is only a belief and a myth.

In this chapter I have presented the link between poverty and unemployment in Alexandra; how these in turn leads to racialised competition and fight for women. I have not entirely dismissed economic determinism because I think it has a place in these relationships. Doing so would have been erroneous on my part. My supposition has been that economic determinism *per se* is not enough but needs to be analysed in the whole context of community dynamics, sets of values and perceptions. These dynamics point to the social condition of township life. What I have done in this chapter is to analyse how these conditions are affected by the larger economic structures. In this way both the micro and macro are an interlocking system that defines social relationships between black African immigrants and South Africans.

Chapter Two

The Immigrant Penis is Huge – Beauty and the Beast?

The previous chapter has dealt with poverty and unemployment and how these lead to masculine competition for women. As I indicated earlier this is not enough in explaining 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 racial violence seen in May 2008 and even before. However I argue that it is not only the genitalia that are a cause: the causes are multi -dimensional and all converge and concur in affecting relationships between immigrants and South Africans. I will go further and examine these dynamics and types of cross border relationships; explore the reasons why South African women desire to have an immigrant as a partner. Again I look 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. Finally I examine how patriarchy plays a role in women domination and abuse in the township. My overall argument is that all these dynamics have a hand in encouraging and promoting racisms.

I must reiterate here that this aspect of my research and moreover my thesis is not stereotyping South African men and their penises. The information presented here is from the mouths of informants I interviewed and engaged in conversation with.

There is a widespread belief in Alexandra that the immigrant is endowed with a big penis. This also includes men from Limpopo, Vendas and Tsongas in particular. The immigrant's big penis is a subject of discussion among women, in 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 interviewed informed me that they love big penises and would shun a man with a smaller one.

> 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.[23]

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 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 confounding sexual potency (see for example Niehaus 2001; 2002). In my view 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 Negro male was seen as a penis symbol, whose sexual potency was hallucinating to the white woman and this was a basis for lynching and violent racial crimes emanating from racial jealousy.

[23] interview with Nikezwa, 13 July 2009

The same views are apparently still prevalent in a contemporary South African black community. The contradiction is that they are manifest among black populations. The black African immigrant is attributed with a big penis and sexual potency and therefore is seen as a threat to the South African woman. Naomi Nkealah (2008) and Pumla Gqola (2008) both have come close to the 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 fieldwork, I could not clearly establish how the immigrant came to be associated with the big penis. Closer, my female informant, Tumi who is 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 that they were better performers in bed. Neither could it be known if this belief is true or just imaginations by locals. Certainly nobody has measured any man's (both immigrant and South African) penis. Despite this, both South African men and women believe the immigrant has a big penis. Tsongas and Vendas though 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 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 interviewed some immigrant men if they were really given *muti* to lengthen and thicken the penis. One informant 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 informant 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 can fuck like a goat. All women who have come across me can testify that.

During my fieldwork, the *muti* logic was corroborated with by immigrant men themselves.

> When I was young some incisions were done on my testicles and *muti* was rubbed in.[24]

The immigrant men talked of a number of 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 GMOs. Sibusiso, 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.

[24] Interview with a Mozambican man, 13 July 2009

I asked South African women who are 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.[25]

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

I interviewed some herbalists and "doctors" who give out pamphlets in 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 interviewed three "doctors"[26] and they told me that they get regular visitors from South African men in need of help. The "doctors" said that their *muti* is strong and does

[25] interview with No, 4 July 2009
[26] From my observations most "doctors" are non – South African.

"wonders" and clients have to apply it on the penis everyday until it gets big. While the immigrants said their *muti* is sometimes a once off treatment and a lifetime "guarantee", apparently the "doctors" *muti* has to be constantly applied for results.

I paid one "doctor" operating around Braamfontein area a visit. 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 micro cosmic 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 where I wrote my age, full names, address and telephone numbers. I reiterated that I was doing a 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. However 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 younger men.

The immigrants said they compliment penis size by drinking concoctions, which are not available in South Africa. In Zimbabwe, it comes in different forms: some is powder like sprinkled on cooked cow feet and some is drunk with sorghum beer. I am aware of a Zulu mixture called *imbiza yamaZulu* and people say its drunk mainly by taxi drivers and 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). However whether *muti* from across the borders is more potent than South African 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 interviewed 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 interviewed 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. I could not get much information on what happens there. However, one female informant, 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.[27]

[27] interview with a South African female informant, 7 July 2009

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).

Although immigrant men and some South African women collaborate with the big penis myth, this cannot be entirely verified because in my fieldwork I had seen neither the immigrant nor South African man's penises. These myths (like immigrant steal local women and jobs and do crimes and so forth), don't 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 racism, 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 sexual possession of women, whether 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. This is discussed later on.

Some male immigrants told me that many women enter into relationships with immigrants 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 love, are hallucinated and fascinated by his penis, which is an object, a thing and the sexual potency, orgasm and sexual satisfaction he brings. After getting this 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 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 section has been on the immigrant genitalia. However 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. This I discuss below.

The Dynamics of Cross border Relationships

From my interviews and conversations with my informants, apparently South African women in Alexandra are involved in love relationships with immigrant men and many desire an immigrant as a partner. The question i may pose is: why are South African women long for relationships with "strangers" and don't love South African men? One clear reason is discussed in this chapter: the curiosity of the immigrant penis. However that alone is inadequate. There are other factors that I will explore later on.

Migration into Alexandra for many decades meant that the newly arrived immigrants had to find female partners to cater for their sexual and marital needs and other comforts. The immigrants were mainly men, who had left their families and even 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 immigration, as one elderly woman put it:

> *Nto yakudala le. Abekoko bethu babeyenza.* (This is an old thing, our parents were doing it.)

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 or

Sotho and Tswana ones and never returned back home. Such categories of men from Zimbabwe were called *muchoni* (those who went to Johannesburg and never came back) or *mujubheki* (Johannesburger), who were disconnected from their homes and got swallowed by the delights of Johannesburg lights. Johannesburg lights were and are the various entertainments and merriments, found abundantly in the city. But these entertainments means the city has beautiful women with soporific powers for seduction and attraction and 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 accommodation and the immigrant stays with her in her domain and his duty is to provide for the household. The major reason though is that *lobola* (bride wealth) is exorbitant, and these formations are convenient. The man and the woman just live together as husband and wife, the man providing material needs and the woman, conjugal and marital duties. Normally, both parties are not known to their respective kin and as they say, it is a "Jo'burg arrangement". The immigrant, because he 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. Women in these kinds of relationships don't like going to the men's countries either; for fear that they might never come back.

Why do South African Women enter into Cross Border Relations?

Most love relationships between South African women and immigrant men are materially based. The latter provides money, pays rent, buys groceries and looks after the woman's child or children, and does it in a way that she is well cushioned and comfortable. As seen earlier, immigrant men are seen to be making money and that is a general belief in the township. Again most South African men are unemployed, and the poverty in the township's homes lead 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 "*baya supporta*" (they provide).This might have emanated from Nigerian men, who among all 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?

Female informants 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 US dollars have more value than the South African Rand, therefore they have more money. Most Nigerians don't live in the township and once they marry the woman, they take her 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 the poverty of the township. Not only are they well architectured, with well manicured lawns and gardens, beautiful interior decors and furniture, the fridges are well stocked with all kind of food and refreshment. A woman with a Nigerian man is said to be living in "heaven". A Nigerian man does not mind

buying a woman R1000 rand shoes, expensive designer clothing and give 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 Pick n Pay supermarket, and ask her to fill up the trolley and pay for all the groceries.

One other reason women enter into cross border relationships is to escape from physical violence they say is perpetrated by South African men. This violence is an internalised norm, sanctioned and substantiated by patriarchal expectations. One female informant 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. However some women view physical violence against them by their men as his emotional commitment and his expression for love. On the other hand majority of women are seeking "escape" from this entrapment, thus cross - border relationships. Immigrant men are seen as not culturally socialised to beat women. This is the perception of many women, though one female informant informed me that her mother told her Zimbabwean men have a tendency to beat up their women. Interestingly the fact that immigrants don't 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's a "serious" crime to beat a South African woman; the immigrant therefore is governed by fear of the state's legal and judicial machinery and apparatus, that includes the police, the department of Home Affairs and the courts; where the immigrants come from, there are no perpetual structures of violence that has characterised South African history and configured perceptions of masculinity and finally, some immigrant men told

me that although in their societies some men beat women, the prevalence is morally sanctioned.

