

https://dspace.org/

Valuable or devalued? An ethnography of mine work in crisis

Sheerin, Anne Marshall

2015

https://hdl.handle.net/10539/24593

Sheerin, Anne Marshall (2017) Valuable or devalued? An ethnography of mine work in crisis, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, <https://hdl.handle.net/10539/24593>

Downloaded from a DSpace repository. https://dspace.org/

Valuable or devalued?

An ethnography of mine work in crisis

Anne Sheerin

A research report submitted to the Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Masters of Arts in Anthropology

Johannesburg 2015

Supervisor: Dr. Hylton White

Abstract

Research in the mining community of Carletonville focused on how individuals negotiate and contest different value orientations in trying to construct a workable moral economy. Based on in-depth qualitative interviews and observations of respondents from lower and higher wage classes, the report deconstructs the elements of differential value sets that are redefining and sometimes destabilizing the moral economy and underlining views of inequality. Wage disputes are seen not only as mine workers' expressions of economic injustice but perhaps more crucially as a form of control and protection of their craft and status. The dominance of global economic governance and decision-making is leading to more acute internal divergences but can also be a starting point for a discussion about the impact of conflicts in social values.

Acknowledgements

I am very grateful to Dr. Hylton White for his support, patience and insight as I grappled with the focus of this study, especially when I was distracted by tangential theoretical concepts and personal challenges. As a mature foreign student, my experience studying at the University of the Witwatersrand has been extremely enriching, so much so that I want to extend my thanks to the faculty of the Department of Anthropology for their stimulating and thoughtful approach to the variety of students under their guidance.

Special thanks also go to my respondents whose insights and candor were especially valuable and appreciated in that my questions often asked for more intimate responses. Their answers demonstrated a range of emotional and intellectual depth about their own sense of worth as well as how they feel about others more, or less, fortunate than they. Even their silences were evocative, and I am deeply respectful of their willingness to share their thoughts with me. Finally, I am of course so thankful for my family: the constellation of personalities is dynamic, positively challenging, and glorious. Thanks especially to my husband, JK, for his trusted love and support.

Table of Contents

CHAPTER 1

1.1	**Introduction**	**1**
1.2	**Scope of Study**	**3**
1.3	**Context and Arguments**	**7**
1.4	**Research Objectives**	**9**
1.5	**Why mining? Why gold?**	**9**
1.6	**Methodology**	**10**
1.7	**Structure of Thesis**	**15**

CHAPTER 2: Construction of Value on the West Rand

2.1	**The Stage**	**17**
2.2	**Mapping the Terrain**	**20**
2.3	**'The best laid schemes"**	**22**
2.4	**A history of devalued labour**	**27**
2.5	**Mining's value to South Africa**	**29**
2.6	**Cultural Roots**	**31**
2.7	**Local bases – International Connections**	**32**

CHAPTER 3: Valued and Devalued In Carletonville and Khutsong

3.1	**Introduction**	**34**
3.2	**Sketches**	**35**
3.2.1	**Robert**	**35**

3.2.2 Zachariah 37

3.2.3 Frans and Mimi 39

3.2.4 Joyce 42

3.2.5 Bongi 43

3.2.6 Jim 45

3.2.7 Mpho 47

3.2.8 Mandla 49

3.2.9 Julian 50

3.3 Value Conflicts in Practice 53

CHAPTER 4: Navigating the Constellations

4.1 Constellations/Orientations 57

4.2 Sign of the wage 61

4.3 Hidden burdens of work 63

4.4 Value as imagination and creativity 66

4.5 Problematic universals 69

4.6 Measurements of attitude 71

4.7 Institutional morality 72

4.8 Mediators of value 74

CHAPTER 5: A moral economy in flux 78

Works Cited 85

Bibliography 94

Chapter 1 - Introduction

Value - Origin: Middle English: from old French, from Latin valere = to be strong; be well.

- www.oxforddictionairies.com

The focus of this inquiry is how people subjectively understand self-worth and dignity as they live and work in a gold-mining community in South Africa's West Rand, where a range of different value systems converge to shape identity, knowledge, understanding, and political action. In an environment where convergences and divergences of cultural value take place, where economistic reasoning meets moral reasoning, levels of individual participation and interpretation provide the basis for success or failure. As we will see, specific forms of social practices and regulations at work are presented as empowering and efficiency-driven, but are distinct from, undermined by and often resistant to more powerful globally driven market forces. Even the value-laden rhetoric in mining companies' discourses is perceived at all levels to be full of incommensurate values. The significance of such an inquiry is not so concerned with the morality of market mechanisms and their impact on social life, but rather with the construction and integrity of the current moral economy that is often resentfully if legitimately accepted in South Africa as a platform for growth and development.

Ongoing political eruptions and labour strikes in the mining sector have always crystalized around wage disputes, touching on social and political norms and obligations, the valuing of labour, stability, conditions of work, and quality of life indicators. There is ample literature connecting the role of natural resource exploitation in developing countries to these and other political and economic problems, but testimonies of different people working along

the West Wits line reveal the deeper challenges of competing moral and ethical values that cannot be met simply by providing and regulating a more equitable economic dispensation, even if that were possible politically. Like the original Luddites, mine workers' strikes can be seen as a way of exerting some control over the changes taking place in their industry and their workplaces; wage parity is at the top of the list with loss of craft and status being other critical elements to their sense of self-worth. Polanyi's concept of 'embeddedness', which demands that an analysis of pre-modern economies include political and social contexts, can perhaps be applied to the modern economy of South Africa (1944).

South Africa's constitutional framework –celebrated as a comprehensive and inclusive repository of 'indigenous' and 'western' concepts - enshrines and promotes universal standards of equity, justice, and dignity (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996), even as the notion of a universal value consensus is contested within the nation's multilayered and pluralistic society. While the political and legal dispensation following the elections of 1994 enabled greater protections for workers' pay, rights, safety and welfare, numerous studies reveal how people identify, negotiate or are in conflict with multiple value-driven concepts on a daily basis (Kluckhohn 1959; Appadurai 1986; Graeber 2001; Elyachar 2005; Munn 1992). Despite a significant lack of formal employment, the formal economy is promoted as the most viable platform for opportunity and economic growth, through the arranged marriage between the private sector and the Government of South Africa. The disparity between the formal structured workplace of a mining company, which inherently privileges individual self-interest and profit, and the self-regulating community in which it sits – formal Carletonville, informal Khutsong -, is self-evident: hierarchical ranks among different social domains are maintained

even as interdependence and harmony are concurrently valued. Identities are being shaped in this dynamic, relational and multilayered environment. I suggest that a focus on value conflicts, commensurabilities, and conversions can bring some clarity to challenges within South Africa's economy, in that the range of different 'value orientations' (Kluckhohn) causes bewildering and often deeply-resented re-adjustments of people's actions and expectations. This study specifically highlights the impact of praxis and agency in terms of workplace value theories and practices on employees in a mining community, with implications for the possibility of less aggressive or violent labour negotiations.

In many ways this is an old story. Dunbar Moodie's 1995 book *Going for Gold: Men, Mines and Migration* (1995) contains a rich historical account of what he labeled the moral economy of the mines, and workers' search for dignity. New "rules of the game" seem to be emerging such that past assumptions about the balance of power, and expected outcomes of political organization don't always apply. Though mine workers' salaries are among the best in the nation, dignity, status and stability have not been enabled through monetary incentives. Why not?

1.2 Scope of Study

The central question is then: what is the impact on individuals of differential value orientations in the moral economy of the mines? In trying to express the worthiness of their activities, my respondents - mostly low-wage workers but also managers, executives and others in related services in and around Carletonville - express a range of beliefs, values, fears, and demands for dignity which reveal a contested terrain of understanding and interpretation. The

significance of their accounts points most obviously to the struggle between the value of labour and the specific valorizing logic of capital as espoused and institutionalized by mining companies. Beyond that well-documented contestation however, the ideological structure of mine workers' protests can be linked to the ideological structure of South African society in terms of its multiple layers of value, which are both obscure and transparent. Mining communities illustrate the ways in which people are trying to grasp and maintain minimum levels of human worth and dignity in an environment of shifting and contested transcultural values. These values, and the environment in which they are embedded and/or imposed, can be seen as foundational elements in an analysis of power and structure. If society is a moral system whose foundations have been penetrated by market principles, broadly speaking, we find that specific value conflicts are at least partly responsible for protest and resentment. Mine workers' actions thus may not always be "right or good" and don't necessarily need to be "evaluated by the usual criteria of what is right and good" (Lambek 2010:1).

The broad conceptual framework for investigating this type of phenomenon is the moral economy, first described by Edward P. Thompson in *The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century* (1971), which investigates the moral and value-based resources of those social groups who rebelled against fundamental economic upheavals of the middle and late 18th century. As market relations began to permeate every aspect of the patterns of food provisioning in the countryside, Thompson argues, the resulting food riots were a morally legitimate reaction against a new political economy that was not yet perceived as legitimate, rather than the immediate result of a fear of hunger. 'Moral economy' is defined by Thompson as "a consistent traditional view of social norms and obligations", that mediates popular

interactions with the state and the market. The term allowed Thompson to conceptualize and comprehend the "complexities of motive, behavior, and function" of those who were otherwise perceived as an unruly mass (76-79). In a similar vein, James Scott's study of Southeast Asian peasant farmers is an attempt to "understand the indignation and rage which prompted them to risk everything" through major rebellions in the 1930's (Scott 1976:3). 'Moral economy' was the term Scott uses to explore their "notion of economic justice and their working definition of exploitation", as well as their "fears, values and habits", especially a conception of the right to subsistence which he calls the "subsistence ethic" (1976: 2-4).