When I asked how men propose to women, I was informed that Nigerians use promises of money and wealth upfront saying:

> Come on baby, let's eat my money.

Instantly the woman would fall for him because she loves the money. The Nigerians are said to also say to the woman:

> What are you doing with that poor man? Come to me I will give you everything.

Other categories of men (that is both immigrants and South African) just say:

> *Baby, ke a ho rata.* (Baby I love you)

Jerrinos informed me that, one can pick it up from there, depending on the strength of one's "statement". Cell phone numbers are exchanged and by night time, the man would have slept with the woman.

Some female informants informed 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, its not that they love money, it's because they love to be treated well and spoiled.[28]

Therefore they would love a man who provides her with security. In fact women put security and material things on a higher pedestal than love, and they are more concerned with welfare and well being of their offspring. On the other hand South African men say South African women are "omahotsha (bitches), materialistic, gold diggers and evil" who

[28] Interview with a female South African, 13 July 2009

are after money and go for a man who “impresses”. It happens, then, that the immigrant man is the one who “impresses”. This scenario is what bell hooks (1992) likens to misogyny in which women are represented in these terms, that they are evil, are prostitutes who see their sexuality as a commodity to be exchanged for cash, after which they betray the man.

Again immigrant men *bayacharma* (well dressed) and are always wearing Levis and Carvella clothing. The impression is that they are making a lot of money. In Alexandra, it is said one has to avoid *ukucharma* and must be somewhere in between - smartness and scruffiness. Nonetheless since the one *ocharmayo* is seen to be making money, women go for them, and not the township riff raff. The shabbily dressed are always those unemployed and are shunned by women. Consequently, unemployed South African men resent immigrants for that.

Immigrants are said to be in the habit of “show off” especially in taverns, where they buy women beer; fill tables with bottles; playing snooker and are a noisy lot. The women say South African men don’t 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, the former are also said to be in the habit of going for 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. In one street in Alexandra, I counted seven shebeens and taverns, not including many others in other 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? At this juncture I will stray a bit and delve into the history of alcohol in the country's townships. This section is heavily indebted to the works and insights of Rogerson (1986); Callinicos (1987); Mager (1999) and David Coplan (oral communication, 28 October 2009). By the turn of the 20th century the colonial administration was prohibiting Africans' consumption of alcohol because owners of capital were concerned about reduced productivity due to "drunkenness", while ministers of religion were concerned about effects of alcohol and felt it led to violence and wasted lives. A 1928 legislation prohibited Africans from drinking "European beer" and restricted them to *kaffir* beer (sorghum beer), which became monopolised by municipalities, who realised huge profits from it. Traditionally, African brew had a social and religious value: it was nutritious, had low alcohol content and was refreshing, good for relaxation and conversation. However, prohibitions on alcohol facilitated trade of illicit liquor and establishment of shebeens in towns. Although municipal beer halls existed, they were not preferred because they did not have a social environment patrons desired. Town beer began to change its nature and became stronger because brewers found out that they could charge more for a drink with a "kick" in it. They were also quick to prepare, and since alcohol was criminalised, it lessened chances of being discovered by police. The traditional brew used to take up to two weeks to prepare, therefore brewers had to be creative and inventive in an urban setting. Beer soon lost its social and religious value. Town brewing began to create a new black culture and women's houses were turned into shebeens. Oppressed and exploited workers, who worked for long hours and for lesser wages, found beer as a form of escape

from daily drudgery. Criminalisation of alcohol led to, and encouraged drunkenness in urban centres because Africans would swallow whatever quantities they had before being discovered by police.

After 1962, prohibitions on "European beer" were lifted. The motivation was both political and economic: the apartheid state realised it could get money from taxes (in addition to sorghum beer); the apartheid state constructed Africans as "naturally heavy drinkers" and believed that access to European liquor would increase alcohol consumption and thus more gains and profits. Again liberalising liquor would draw attention away from repressive political controls (Bantu Authorities Act, 1959; the Republic of South Africa Act, 1961 and banning of African nationalist organisations in the aftermath of the 1960 Sharpeville massacre). Lifting of prohibitions also meant the state would look forward to an inebriated African population and thus minimise potential political opposition to apartheid. The SAB purveying of clear beer to African market meant there was booming trade in liquor. The changing African consumer patterns were seen in excessive drinking and as Mager (1999) has noted, Africans were drinking themselves deeper into apartheid and urban squalor.

Given this background, it is of little surprise then, that alcohol is imbibed in great quantities in Alexandra. Wherever there is partaking of alcohol, it's usual to see groups of men who are friends, each taking turns to buy rounds of drinks or around a *shisa nyama* (braai). Each man's obligation is to his male friends (*omagang, izinja, tsotsis, and impinsthi* which I think is the lexicon of township masculine gang culture) and would

drink until his pocket is empty. I think the "waste" comes when women see their men coming home drunk, penniless, while he has not paid attention to basic priorities like necessities, fees and clothes for children and rent. The typical South African male is constructed as one fond of alcohol, and merriments and entertainments that come with it. He is seen as irresponsible, moreover after a drinking session is prone to violence. It became apparent to me the extent of apartheid's role in producing pervasive alcoholism and fracturing social and family relations.

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. Its not that we love material things, we love being spoiled.[29]

When he buys, say, relish today, tomorrow he says it's her turn, since yesterday it's him who bought. Or when he pays rent this month, the next, he asks the woman to pay. South African men demand that they take turns for providing necessities of the home. The general feeling among South African men is that they have to go "fifty – fifty" and share chores, because of women rights, enshrined in the post 1994 South African constitution which guarantees equality. They also say the new constitution has "destroyed everything" by implying that everybody is equal and that both men and women are "fifty – fifty". The

[29] Interview with a South African woman, 13 July 2009

men also feel that the women want to control everything including the man and men are not keen to be under a woman's tutelage.

Case 1

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. Girls who drink in the tavern, are mostly young women, some aged 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 mainly Malawians, Zimbabweans, Mozambicans and Vendas and Tsongas. 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 chase them off.

The immigrant men are *dom* because they open their wallets easily and *bayadliwa*[30] (are eaten). When I related the nice time girls' scenario to one Zimbabwean immigrant, Sbusiso, he told me that immigrants are seen by South African women as "portable ATM's" 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.

[30] This implies that women spent the men's money until it is finished.

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, full of beer bottles. The perception would be that they have money. However, 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 girl gets an immigrant boyfriend, it's called *ubamb' bhatshi. (*It's difficult to translate. Literally it means to hold a coat). Metaphorically it means she has hit a 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 leaves the tavern altogether for another. Some of the girls have South African boyfriends who would also be drinking in the tavern. 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 two fold: 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 women). When its 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 obligation. In many instances that is not the case. After

"eating" the immigrant, she will refuse to go with him for the night therefore 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 can't 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".

Often times the women engage in brutal fights that include broken bottles and knives, with each other over immigrant men. This happens when one woman accuses the other of having "snatched" her boyfriend. Mainly this boyfriend would 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

a) Casino Type

Immigrant men are said to be *bayabheja.* In the township lingo *ukubheja* is synonymous with betting. Imagine betting on horses or at the casino. Like all betting or forms

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 get South African citizenship and that would broaden his employment prospects. On the other hand, he might lose, 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 the relationships in the larger community.

A greater stereotypic perception in the community aligns Xhosa[31] women with materialism, as regards 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, the man has similarities of a job; she takes his money and sends it home. As a result some immigrants I came across said they 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"*

[31] Xhosas are an ethnic group in South Africa

Many women I talked to said 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.[32]

Some immigrant men are said to give the woman a baby and leave her for good, when they return back 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 complains a lot 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 don't tell the women that they are married. This makes them dump the women easily. The feeling is that it is difficult for a man to support two households on a sustained period of time. Again if the man does something terrible to the woman, like beating or killing her, he runs away and nobody would ever locate them because they don't have "passes"[33].

[32] interview with a female South African, 12 June 2009
[33] I discuss the meaning of "pass" in chapter 4.

b) Bribe 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, lets 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.

The bribe and take relationships are characterised by *ukudhiza* (bribery). 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 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 some other niceties. 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.

Case 2

I met a Mozambican man, in overalls, who does some odd jobs. He told me he is 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 how an irresponsible man he is and that injures his ego a great deal. He said whenever he is drunk, she searches his pockets and steals his money and he is not happy because she buys other men beer (and she loves drinking a lot) with his own money. She expects him to buy her

expensive things because she loves *izinto zetop* (expensive and high status things). 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, though, because the man *uyadhiza.* The previous night he didn't sleep at home, because she also doesn't sleep at home many nights.

However, not all relationships are material based. Some are premised on genuine love with both parties loving the other for who they are as shown in the cases 3 and 4 below.

Case 3

No, a South African woman in a relationship with a Nigerian for three years got 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 was involved with a South African, a Zimbabwean and a man from Botswana. She cannot generalise on South African men because she was not much involved 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 being his girlfriend. The Zimbabwean and the Nigerian are very humble people: they feel she is doing them a favour 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 pre requisites and

were not the reason she got into the relationship in the first place, even though some women do.

Case 4

Tshidi, who is involved with a man from Zimbabwe, got into the relationship because it was best for her. She was looking for a man who would meet her emotional needs and she found out he was the perfect match. Being an ambitious person, she needed somebody who could handle her sense of independence, 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 misconception 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 thinks that misconception is 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 get 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.

Contestations of the Manhoods

The fact that South African women enter into love relationships with immigrants, is a source of deep resentment by South African men. The allegation is that immigrants are "stealing our women". 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 long, big and thick penis but the one who can provide for the woman, the family and dependants. This is the point of distinction between immigrant and South African men. Certainly there are some "things", qualities and values that women are looking for. Despite them being labelled gold diggers and money mongers, for Alexandra women, the man is not just a penis symbol but must come as a "complete package". He must not only meet her material expectations but her emotional needs as well. 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 came out prominently in my extensive interviews with female informants. 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 are escaping these oppressions. Immigrant men are seen as better lovers and these have consequences: bitter contestations between the two sets of manhood which are manifest in racisms.

Being a Man in Alexandra

As indicated earlier, being a man in Alexandra encompasses many things: the big penis, being employed and being able to provide for the woman or making money, therefore lovable. South African men are said to be afraid of independent and competitive women

who are better than them. They therefore prefer "stupid blondes", who stay at home and don't argue or oppose them and just do whatever he says without question or resistance. These women would run his bath, cook and do laundry for him while he sits and watch television. South African men are said to demand conformity in a woman, that she perform traditional roles and give her babies. Other men look for a trophy woman they can display in public and boost their manly egos and masculinities. Certainly women are dismayed by this kind of arrangement. Female informants 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.

However some women said a real woman must provide for her family, clean the house, wash and cook for her man. One female informant argued that though she is a working woman, she still finds time to do household chores. Nowadays people employ nannies and house girls, she doesn't 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* 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 also means to have concurrent multiple partners, all in which sex is a major factor. For this reason, an unemployed Alexandra man who can't access women because

of his social position is a deep injury to their manhood. The broader connection between unemployment, poverty and masculinity means two things: one, as seen earlier, there is contestation between the two sets of manhood, which is immigrant and South African. Secondly, it would seem men are involved in a sexual competition for women and the one able to provide for her becomes the ultimate winner.

Many female informants pointed out that most sexual relationships are characterised by coercion, violence and physical threats. This is viewed as an extension of male authority and sex is his inalienable right. Manhood in the township is marked by sexual and physical violence. These two, in the men's eyes, define manhood. Paradoxically, the majority of women don't see it that way. For them a real man is not the one capable of exercising physical and sexual violence: these are two things they loathe and make them seek recourse in cross - border relationships. Women are in fact looking for love, emotional support, commitment, security and material provision, and this, according to women is their definition of manhood. This I discuss below.

a) What women look for in a man?

One consistent response from female informants was that women look for respect, honesty, communication and love. Women love long lasting and enduring relationships and *bafun' umuzi* (they desire a home and a family). Apparently South African men don't provide that. I was told all they want is to fool and play around and *bayajola* (they cheat) and are not serious. All men in Alexandra are said to be *jolling*.

However some men say that if men are cheating it means something is seriously wrong with South African women, mainly because they are materialistic and they don't love the man but his money. The indication was that South African women need to be taught to love somebody for who they are and not their money. Further men are privy to serious relationships because of fear that the women would give them *korobela* (love portion), which would severely curtail the man's independence.

An elderly woman told me what makes a woman is her bearing a child. Only and until 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. However, it seems men only uses the woman and give her a baby and dump her. On asking her what a relationship should be like, the same woman said in a relationship, love must be balanced and not just all 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. [34]

The same man, called Bhakaniya for his undying love for Orlando Pirates football club said a man who doesn't work is the one who mostly creates problems in the house. When some men are out of employment, they start thinking that the woman is no longer respecting them, so they leave her and get another *cheri* (girl). He said men are charmers

[34] interview with a South African man,30 June 2009

and use their tongue to get their way into the new woman's heart. He starts borrowing, say, R100 from her and tells her he will pay it back and never does. He gives her a baby and runs away. For immigrant men it's different because *bayabheja.* (They freely give out money). Bhakaniya said if South African men don't take responsibility, immigrant men will come and takeover. Women say the dismay and disapproval of South African men over cross border relationship emanates from jealous.

> 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 jealousy, they beat up women and they don't trust them.[35]

When I posed the question if non - South African men are "taking South African women", No, 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 damnit 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.[36]

Some men are said to spend money on parties, get a girl there, do a one night stand and move on and that they are not serious about making a family. I was informed that the man must first have sex with a woman before he buys her clothes for the child or children. If she can't offer it, he goes for other women. Women say when men see a woman they

[35] interview with a female informant, 07 July 2009
[36] interview with No, 04 July 2009

see sex; in their imagination they strip her naked and envisage having sex with her. They told me that all men want is sex and nothing else.

Some immigrants feel Alexandra women are "loose" and also because of widespread cheating by men, they have lost the definitive essence of love. When she sees a man, she expects him to sleep and *jol* with her. This may be because of desperation brought by intermittent and chronic poverty. Alexandra has a huge concentration of shacks, in their homes there is neither money nor food. As a result they go around looking for men to provide them with these needs. When a man speaks with her, she expects him to love her. Immigrants say local men are not serious with their women, they are the "hit and run" type. As Jerrinos told me one day, people no longer respect love and they don't think about a long term relationship. He said in Alexandra no woman has a boyfriend somewhere, even *"married old mamas have a boyfriend or boyfriends somewhere, its waar"* (its true). *The boyfriend can just come to the woman's house and sleep with her while her man is away, its waar."*

It came out repeatedly that there is moral degeneration in the township. Fathers are not there to provide for their families; they are invisible. They just make babies and shy all responsibility. The other feeling is that women don't like living permanently with men, because that would "disturb" them from *jolling* around. Their young daughters are therefore, also *jolling*. One man said in the old days girls would "fear" a man. Nowadays it's no time for fear, otherwise they would starve and nobody would provide money to fix their hair.

> Its mostly young girls who are *jolling*. When I was coming down the road, I haven't seen a girl walking alone, but with a boy.[37]

Cultural Particularisms, Patriarchy and Women Domination

There are cultural factors and perceptions and patriarchal notions that all work towards women domination, all intractably linked to, and affect the dynamics of cross border relationships. In many instances there may be no problems between the two individuals, but they set in as a result of cultural pressures brought largely and mainly by the family.

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, worse still fight with, or beat her. One female informant said, 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 informant 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, men and unemployed men in particular resent them because of the conception

[37] Interview with Mukoma, a Zimbabwean immigrant, 08 July 2009

that immigrants are “stealing our women”. Some parents, however don’t approve these relationships because they are afraid of embarrassment from neighbours and 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 informants, 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 sixteen 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 and that 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 circulation of such stories, racial attitudes towards non - nationals intensified and moreover 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 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 he doesn’t have control over the child. In the patriarchal systems of most African societies this is a deep injury to the man and a source of contestations in these relationships.