Reformulating the concept of 'moral economy', Didier Fassin explores a complex and intimate interplay of "the production, distribution, circulation and use of moral feelings, of emotions and values, of norms and obligations in the social sphere", how and where societies problematize their moral responsibilities (Fassin 2009: 1257). In a more recent essay, Fassin distinguishes between the English word 'resentment' and the French word '*ressentiment'*; the first is defined as "a situation in which a social position generates frustration and acrimony"; the second (Nietzchean) concept "corresponds to a condition related to a past of oppression and domination" (Fassin 2013: 249). If we perceive 'resentment' as creating the possibilities for *ressentiment* in South Africa, these concepts provide another frame for the interplay of different value orientations. Fassin's concept of the moral economy provides a more applicable basis for this inquiry than Thompson's, in that the "production, distribution and circulation" of values, morals, norms and obligations is a more appropriate approach in an environment of unstable and contested transcultural values than Thompson's "consistent [and] traditional" one.

How do people subjectively understand self-worth and dignity in such a contentious terrain? Instability is a recurring theme from all my respondents, including the executives - a sense of not being in full control of their own actions and environments. However, each story is told in terms of a unity of a plot, despite disparate and sometimes discordant elements, and across a clearly temporal span. Experience and expectation -- or as Reinhart Koselleck phrases it - the space of experience and the horizon of expectation -- are integral to the self's narrative, especially since experience has become less relevant to the ability to foretell the future because of interdependencies which overwhelm our ability to make sense of larger events (1979). The ways in which identity is formed or maintained through changes over time is reflected in the distinction Paul Ricoeur makes between the *ipse* identity as mutable selfhood and the *idem* unchanging core identity. "The equivicity of the term "identical" will be at the center of our reflections on personal identity and narrative identity, and related to a primary trait of the self, namely its temporality; what we say and do in any given context gives expression to new meanings and values (Ricoeur 1992: 2). The concept of *habitus* as refined by Bourdieu (1990), or the interplay between structure and practice) is also explored in the relationship between individuals and their environments. Finally, we see Sennett's "badges of ability" evident in mining companies' use of 'management science' to promote productivity and empowerment, an example of what he calls "the hidden scheme of values that sorts men into different classes" (1972: 96). These "contradictions of freedom and dignity" (ibid.) inherent in incommensurate value orientations result in a range of behaviors, from the pecuniary emulation of amassing material goods, to conducting strikes which are redolent with resentment. As one informant

told me, “They don’t really want us to dream or have ambitions like the others. And we’re not supposed to have feelings.”

Three subsidiary questions were also raised during the course of this investigation: How do mine workers in particular perceive their own worth? How do people integrate different values – ‘traditional’, corporate, extrinsic and intrinsic - influencing their environment? The workplace itself defines the value of their labour through specific practices and policies – how do people respond to those? While the focus of this study is primarily on low-wage mine workers, the perspectives of different stakeholders in the target community of Carletonville are also considered for the purposes of comparing how value, in its many dimensions, is one site for understanding the problematical nature of political and economic forces shaping South Africa today.

1.3 Context and arguments

An initial approach to this project was somewhat clouded by reactions to the violence that took place at Marikana in August 2012, and influenced by reading Slavoj Zizek’s take on Giorgio Agamben’s *Homo Sacer* during the crisis (2010). But a focus on labour issues brings us quickly to a place where apocalyptic theories of state authority have little traction. It is difficult to argue that miners represent some sort of “bare life” (Agamben 1998). There may be some merit to a discussion of South Africa’s government entering a “state of exception” (Schmitt as interpreted by Agamben 1998) through its legalized but lawless use of force at Marikana. In the immediate aftermath of Marikana most reports were distillations of usually unsubstantiated rationales for protest – an African propensity for violence, untenable forces of globalization, or

the seemingly immutable nature of the migrant labour problem. To paraphrase Didier Fassin, the "morbid ideology that is crushing Africa" (Fassin 2007) is not so much about the causes of violence and protest as a pre-existing condition among Westerners who interpret South African mores so superficially. The complexity of human life disappears in broader political and economic policy discussions, many of which are based on impersonal calculations of far-flung economic agents, in turn referred to as 'market forces'. "There is no inequality more disturbing than that by which we decide what is interesting and what is not, who can still interest us and who no longer does" (Fassin 2007: xiii). Perceptions of subjectivity and agency, the indignation and rage, are far more legible when seen from the perspective of those who experience the injury.