Case 5

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 naming of the child and damages. The man had broken into the family *(ho thobela)* without Tshidi's father's consent, 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, though, 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 has to pay *lobola* for the child not the mother. Unless and until he does that, the child carries the mother's name (which ironically is Tshidi's father's name). 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. On 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 are however, the ones appearing on the child's birth certificate.

Tshidi attributes this state of affairs to cultural particularism that is synonymous to racisms. 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 the family says she has brought shame. The perception is that their ethnic group is superior and jokes are made about her man. Her aunt always says to 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 UK. A black African, however wealthy he might be remains a non starter.

Another informant, Tumi, informed me that her grandfather used to tell her that South Africans are like domestic cows whose meat is tender and the 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".

Are Women Complicit in their Domination?

a) Two Rand Sly

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 which is made of slices of bread, with chips, fried eggs, cheese, Vienna and polony added inside. 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 slice. It is highly coveted by women. Anyone seen holding or eating it has a certain prestige or status. Therefore any man who can buy a woman the *sly* or ice cream which is also widely consumed can win her heart and can sleep with her. Men also propose and make sex with women on the promises of buying her a *two Rand sly.* Apparently, *sly* has assumed a more intrinsic value than the normally staple diet of pap 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.

b) Patriarchy and Abuse

Men have the ingrained perception of an infallible right to women's sexual rights. This might have emanated from the mentality of struggle masculinity that considered women to be fair game (Xaba 2001). When their advances are turned down, men would use force and this has led to many instances of rape. Rape is therefore a major concern in Alexandra. From his study of the Kabyle in Algeria, Bourdieu (2001) observes that women are socially prepared to see sexuality as an intimate and emotionally charged experience which doesn't necessarily include penetration. Instead it contains things like

talking, caressing, embracing and other communications and understandings. Men, however, compartmentalise sexuality which is seen as an aggressive and physical act of conquest oriented towards penetration and orgasm (Russell 1975). This kind of scenario unfortunately is playing itself out in Alexandra.

In the Alexandra community few men are seen walking with, and holding hands of their children, especially girls (Thapelo, oral communication 08 July 2009). Previously when a man was seen walking with a girl child people would think he would rape her. As a result many children are afraid of, and are detached from their fathers while the latter remains a distant and fearsome figure.

Some female informants like Nikezwa from Alex FM told me that many women are abused and they don't report to police because either the man would be 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, influenced by historical factors (Morell 2001). Further, masculinities like feminities 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 the intimate relationships is disproportionate. Men are not keen on a woman who talks back or challenges him. She does 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 they vent their anger through physical violence, not only on women but on other men as well. 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 comes in when she gets into a love relationship. He starts saying," baby, don't work, I will provide for you." But when he goes out of employment, problems start setting in, often related to the man's inability to provide for his family. The capacity of the man to use physical violence, hurt vulnerable people, like women and children who have less power is seen as 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 they don't support. Far from being caught in the apartheid structures, Ratele (2004) argues that black men are still caught up and support the oppressive discourses those structures supported. 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), of which Alexandra is no exception. As a result the masculinisation of the male body and the feminisation of the female body reflect relations of domination which are naturalised.

While traditionally men were seen as economic providers (Ratele 2004), it seems this has been subverted in the urban context and changing times. Apparently it seems men are depending on working women to support them, financially and materially. It was revealed to me that it's not only women that love financial benefits from a relationship but men as well.

So far in this chapter I have used a multi - pronged approach, looking at different elements and how they play themselves out in giving rise to racisms in Alexandra. The immigrant penis alone is not enough, thus my inclusion of other phenomena. I have looked at other factors as well that include the linkage between masculinity, sexism, gender relations and racism, the cultural logic ingrained in community beliefs and how it has a bearing on social relationships between immigrants and citizens. Gender and power relations in particular, remain important in understanding these. My belief is that all have common affinity and sometimes overlap. All in all these affect dynamics of cross - border love relationships.

Chapter Three

Social Formation of Races in the Post Apartheid South Africa

Alexandra is Africa.[38]

In understanding cross – border love relationships, I think one needs to analyse racisms in the townships. My approach thus is holistic and all encompassing – I present the overall picture. In my analysis I show why black racism is significant, how people get constituted into social membership and how immigrants get racially discriminated. In this chapter I look at the community life and its own internal sets of social relationships. Alexandra, being a multiethnic society with a large presence of different identities does not mean these relationships are harmoniums. Some frictions are bound to come out. This is seen in use of language, naming, renaming and use of racial labels on immigrants. For me cultural semiotics of signification and representation are important in understanding racisms as I will show in this chapter.

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. In the pre 1994 South Africa, there were contestations of who the bona fide township residents were and who were not (Bonner and Nieftagodien 2008). Migrant

[38] Interview with Colin of Alex FM, 07 July 2009

labourers from rural South Africa were in many instances called *amagoduka* (those would return) implying that they were temporal residents who after a certain period of time, would return to their rural hinterland. Naturally this arrangement served the apartheid regime's interests, which was loath to the city slicker type and street wise township resident and secondly the *amagoduka* were important as a labour reserve.

The advent of democracy in 1994 saw the country opening up to the whole world in the process of accelerated flow of labour, capital, goods, electronic information and increased migration by African immigrants (Nyamnjoh 2006). In addition to almost all ethnic South African groups, there are people from Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Malawi, Nigeria, Somalia, Ethiopia and Zambia resident in the township. Many of the non - nationals found their way to Alexandra, because of long existing networks of immigrants who had migrated to the country and township for many decades. Secondly, the township is favoured because of its proximity to industrial areas which surround it, like Kew, Marlboro and Wynberg. Thirdly, it makes economic sense because of cheaper shack accommodation, which has been proliferating since the late 1980s (Bonner and Nieftagodien 2008). The increase in migration by African non - nationals exacerbated insecurities and anxieties of locals and immigrants alike (Nyamnjoh 2008). The resulting end has been a building of differences in identity and sequestration of ethnic groups. These differences have transcended merely ethnicity, to racial conception, as presented later in this chapter.

The rise of 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).[39] Here I am inspired by Hall's (1980) assertion which is relevant in the contemporary South African society:

> 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 transformation of previous pre 1994 racism, that 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 *"Buyelaekhaya*" (Go Back Home) tried to evict immigrants from Zimbabwe, Mozambique and Malawi, accusing them of crime, sexual attacks, unemployment and other social vices. Most of the victims had been resident in the township for decades (Crush 2008). In the context of different identities I will now look at how immigrants are brought to subjectivity thorough use of names and speech in these sets of relationships.

[39] I have made references to this earlier in my literature review

Racial Labelling and Racial Mapping

As Emile Benveniste (1971) observes, the linguistic status of a person is the very foundation of subjectivity. The process of interpellation, thus, is when individuals are called to subjectivity by others. Similarly, an index as a sign whose meaning is interpreted from the context in which it is uttered configures racial and ethnic relationships (Foley 1997). Understanding the interface between language and race/ethnicity shows a close affinity that is tied together and language and its use becomes a social marker of ethnicity and or claims to an ethnic identification. Therefore the "speaking" subject exists in culture. If that culture leans more on racist and ethnicist, 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 racisms in Alexandra.

Goldberg's (1990) view on racial subjectification demonstrates how social agents are defined or define themselves as racial subjects. Further this entails for both the racially formed (racialised) and racially forming (racialising) subjects. 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 racial violence as the May 2008 attacks on immigrants in Alexandra show.