Miners' strikes represent just one element within the larger context of South Africa's complex relationship with the global marketplace; narratives of influential media voices such as *The Economist*, *The Financial Times*, and *Business Day* view worker dissatisfaction as an obstacle to industrial efficiency, serious but generally unrelated to anything but financial performance. Locally, this relationship often manifests itself in contradictory reactions. For instance, some workers expect to be compensated for inflation by wage increases or higher benefits, even as they understand that higher wages might mean lower numbers of people employed. Often the opposite is true. One mine worker boasts about the trendy Chinese-made clothes he bought from a Chinese import shop in Carletonville, but still deeply resents the presence of those same clothes and the Chinese national who sells them. Such responses are a small indication of the complex nature of the moral economy in place, and is part of a larger global phenomenon.

1.4 Research Objectives

This project had two broad objectives: the first was an inquiry into the values, fears and habits of a range of actors in a mining community in order to investigate factors which drive rebellion and resentment; and further to describe and compare how different sets of actors in a mining community inhabit, interpret and appropriate self-worth and dignity in an environment of differentiated value. As Ferguson notes, questions of human agency and responsibility are both frame and foreground for people who are trying to understand questions of poverty and wealth in their societies (2006). The second was to try to illuminate how schemes of competing value can highlight and challenge bases for understanding and equality. The impact of certain 'value-driven' (financially-based) business decisions is often demoralizing, having negative effects on employees' sense of place and worth within a company. Respondents' perceptions of the impact and challenges of 'self-directed work teams' as management's answer to better productivity are provided, as well as a brief look at a case study of the same. Another illustration is of the impact and efficacy of bonuses as a motivator of productivity and company loyalty. The aim is to demonstrate that people's conceptual understanding of the world - and their subjective identities as valued or devalued individuals - is influenced by different domains of value.

1.5 Why Mining? Why Gold?

Mineral extractive industries have always been particularly good sites for studying where and how the political and the economic become indistinguishable; where the concepts of value creation and empowerment are entangled in a double-bind. The gold-mining

industry is a prime site for studying this phenomenon, as it represents and incorporates an array of factors considered to be of strategic importance to the state while simultaneously hindering real growth and development. Three such factors are the organizational nature of a mining company which is flat globally but locally hierarchical; the metaphysical nature of gold itself; and the closely regulated structure of the labour force. The vulnerability, indignation, loss of control, *ressentiment*, rage and resentment expressed by various mining community stakeholders can be considered from the perspective of different value orientations in play.

1.6 Methodology and Reflection

Analytical framework: I have tried to approach this ethnography of value theoretically and philosophically, and acknowledge a fundamental contradiction therein. While anthropological literature over the past few decades argues that anthropology makes meaningful contributions to the issue of value in various forms of social theory, ethnographies are seen as antithetical to the formulation of an anthropological theory of value: findings from the field shouldn't fit neatly into theoretical categories and should both pre-empt and preclude theory. Rane Willerslev argues that the primary role of ethnography is to prod and challenge conventional wisdom, that it not only provides an empirical investigation into ethnographic phenomena, but is a place for "imaginative contemplation" where "abstract thinking can give force and meaning to ethnographic observations" (2010).

The phenomena of value in different forms and concepts can be viewed metaphysically (though perhaps, as Joan Robinson wrote, "like all metaphysical concepts, when you try to pin [value] down it turns out to be just a word" (1962: 26)). Can we in fact compare value

orientations (Kluckhohn) or "ideologies" (Dumont 1986) which might be inherently incomparable? What value is, what value does, and the question of whether it's possible to find shared or universal values in a multicultural context (Miller 2014, Lambek 2013, Graeber 2001) – these are questions which can be fruitfully explored in the South African context where a variety of norms and values are imposed and occasionally (mis)understood as universal within very localized conditions.

References to Dumont and Kluckhohn do not imply a structuralist approach to research, however, but do recognize the importance of a comparative method that arose when listening to how my respondents have expressed their own values and where they conflict with others'. Sennett's ethnography of blue-collar workers in Boston reveals the internal conflicts experienced by people who measure their own value against those whose lives and occupations are privileged in society (Sennett 1972). Thus, comparing value sets and domains - within theoretical models - allows us primarily to frame a complex context or situation into which we can place those explorations.