In Alexandra, non - South Africans are known by a wide array of given names. These are not just names but labels. Consequently they are identified by them. These emanate from culture contact as a result of the presence of other ethnicities and identities. Each of these, are value laden and have a certain meaning denoting the social origins of their carrier. In Alexandra in particular, these labels undergo a mutation process. While their origin may be in addressing one racial/ethnic group, they may end up being a blanket label that refers to anyone and everyone who is not South African. As I went around asking people their perceptions of social relationships between immigrants and South Africans, I also enquired about names they are given and their etymological roots. From these conversations I identified fourteen:

a) Amakwerekwere

Amakwerekwere is the most common and "older" label given to African immigrants. Its roots are in language differences found in the latter's and South African languages. The speakers of the strange language were seen as speaking an *alien* speech, totally incomprehensible to South Africans. As I was told, when they speak their languages, the phonetic sound would go like "*kwerekwerekwerekwerekwere"*. Again they could not speak any of the South African dialects, and it was confounding how a black person could not be able to speak any of the dialects spoken by South Africans. For Nyamnjoh (2006), the term *amakwerekwere*, in reference to civilisation, its bearers would qualify for a subhuman race. Following May 2008 violence, the Black Lawyers Association proposed that the painfully offensive term "makwerekwere" be declared part of the lexicon of hate speech in the statute books (the Star 9 July 2008).

b) Amagrigamba

Another older term that refers to non South Africans. Originally it referred to West African men. During my fieldwork, I was told that a *grigamba* was one who came to South Africa with nothing except clothes on his body. After a while they returned home carrying lots of property and goods.

c) Ama foreigner

This is a recent term, which came about as a result of May 2008 xenophobic attacks. The period and aftermath of the violence was captured extensively in the media, with people caught up in the violence, called "foreigners". Township residents merged the term into their daily linguistic repertoire.

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. Among the first Zimbabwean people to migrate, and set migration trends, to South Africa long back, to work in the gold mines of the Witwatersrand, under WNLA recruitment, was the Kalanga ethnic subgroup of Zimbabwe. In Zimbabwe, they are not regarded as bona fide Ndebele who came from Nguni land in South Africa. Most of the Kalangas, however, are fluent in Ndebele, and they settled in Alexandra, where they lived for many decades. The term *AmaKalanga* came, before and in the post May 2008 violence. It referred to Ndebele speaking people of Zimbabwe and those from Swaziland. The idea was that they are not bona fide Nguni, therefore they are amaKalanga. The label, of late has come to refer to anyone who is not South African.

e) MaNyasa

This 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 derogatory.

f) MaNigeria and Broeder

It refers to Nigerian immigrants. "Broeder" is an imitation of Nigerian speech: *"my broeder from anoder moeder.*" Apparently, these labels, on 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.

g) Ngwangwa

Again this label refers to Nigerians. It's not clear how it came about in Alexandra. However my informants told me it has something to do with food Nigerians eat.

h) Patrao

Refers to Mozambicans. It originated from the Mozambicans themselves and how 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, Patrao!"

The other would reply:

"Patrao!"

However the term has been appropriated by South Africans, and the way they use it has come to be offensive, carrying negative connotations and intending to cause injury to the

Mozambican. Though I observed numerous Mozambican women traders, they are not called *patrao.* That term is used on men. Among Mozambicans themselves women are called *senora.* Apparently that 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 slickers to refer to South Africans coming from rural areas, who were not well versed with city ways, who were seen as "traditional, conservative and backward." However 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 – linguistically, physically and culturally. Further, it buttresses their inferiority, both as beings and their places of social origin and ancestry.

j) Mkwevho

Refers to Tsongas and Vendas from Limpopo and Mozambicans as well. The label might have originated from a popular Venda soapie, *Muvhango* which is broadcast on SABC 2.

k) MaShangani

A label used for Tsongas and Vendas. During the violence it was used to refer to Mozambicans. The logic was that Mozambicans share the same blood, ancestry or origin with South African Tsongas and Vendas.

l) Abantu bakaMugabe (Mugabe's people)

It is used for Zimbabweans. They are considered to be just as bad as Robert Mugabe.

m) AmaXenophobia

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.* The Star newspaper article 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.

However, like other labels, it is also interchangeably used to refer to all non - South Africans.

n) MaZimbabwe

The label was not only referring to Zimbabwean immigrants but to all non - nationals as well. 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.

The labelling is, however, not a linear process. Immigrants also have names they give to South Africans:

a) MaSasko

This is mainly used by Zimbabweans to refer to South Africans. There are two explanations as regards this label. One is that it might be a linguistic derivation of "South African". The other is it comes from Sasko bakery or Sasko bread.

b) MaZulu

It comes from amaZulu, a South African ethnic group. The immigrants have a perception that all attacks perpetrated on them, are done by the Zulus. The *maZulu* label encompasses every South Africans, even if they are Sotho, or Xhosa they are still called *maZulu.*

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

In the above discourse, I am attempting to link racial names that Alexandra's South African residents give to African immigrants. Since the immigrant has come to be identified by a label, it lasts long their stay in the township and the country as a whole. Even when they go to sleep, in the privacy of their quarters, when there is no one to give them a label, 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 in most instances 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 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, one, that is where the immigrant belongs and the autochthon is not really sure of the physical, geographical and social location of it. Two, it is an alien space, so strange and surreal, like the immigrant himself who emanates from there. Third, in the autochthons' imagination, that place must be inferior, undeveloped, and in terms of civilisation, lesser than Alexandra and South Africa in general.

Racial naming as a social practice perpetrated by discriminators who are social actors, ultimately commit a social action of discrimination. They generally wield the power, embedded in language which can be both an object and means of social discrimination (Roberts, Davies and Jupp 1993; Billig 2006; Van Dijk 1987) and these often overlap. Secondly, 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 like 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 social construction of race categories.

Labels like *amakwerekwere* can be understood through a discursive pattern of signification and representation (Wetherell and Potter 1992). Further they are part of collective symbols, as espoused by the Duisburg analysts Sigfried Jager and Margaret Jager (2001a). These are cultural stereotypes which are in the form of metaphorical and synecdochic 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 that they are discriminated at by means of discursive practices (which are nomination strategies). This can take many forms – some 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

From my observations during my fieldwork I come up with an interpretation of cultural semiotics of signification in Alexandra. Hegemony and signification, 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 wider than near. It's a synthesis of both remoteness and nearness (Simmel 1950). 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, because the senders of these signals, in most instances don't receive feedback from the receivers. For instance, when somebody shouts: "Hey, *wena kwerekewere*!" the social actor, who the verbal outburst is intended, just imbibes the insult silently; they neither respond back verbally nor physically.

Most of these significations are beyond merely verbal communication (Reisgl and Wodak 2008: Van Leeuwen 2000). They draw attention to other semiotic processes, in particular visual communication. Van Leeuwen identifies various types of discrimination; *inter alia,* depersonalisation; separating; distancing; accentuating differences and devaluing. Visual discrimination which is by symbolic distanciation is whereby groups of persons may be viewed as not close to viewers, as they are strangers.

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, thus exercising power (Jager 2001). Within this approach, discourses are understood to be historically determined, transindividual, institutionalised and regulated social practices that become material realities *sui generis* (Reisgl and Wodak 2008).

Stereotyping of the Other

My fieldwork and findings reveal that 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 it necessarily does not have to be true. However 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) what are common stereotypes associated with immigrants and South Africans in Alexandra. Below are some which I was told, as 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 our women, including the most beautiful ones

g) Immigrants *banuka amakwapa* (they smell).

h) foreigners brought AIDS to us

Reverse/Counter Stereotyping

Stereotyping in Alexandra is not a one way process. Immigrants themselves have, in their repertoire, stereotypes that they associate South Africans with:

a) South Africans are lazy, they don't want to work and are stupid

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 2001b). 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 also identifies convictions as being central in that they ascribe qualities to others and provide rationalisations for negative attitudes to other people.

For example one man I interviewed said:

> Zimbabweans…ummm…okay…at least some are hardworking. 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. 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. *Mfethu, ibuhlungu laai len*… (My man it's painful).

Racism, Plurality and Multiethnicism

Given a long history of migration, Alexandra is place where different ethnic groups reside. These are internal and external migrants. They live side by side in the yards and shacks and social interaction is close as a result of this proximity. At one instance it might imply that social relationships are more defined; well refined and thus giving credence to cultural diversity or 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 that how can neighbour turn against neighbour, if they have 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 set up permanent family structures. Those immigrants had lost contacts with their homeland, their families and kin there; therefore, the new families they established in Alexandra were *de facto* their only kin.

This brings one to the following question: does absence of violence mean there is no racism, prejudices and other intolerances? Does racism manifest itself only in violent ways? What about other nuances and logics steeped in stereotypes, culture, habits and even verbal outbursts? The salient racism has been an integral part of immigrant/South African relationship at least since the post 1994.

One informant 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.[40]

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 informant put it this way:

> 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 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.[41]

Alexandra as a multiethnic society means social relationships are defined by conflict and tension and are rarely harmonious. Unlike other communities where racisms against non -

[40] Interview with a South African man, 10 June 2009
[41] Interview with a South African man, 10 June 2009

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. As both Smith (1986) and Armstrong (1982) argue, cultural myths and symbols endure through time and are reproduced through generation after generation, notwithstanding changing material and historical conditions. Again cultures that are seen in these differences operate within the context of both the social and the spatial, which can't 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 them and the locals (Alund 1995). This line demarcates the national and non - national and as Wieviorka (1994), observes, it has to do with issues of identity and difference. These are determined by national borders in which people construct their collective identities and meanings and form a base for social interaction (Cohen 1986).

In this chapter I have presented how cultural semiotics of signification lead to differentiation and I have borrowed from psychoanalysts' perspectives. However differentiation becomes racial in the sense that it 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.

Chapter Four

Nationalism, Ethinicism or Racisms?

One question may be asked: are racisms in Alexandra a result of nationalism, ethnicism, sexism or purely racism? In this chapter I attempt to answer this question. Based on findings of my fieldwork, I affirm that it is not only nationalism, sexism, ethnicism or racism but all four. These four in turn constitute racisms and they converge, concur, interface, cross cut, intertwine and sometimes overlap. In this chapter I will not dwell on sexisms because I have done so in the previous. I instead analyse the other three. As indicated earlier, Alexandra is a place where many and different identities live, this makes it possible for these factors to play. The fact that these identities live in one place; I therefore see it as claustrophobic racism which is racism in a shared social place (see also previous chapter). This I discuss below. In this chapter I also take time to examine state racism and how it shapes public opinion and attitudes to outsiders. I also look at the social life of the identity document and its role in community relations.

The definition of racism in Alexandra is sometimes fluid. The May 2008 pogroms were racial and sexist in nature, more than merely an expression of ethinicism or nationalism. The latter two concepts were nonetheless heavily intertwined in pre and post violence and 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 the chapter on the section of **Spider web/Sticky Web.** Presently let us take a look at the social relationships among different ethnic groups in Alexandra.

The Common World

As a multiethnic/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 a space and apparently live together, side by side. In many homes, like the one where one of my key informants, Jerrinos live, are made up of South Africans (Xhosas, Zulus, Sothos, Pedis, Vendas and Tsongas). Non - nationals living at the house are from Zimbabwe, Ndaus from Mozambique and one man from Malawi. Most South Africans at the house have families living with them. Immigrants, who are mainly male have families back home, and one man from Zimbabwe, though he doesn't live with his wife in South Africa, who is a relict wife back home, she however intermittently visits him. 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, but a muted show of acknowledgment of each other's presence. For example one day I observed a Zimbabwean man occupying 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 need to be emphasised. Though the inhabitants are near each other by virtue of living together, they are distant to each other. This is because of circumstantial necessity that in the first place has made them live together. Living together might not necessarily mean that their social relations are smooth. These relations are marked by *silent tensions.* These silent tensions originate from differences in ethnicity and nationality. Here I may use Gluckman's (1942) concepts of *endoculture* as referring to culture of social personality or group as perceived by them and *exoculture* as 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 whom they come to associate with. 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 however, does not mean that these relations are entirely *silent tensional* ones. During my long hours of observation at the house, sitting on a wooden bench, just outside the fence, by the stall where Jerrinos sells his wares; these relations are sometimes cemented by terms of address that are reminiscent of kinship relationships. Jerrinos who is from Zimbabwe would address an elderly Venda man as:

"VaVhenda we!" (Hello Vhenda man!)

The man would reply:

"Nda! ni honi…" (I am alright, how are you.)

Consider another situation. Jerrinos who is conversant with most South African languages because he hears them being spoken all the time and he also once worked with South Africans who were speaking local languages only. After all he lives at a house where practically all South African ethnic groups are. They address him as s'*bali*.[42] They would leave keys with him and ask for them:

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

[42] *S'bali* is Nguni word that might mean brother in law. However it can be used interchangeably by both sexes.

He would also say:

"yebo s'bali." (Hello).

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. Jerrinos (who is 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, which in this case is Alexandra. Be they South African internal migrants or immigrants from outside the country, their kinship or even extended kinship patterns are broken as a result of migration. The networks found in a family life (like addressing each other as s'*bali*) often occur within, and depend on artificial structures (Rex 1997). Having left their families back home, immigrants, ideally in this situation 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 extending back to their home area, by virtue of coming from the same place. In this way they have a sense of identity that is both shared and similar.

The extent to which primary social relationships become integrated in the whole 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 in calculated in the family (Rex 1997). In the aftermath of the racial 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).

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 and not separately. 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 call *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.* By *coerced co – habitation* I imply that circumstances and the situation *coerce* people to live side by side. 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; 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 *mastands* (landlords) prefer immigrant tenants because they don't give "headaches" when paying rent at the end of the month.

Therefore 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, except one area which residents[43] call "Maputo", which is entirely inhabited by Mozambicans. During my fieldwork I could not ascertain how and why this kind of demarcation. However though the "Maputo" area is almost entirely inhabited by Mozambicans, there are many of them 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 and national origin. This Diaspora identity is in my opinion, a response to 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 in which Mozambicans of "Maputo" share.

[43] South African residents were the first to call the area "Maputo". However everyone including immigrants and Mozambicans themselves call it by the same name.

The Spider Web/the Sticky Web

Is the situation in Alexandra a nationalist, ethnicist, sexist or racial one? Describing racial, ethnic and inter – relationships 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 interpenetrating, interrelated, intertwined and cross cutting. One cannot attribute the social situation exclusively to nationalism neither ethnicism nor racism. Doing so would be an inadequate and incomplete analysis and glaringly missing the point. Therefore the Alexandra situation can be seen as a spider web or a sticky web **(see the Spider Web figure below).** It's a sticky web because racisms in the township cannot be explained by a single factor: instead the causes are multiple, multi - dimensional and relational. Plucking one factor and analysing it will not help one understand the nature of racisms, moreover 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 which I have taken is necessary to unlock social dynamics in the township. Since racism 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).

The figure shows a spider web. In it 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. From my observations, all these

factors mark and influence the nature of social relationships between immigrants and South Africans.