Research approach and method: This is a qualitative study within an interpretive model; a focus on gaining deeper understanding of the impact of multilayered values on individuals in a pluralistic setting. Because my respondents occupied various positions along an organizational hierarchy, my field of study comprised a number of different sites. I employed primarily in-depth interviews backed up by participant observation combining field-driven and theory-driven approaches. The back-and-forth methodology had two challenging but inspiring effects: a close reading of theoretical texts and ethnographies was undertaken during periods away

from the field, while results from the field offered stimulating insights into the questions and theories revealed in those readings. Burawoy (1998) and Lichterman (2002) outline the dialectic between the field-driven versus theory-driven approaches. While my own experience wasn't particularly 'clean' in either direction, it did allow for an interesting dialogue of observations and ideas during the process.

The setting and sampling: The research explored how people within the community of Carletonville are understanding and interpreting 'value' for themselves, and how they value each other and each other's work, and what types of values might instantiate narrative and subjectivity. Multiple interviews took place in a corporate headquarters in downtown Johannesburg, as well as more traditional field work in Carletonville and Khutsong. This is an intentionally diverse set of theoretical explorations of value as seen through the eyes of different actors in order to shine a light on differences and conflicts.

A study was conducted over a period of four months by way of in-depth interviews with 5 mine workers (2 female, 3 male), 3 senior managers in Johannesburg, 2 union representatives in Carletonville, and two mining services providers also based in Carletonville. Of the mine workers, two were Zulu, and three were Sotho speakers, one of those from Lesotho. The three managers worked at two different companies, with one in regular contact with his head office in London. Interviews with union workers ultimately proved to be of little use for this study as their attention was focused on the nuts and bolts of wage negotiations at the time. A number of other respondents gave me helpful and significant information and advice, including a radio journalist from Talk Radio 702. All names have been changed in this report.

The sampling procedure was purposive in that I wanted to ensure I received perspectives from a number of different angles. That said, the use of snowball sampling was important as it led me to a wider network of individuals whose views were influential in terms of broader historical and cultural understanding. Ultimately, my emphasis was on in-depth interviewing, not just to gather data, but to try to 'read' through words and actions the emotive and subjective accounts that were presented to me.

Elements of power of the kind Burawoy discusses (1998) were taken into consideration during the interview process, though it may be said that my own age, gender and approach seemed to not cause any level of distrust or concealment among most of the respondents. The mining community as a whole is subject to a vast, almost ludicrous amount of research, despite which meant that most of my respondents were comfortable being interviewed. Frans was my greatest skeptic, being a member of a smaller group of whites in mining-related services who are rarely the subjects of investigation.

Access: Access was originally obtained through introductions from an acquaintance in higher levels of management in a leading mining house. I also took the opportunity to hold informal conversations with people I met during periods of 'deep hanging out'. A chance meeting of a union representative toy-toying outside the Pretoria clinic where Mandela spent his last illness led me to two other mine workers.

Data collection methods: Data were collected through multiple in-depth interviews, through observation at different sites in Carletonville, Khutsong, and downtown Johannesburg; document analysis of a management process case study, as well as reviews of ethnographic

accounts of mine work. Interviews were open-ended. A specific definition of value was not supplied, but I instead employed various examples of possible interpretations in order to spur discussion. Questions referred to subjective experiences and importance of personal and cultural values, examples of conflicts and misunderstandings, actions taken to resolve or avoid those conflicts, and future plans and dreams.

Interviews were both formal and informal. Formal interviews with all respondents involved a specific set of question 'types' which varied slightly depending on the subject. However, there were times when the setting allowed for more informal discussions, where equally informative and illuminating opportunistic questioning took place. Interviews tended to last one and a half to two and a half hours long, and more than once respondents called later with "another thought". One had taken a few notes for the next time she saw me.

Ethics: This research was based on standards of research ethics that ensures the creation of informed consent, respect, transparency, confidentiality, and anonymity. Each initial interview began with an explanation of the study's purpose, and that anyone was free to withdraw at any time. One mine worker whom I had contacted in the initial stages became ill and returned to Lesotho. I made sure to obtain informed consent and guaranteed anonymity in each case.

Limitations: As a qualitative study, broad generalizations based on research findings rely on the specific content of interviews and documents studied. The relatively small sampling guarantees that the generalization will be limited, but it is hoped that the insights gained will be useful to other studies of 'soft' issues of value orientations as they relate to the 'hard' political, social and political challenges in South Africa. It may be that the notoriously difficult study of value is my

own justification for a simplistic conclusion that it's impossible to assume one value is aligned to one particular behavior.