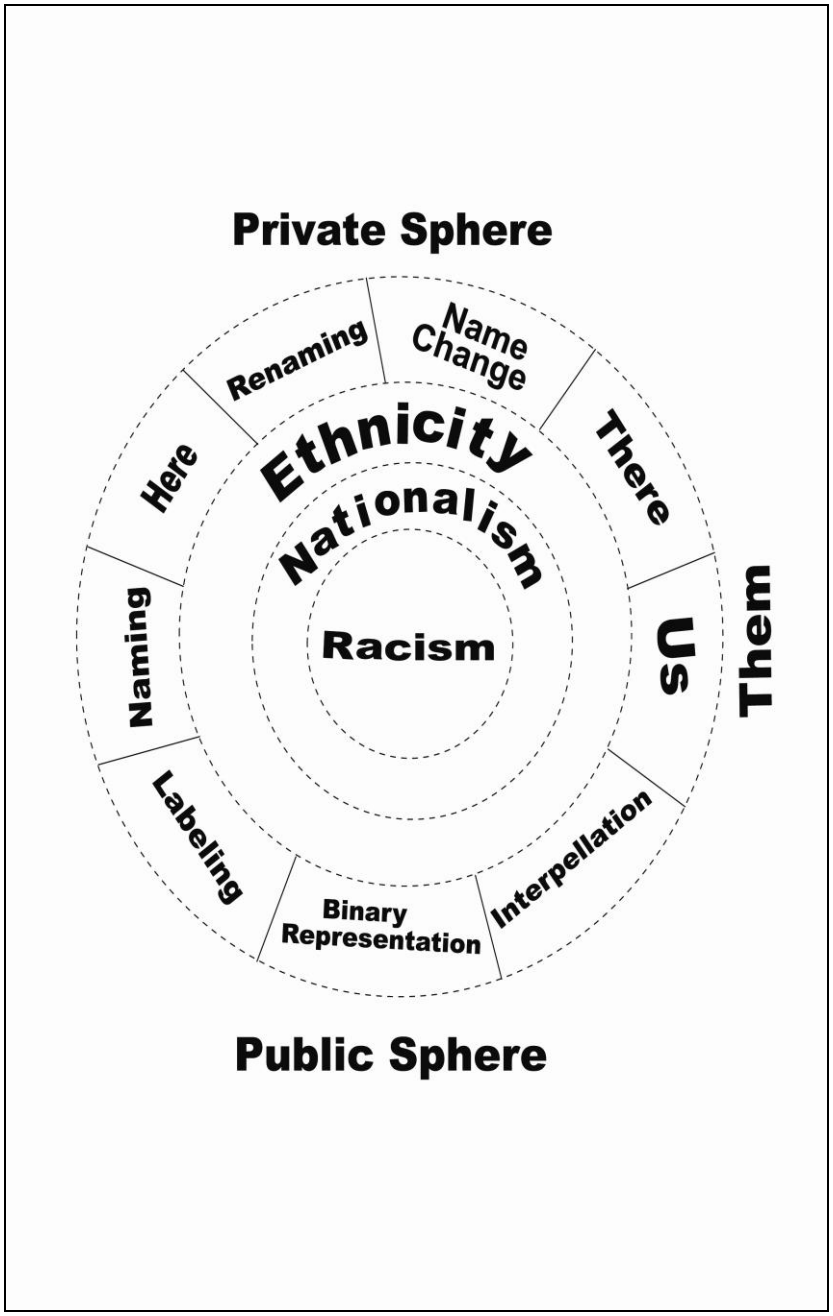

Figure 1 The Sticky/Spider Web

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. However these differences as exhibited in speech tend to carry racial 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 and "betterness".

Consider also 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, however, does not mean 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 conversations and speeches, become derogatory, condescended places linked to those nationalities, which emanate from them. In abstract terms, an analysis of social actors using this kind of speech might on one hand be deemed to be not familiar with the nationality of people from "Maputo" or "Lagos". In reality they know that these immigrants come from Mozambique or Nigeria. However, an explanation is that they might not be familiar 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 racial 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 merely space, place and national origin. They link the bearers of these labels to 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, is a binary racial representation.

The interface between ethnicism, nationalism and racism

In Banton's (1967) view race refers to categorisation of people (them) while ethnicity has to do with group identification (us) and stresses the need to distinguish between race and ethnicity. On the other hand, Van den Berghe (1983) would regard race relations as a form of ethnicity. 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). Anthropologically ethnicity refers to aspects of relationships between groups which consider themselves, and are regarded by others as culturally distinctive (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992; Hylland Eriksen 1993; 1997). Weber (1922; 1968) distinguished ethnic groups from races conceived in biological terms. Its not biological differences alone that constitutes an ethnic group (in Alexandra, immigrants, including

Tsongas and Vendas are seen to be uglier and of darker hue) but also common customs. Its 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.

Since ethnicity assumes many forms and tends to stress on common descent among their members, the distinction between race and ethnicity becomes a problematic one (Hylland Eriksen 1993). In reference to Alexandra, ethnic labelling as I pointed out earlier on is also an ethnic classification which is a reflex of self identification (Ardner 1989a). In that way indexicality becomes racist.

Ethnicity and nationalism being related concepts, the majority of nationalisms are ethnic in character (Hylland Eriksen 1993), and also racism and nationalism are fundamentally related with the former deriving from the latter (Anderson 1983). Commonly racism usually manifests itself within national boundaries. 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 socio – historical context in 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 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 collectivity 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 world view that consists of racist elements, the society becomes automatically divided between minority and majority groups (Spoonely 1988). Minority groups[44] 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. 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 1993). The majority groups have privileged access to state apparatus and the policies it adopts exacerbates racial disadvantages. 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 Alexandra immigrants are blamed

[44] In Alexandra minorities are immigrants and South African ethnic groups - Tsongas, Vendas and Pedis.

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.

Though nationalism and racism exhibit fundamental differences and oppositions, formulations of nationalism are closely related to racism. Nationalism, by using "us" and "them", does not only construct national identity but a racial identity as well, 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.

State Racism

The pattern of racisms or even nationalism at a community cannot be studied or analysed in isolation. It intrinsically links to the overarching perpetration of a nationalist agenda; anti - immigrant policies 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. The state bureaucracy and hegemony is used coterminously with its apparatus to separate populations and labelling of the "Other". The "Other" is denied "belonging" through denial of legal status, documentation, police harassment and arrest and detention at Lindela [45]Repatriation Centre, and lack of protection through

[45] 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

courts. At this point, I will briefly look at the state's immigration policy and how it is part of state racism and I am indebted to the work of Peberdy and Crush 1998b; Leitzes 2009; Harris 2001; Handymaker and Parsley 2000 and Valji 2003. The South African immigration policy is rooted in the racist history of the country; hostile to "foreigners" and black racism is a continuation of the historical narrative of resistance to "foreign" nations and creation of a new nation (Leitzes 2009). From 1913 to 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, they have a linkage between state policy and citizens attitudes towards immigrants.

I can draw a conclusion that the racial logic that emanates from the top is like drops of water from a gourd suspended up a tree seeping down, into the community and not only permeates into locals' approach to non - nationals, but shapes their views as well. This is because the state is not autonomous of society and is in constant interaction with it – regulating, ordering and organising it. Here I will use Hall's (1982) treatise of the state. For Hall, the state constitutes society and is constituted by it, in a complex inter - relationship and inter - dependency that exists therein. There is a general willingness of the population to consent, conform and support the state's rule, which in turn affects public attitude. However there is the concept of power - administering society involves policing it. The state's relation to society is hierarchical and those above set the rules of

the game for those down there. This also entails state's use of force to enforce conformity to its rules, laws and regulations. Hall argues that though the state may be abstract, its power acquires concrete, real and social organisational form which includes using of real resources through a set of practices in the state's apparatuses. These apparatuses acquire characteristics of their own and become power bases for quite distinct interests. I think Hall's supposition is true when analysing the situation in Alexandra as shown below. Identification processes done by the police on immigrants have been denounced by Dludlu (cited in Valji 2003) as "humiliating", "dehumanising" and current state policies "smack of apartheid rule". Recently Dludlu has written on his harassment by immigration officials who suspected he was not South African (see the Sunday Times Review, 1 November 2009).

In depth interviews with immigrants reveal dismay with 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.[46]

Detection, stopping, searching and detention of immigrants by police, often happens in full view of the community. Consequently they have a misconception of immigrants and augment the idea that they are "illegal" and have no right to belong to both the

[46] Interview with a Mozambican immigrant, 23 June 2009.

community and the country. The manner, in which these operations occur, criminalises immigrants. The community in turn views them as such.

Flow of Racism

State - - - - - - - - - - - - - Community- - - - - - - - - - - - -Immigrant

Figure 2

Figure 3 illustrates how racisms, can in a singular time period, emanate from the state. The working of the state is complex for these reasons: firstly, the state may for instance be the Department of Home Affairs and policy makers who make (immigration) policies from their offices. These policies in turn affect relationships between immigrants and locals. Secondly, at the community level, the state is represented by agents like the police. They are not merely an extension and representatives of the state but when in the community they assume two complimentary roles: they are the state themselves and secondly, since they are operating in the community they are part of the community's racial logic. For example one Zimbabwean immigrant who was stopped and searched by police, informed me that they crudely told him: "you should go back to Maputo".

As indicated earlier, one major crime an immigrant could commit, as I was informed by immigrants themselves, is beating up a South African woman. While a South African man might abuse or beat her, he might get away with it. For the immigrant it's 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.[47]

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 *babamb'inkunzi* (they are muggers/robbers). Now you see *Broer waka* (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.[48]

This phenomenon is not a new characteristic of the post 1994 state. State's attitudes towards those perceived as "aliens" have deeper historical roots that can be traced to the apartheid era (see for example Coplan 2007; Bonner and Nieftagodien 2008; Misago, Landau and Monson 2009). 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 socio - political relations between the state and communities' views on the one perceived to be an outsider (Misago, Landau and Monson 2009). Criminalisation of immigrants and the fact that they don't have "passes" fuels nationalist and anti - immigrant sentiments in the township. A contradiction however is that many South Africans don't have the green ID book, for a variety of reasons including

[47] Interview with an immigrant man 01 July 2009
[48] interview with a South African, 30 June 2009

incompetence at Home Affairs; still non documented immigrants are seen 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 green ID document.