On the other hand, this researcher recognizes the difficulties and weaknesses in framing the concept of value too broadly, while acknowledging the problem of trying to balance the need for a value-free ethnography within this ethnography's subject matter. Thus the focus is an attempt to identify outcomes on individuals who must negotiate through a multiplicity of value domains. Being qualitative, it is full of what might be termed 'anecdotal evidence', indirect and imperfect; even so, specific individual responses opened windows to the subjective challenges faced by people every day.

Language: Interviews were conducted in English, which presupposes understandings of value as they are defined and influenced in that language through its Latin roots. Some respondents regularly used Sotho and Zulu expressions to explain themselves; these were later translated into English. The results are hopefully true to the conceptual understanding, but I acknowledge the problematic nature of this approach.

1.7 Structure of Thesis

The thesis is organized into five main chapters and a conclusion. Chapter 1 introduces the focus of the inquiry, the contextual foundation of the thesis, the methodology and a reflection on the research. Chapter 2 presents a brief history of mining wherein the foundations for the devaluing of labour can be discovered; gives a description of the context in terms of its significance to various sets of actors; and captures important and relevant

perspectives of respondents – their fears, values and habits. In Chapter 3 we meet a sampling of people who struggle to live within, and orient themselves to, an imposed moral economy with varying degrees of acceptance and resistance. Here we take a brief look at how 'self-directed work teams' and bonuses create the conditions for conflict. A concluding Chapter 5 is preceded by Chapter 4 which analyzes and elaborates specific themes: how self-worth is interpreted, the relation between wage and self-worth, values as markers of individual imagination, institutional and universal values, and the mediators and relays of power and value.

Chapter 2 – The Construction of Value on the West Rand

2.1 Introduction: The Stage

The gold bearing Witwatersrand rocks were laid down between 700 and 950 million years ago and were already covered by a layer of lava and rocks (Norman & Whitfield 2006: 38-49). The impact of the asteroid known as the Vredefort impact caused the gold-bearing rocks to be thrust closer to the surface inside the resulting crater, encompassing the area now known as Johannesburg and the Witwatersrand. The "Witwatersrand Gold Rush" began in 1886 and within ten years Johannesburg had overtaken Cape Town as the largest city in South Africa. Nearly 50% of all the gold ever mined worldwide has been extracted from these Witwatersrand hills (Norman & Whitfield 2006).

White labour history attests to an increasing dearth of white mine workers in the 1920s and 1930s, and they were prone to protest their low wages and poor working conditions. Among other issues was the promotion of black workers to semi-skilled positions at lower pay. The recruitment process was organized and refined via the founding of the Witwatersrand Chamber of Mines, and was designed to prevent competition for black workers by the agricultural and rail building companies (Allen 1992; Crush et al 1991: 7; Chamber of Mines; http://www.bullion.org.za/). The Witwatersrand Native Labour Association (WNLA or WENELA) was given a monopoly to recruit in Mozambique for workers whose contract periods could be anywhere from 12 to 24 months (First 1983; Allen 1992: 154-156). Labour was naturally also recruited within the country, with 'migrancy' as a legal concept applied as a way of ensuring more control over movements and economies between urban and rural areas. The exploitation

of ethnic categories was institutionalized during this time (Moodie 1994; Donham 2011; Allen 1992.

Political and economic decisions taken by more powerful nations served to free gold from its more confined role as the monetary basis for a range of national currencies. John Maynard Keynes, one of the architects of the Bretton Woods system, had earlier referred to the gold standard as "a barbarous relic" (*Monetary Reform* 1924: 172). In 1971, U.S. President Nixon suspended the convertibility of dollars into gold, which ended the Bretton Woods system of fixed exchange rates founded in 1944 and the era of 'managed economies' was born. In May 1973, with the official United Kingdom gold market price set at $42.22 per ounce, gold broke through the set ceiling price of $100 per ounce for the first time (Sutton 1977), heralding a rapid rise in gold prices and increased investments into the mining industry, including mining technology. The outcome was higher employment, as well as more low-grade ore being mined more profitably (First 1983: 49; James 1992: 18-22).

The history of the development of gold mining presented in this chapter is intended to outline how the construction of different value domains began during the early expansion of the industry, and to focus on resulting conflicts – often hidden or repressed – as they are interpreted and managed by participants over time[1]. A collision of racial and economic forces planted the seeds of the migrant labour system, as the specific nature of the gold-bearing reefs combined with the fixing of the gold price by the Bank of England resulted in a search for labour

[1] The last chapter of Moodie's *Going for Gold* (1994) deals with the challenges and constraints developing theory in times of chaos and conflict.
[2] This is a much discussed issue among residents in the area. The phrase loosely translates as 'chancers'.

at the lowest possible cost. The tension between a devalued labour force and a highly valued industry has continued despite steady wage increases over time.

Thus, 'value' as an analytical, empirical and theoretical focus and as a rationale has a long ancestry in South Africa as elsewhere. While the influence of Smith and Marx have deep roots in the broader political history of South Africa, and equally deep influences on business, governance and resistance movements writ large, Dumont's conception of "paramount value" (1986) is also evident in the way people tend to privilege one value over another. Equally, Nancy Munn's concept of "intersubjective spacetime" (1986) presents a holistic perspective combining exchange, ethics, sociality, time and space, and positive and negative values. Some of these issues are amplified by a "realignment of space and time" enabled in turn by a "proliferating media of compression that facilitate the widespread sense of a global totality" (Weiss 2009: 8). In Carletonville we see evidence of hierarchical and holistic connections people make between value and human meaning-making (Lambek, Graeber 2001, Sahlins 1972), up, down and across social and company hierarchies. Weiss' ethnography of Tanzanian barbershops demonstrates how self-fashioning, as a realization of meaning-making, "can blur the boundaries between consumption and production." (2009 18). This is especially so among the large numbers of labourers whose worth in human terms is measured at the peripheries of the dominant economic forces driving the purpose and management of their employers' organizational practices. Forced into the public realm of wage negotiations, their self-fashioning is practiced through demands for power through violent acts and rhetoric.

2.2 Mapping the Terrain

There are two main routes to Carletonville from Johannesburg, and both move through 120 years of South African history and environmental change. The old route leaves Newtown in Johannesburg along Main Reef Road, travels through Krugersdorp and Randfontein then turns south through long dusty stretches of wide plains dotted with small farmyards and dejected, low-slung brick houses. One can imagine the hopeful and ambitious men who once travelled from Johannesburg along this route towards their fortunes in the hills to the south, though it now feels decidedly forlorn and forgotten.

The faster more popular route is via the N12 and on to the R501, which passes Carletonville and on towards the Western Deep Levels and other mine installations along the West Wits line. The N12 highway, running north to south from Witbank to George, is now marketed as 'The Treasure Route' by tourism and business lobbies in North West Province; it continues to Potchefstroom and Klerksdorp and eventually on south through Kimberley. Quite a few people make the daily commute between the mines and homes in Johannesburg.

Both routes afford close-up views of the towering white mounds of excavated and crushed rock that's been parked over decades, as well as 'unplanned settlements' resulting from a chronic lack of affordable housing over decades. The history of colonial scrambles for power in this area is also present and legible. A Bauhaus style attempt at heroic sculpture rises from a kopje in the memory of Danie Theron, a lone Boer scout who died in a dramatic firefight with a British-supported cavalry unit in 1900.

The entire Witwatersrand Basin has been the site of mining activities since 1886. In a few short years it was understood that the extent of these deposits would result in South Africa's status as the largest gold producer in the world (Allen 1992:132; Davenport & Saunders 2000:95, 607, 615; Wilson & Thompson 1982: 146). The West Wits line sitting within the larger Basin is still estimated to contain the world's largest gold reserves; it is home to the deepest gold mines in the world with shafts reaching nearly 4 kilometers (Mining Technology). This dry crease in the surface of the earth is littered with beige and grey quartzite, shale and banded ironstone, punctuated with small outcrops of dusty pines and clumps of grasses.

Despite some volatility in the gold price in the past year, the closing of some mines and selling of others by one company to another, the West Rand remains an active site for some of the world's biggest mining companies; its towns and townships are organized primarily around employment in these companies. Subsidiary companies or specific mines that failed for one reason or another seem to magically re-emerge through transfers of personnel and assets to a newly-formed company. An example is Gold Fields' "unbundling" of mines to create Sibanye Gold, or Blyvooruitzicht's sale to Goldrich/Aurora. There is usually a negative effect on lower-wage workers. Sibanye retrenched more than 1100 workers in May 2013 (City Press 29 May 2013), while Aurora's purchase and subsequent neglect of the mine known as Blyvoor has resulted in asset stripping, retrenchments and a spate of violence among the "*zama zama*" (illegal) miners who have moved onto the premises.[2]

While government is mostly silent or ineffective when responding to these developments, company statements are the source for news and analysis. Written in the

[2] This is a much discussed issue among residents in the area. The phrase loosely translates as 'chancers'.

dominant terminology of business value, they cause confusion and skepticism among the mine employees who listen to and interpret them. The rhetoric refers to shareholder value and measurements 'valuing' the company's worth 'on the market', and ambiguous references to customer and managerial values, 'shared company values' and employees as their 'most valued assets'. Applying dialogic concepts to these contradictory discourses – i.e., all discourse is dialogical, and the dialogic invites the listener to attend to implicit intentions in these statements (Ricoeur 1992; Sennett 2010) - we can begin to understand how a plurality of bewildering interpretations might be the result, and causing injury and conflict.