What struck me was the fact that most residents 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 (Magubane 1979; Helen Joseph 1986; Callinicos 1987) 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, a 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 of white domination over blacks. Similarities in the social life of the apartheid pass and the post apartheid identity book are drawn below. My supposition is that identity and documentation in the contemporary South African society are a mere reinvention and repetition of history.

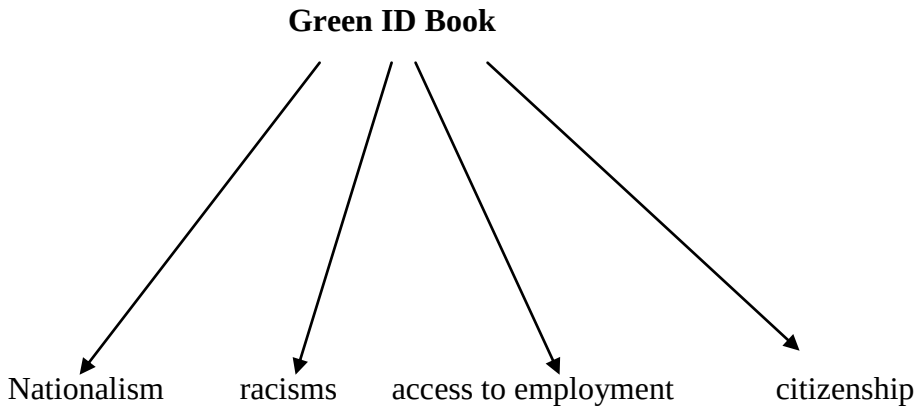

Figure 3

In **Figure 4** above I am illustrating how the green identity book has 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 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, the fact that immigrants are not documented, they are used by owners of capital as cheap labour, working long hours for low wages. The fact that they accept lesser pay is a source of intra class conflict between South African and immigrant workers (see also Chapter 1). This is compounded by non unionisation of the latter and trade unions are not willing 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 green ID book has other social consequences that in a huge way, affect social relationships between nationals and non nationals. To get South African

citizenship, some immigrant men enter into contractual 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 interviewees 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 for because it was her who facilitated his acquisition of a South African ID and consequently citizenship. Acquisition of ID's and citizenship in this manner is a bone of contention between nationals and non - nationals and leads to hatred tension and conflict.

It's easier for unemployed South African men to blackmail immigrants, because they are seen as "illegal". My informants informed me that on Fridays or month ends when immigrants are paid, they are waylaid by South Africans who exhort 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 similar vein, Somali traders, operating in the area around a major shopping centre in Alexandra, are victimised in many 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 diminishes their prospects of finding employment that is commensurate with those qualifications. They either end up vending and hawking (like Jerrinos who holds a university degree, and is

running a vending stall in Alexandra) or being underemployed. Further they assume menial jobs shunned by locals. The existence of unwanted, stigmatised and low status jobs which local workers are no keen to take means immigrant workers can easily be assimilated into them; in which they are both a pariah working class and scapegoats (Rex 1970; 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. [49]

The same man also told me:

> 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 Reisgl and Wodak (2008), discrimination means putting an individual or individuals, who are considered to be different from others, at a disadvantage. This is negative discrimination, which refers to an ethical and normative dimension; political and legal evaluation and also inimical to principles of justice and human rights. It also means the persons and groups are treated unfairly, unjustly; repressed; suppressed; decried; discredited, debased;

[49] Interview with a Zimbabwean immigrant, 26 June 2009

degraded; defamed; excluded unjustifiably in the social and economic, and other inequalities are established.

Discrimination at both community and 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) calls 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 (Althusser 1965) 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 residents rights (Misago et al 2009). This system has been used as antecedent for the hitherto existing socio - political configurations and has shaped the state's and nationals' views on outsiders.
Following the Gramscian model, Hall (1990), 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 and reconstruction 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. This is the related phenomenon of the post colonial state (Hall 1990).

In the chapter I have examined nationalism, ethncism; racisms, state racism and how they manifest at the community level. I have shown and argued how all these are interwoven in an interlocking system of racism hitherto prevailing in Alexandra. These reflect the overarching picture of racisms in contemporary Alexandra and in my understanding they influence anti - immigrant and racial sentiments. I have shown how one's social membership is used for inclusion and exclusion. In considering this, black racism is both structured at the top (that is the state) and at the community level.

Conclusions

I have throughout this body of work attempted to bring a clearer understanding of black racism as it manifests in Alexandra. I have argued that at this present time, employ of *xenophobia* in discourse is becoming irrelevant. Rather use of racism in studying black African immigrants and black South African relations is in my view paradigmatic. I have argued that racism is not a single phenomenon but is multi – dimensional and has multiple causes and determinants and that there is not merely racism but racisms. I have posited that racism should be seen in the system of values, attitudes and perceptions as well. Rather than these being dismissed, they tell us more about sets of relationships that exist in township communities. These manifest themselves depending on time and place and that each situation where instances of black racism arise in South Africa should be specifically analysed than generalised and homogenised. There are other factors in Alexandra like sexism and gender relations, nationalism and ethnicity, state racism, racial labelling and naming which characterise social relationships between immigrants and citizens. These I have examined in the limited time I had, as they occur in the township and I have shown how they intertwine to give rise to black racism.

I have made linkages between black township masculinity, sexism, gender relations and racism. In discourse this has not been adequately analysed. While the epiphenomenon of economics is relevant, it has its own shortcomings that I have attempted to address. I have gone further to examine cross – border love relationships between black African

immigrants and South African women and how these have led to black racism in the township. This I find important in understanding May 2008 racial violence in Alexander.

At the time of fieldwork for this research project, relationships between immigrants and South Africans seemed normal in Alexandra. There were no overt or explicit articulations of racism. Though most immigrants fled the area, many returned. What would strike a first time visitor to the area is that scarcely over a year ago; this was the scene of bloody pogroms that horrified everyone. People go about their business as if nothing ever happened. It is like a mask – that hides things from the outside world but inside are defining sets of relations. This scenario might mislead anyone about the nature of racisms in the township. However as one goes deeper into the field, beyond and unravelling that mask, then unlike what has been said in many quarters, the May 2008 violence, was neither an out of the blue nor a surprising phenomena. The dynamics of South African and non South African relationships, I have pointed out in this thesis. A closer examination of these relationships can only make us understand as to why and for what reasons South Africans, especially men, turned against their non - South African neighbours in an orgy of violence and death. Of course Alexandra is a situation specific, with its own dynamics and factors. Therefore it should not be generalised, neither compared nor homogenised with other incidences of black racism and violence in other parts of the country. However Alexandra has important things to tell us about black racism in the country generally.

This body of work is a study of micro level causes of racisms in Alexandra that are steeped in value systems, cultural and sexual logic, though without entirely denying the economic. I believe an understanding of these reflects better on the social dynamics and relationships existing in the township. I have attempted to point out the realities, as revealed to me by my informants through conversations, interviews and my own general observations. Writing this work has however been an arduous and a challenging task for me. The major being to straddle on a thin line that, on one hand lays bare these realities and on the other, avoiding stereotyping anyone. The other, being an immigrant myself, I have tried to be objective and present the social world as it is. But realities like these and all others are controversial and are subject to different interpretations. As an ethnographer and moreover an anthropologist, I owe my duty to revealing the social world as it is; the social and lived experiences of the people I studied and above all to contribute towards a struggle for humanity. This would enable us to see people as people; people as human beings; created equal; living in peace and harmony. This supposition lead us to struggle for a better world; where children are not bred and fed on hate, but have love for humanity; where men don't exercise violence on women, children, the vulnerable and those deemed different by virtue of race, ethnicity, social origin and nationality. It also leads us to question state policies and laws that ferment these feelings and how they contradict principles of the prophets who sacrificed their lives fighting oppression, exploitation and domination and how they envisaged a world where these ills and social vices would buried in the chapters of history.

I hope and believe issues brought out in this body of work bring a new theoretical dimension in the study of racism (s) and form a basis for further research.

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