2.3 'The best laid schemes of mice and men oft go awry'[3]

From 1937-1957, various companies developed their claims along the Far West Rand. The site that became Carletonville was essentially a small unplanned settlement supporting those operations. The town gained official status in 1959 and was named for Guy Carleton Jones, a senior engineer for Gold Fields who was instrumental in developing Western Deep Levels. Planners got to work, laying out a well-provisioned town for white managers and workers, and designating an area 10 kilometres away for the housing and support of the black labour force.

From the outside Carletonvile is a quiet place, with an air of immutability among its neat grid of streets, low buildings, and a wide green park bordering a stream which runs through residential neighborhoods. A small industrial park sits at the north of the city, and street names attest to its hopes and heritage: Gold, Zircon, Garnet, Kaolin, Calcite, or Oberholzer and Kruger.

[3] Robert Burns, To a mouse, 1785

The names of mines along the West Wits line tend to take mostly indigenous names, such as Tau Tona, Mponeng, Kusasalethu, Savuka. Security around private houses seems an afterthought compared to Johannesburg; people walk freely in the streets and the park, moving between home and school or work. Low breeze block walls or wire fences are designed to keep the dogs in rather than keep people out. Schoolchildren of all races mingle freely here as elsewhere, with Afrikaans, Setswana, Sotho and Zulu as the dominant languages. Business consists mostly of services related to mining operations, and other useful commercial activities. There's little evidence of disposable income, and not much in the way of 'luxury' shopping except for a small Woolworths. Few buildings reach over 6 stories tall so that the many visible church towers bring to mind the old villages of southern England, if it weren't for the pale brick made from nearby clay and strong, dry winds blowing across the Highveld grasslands and through the streets.

Two main shopping centers create hubs of activity, along with the usual assortment of fast food chains and independent general stores. A few blocks away and across a commons is the Carletonville Library, a vibrant place full of students who use it as a study center. The library boasts full shelves with titles covering everything from global and local development issues, to histories of mining and environmental issues, to a large range of instructional materials. A wall display of geological samples sports labels stuck on with cellotape.

Moving along Annan Street, one of the town's main drags, you'll come to the Tower Butchery and restaurant, a small but bustling eatery serving pap, grilled meat and mealies to mostly 25-40 year old black males – a woman who clears the dishes was the only other female

presence this researcher ever saw there. The vibe at Tower is loud and light-hearted, quite unlike the atmosphere in a small take-away shop at the end of town called the '007' run by a father and son with distinct Eastern European accents and well-worn expressions of worry.

Carletonville is also home to a number of training centers offering management and occupational health and safety courses – most are run and supported for the most part by AngloGold Ashanti, Gold Fields and TEBA. West Col, Leslie Williams Hospital, Gold Fields Nursing College also register students and trainees from other mining communities, and these three institutions also offer home-based care and hospice programs across the Wits Basin. Joyce, a respondent, had come from Rustenburg to attend a safety course held over a number of weeks, and though the course was required for her current job, she hoped that a pass mark would eventually afford her a higher wage and a promotion. These requirements are the outcome of regulations and agreements between the Government and mining companies, but as we will see much of what is learned is either inappropriate or ignored underground. Narratives about safety issues reveal very different perspectives between mine workers and managers.

Monuments to death abound: the area is known for some dramatic and deadly accidents from explosions, collapsing shafts, and floods at the deepest levels. Spectacular sinkholes have swallowed whole plants as well as individual houses. Plinths and plaques in graveyards list the names of those who've died underground. On the outskirts of Blyvoorzuicht is a memorial to the Oosthuizen family who died when their house and car were swallowed up in a sinkhole in August 1963. No trace of them was ever found, and it doesn't go unnoticed that the domestic worker who died with them in the house that night is never named in reports or

memorials. While accidents occur far less frequently than in the past, the risk is still high and the threat of injury and death is ever-present. White flags fly in front of the muscular infrastructure of mine installations denoting an injury- or death-free day.

Heading south of Carletonville on the R501 one quickly reaches the first of many large mining compounds, with their main administrative blocks, shaft entrances, towers, crushing belts and machines. Each compound is heavily branded at its entrance, with company logos and slogans such as “safety is our first value’ or ‘we value diversity’. Football pitches and community centers sometimes have their own entrances. Not so easily seen are the residences, though considerable money and effort has been spent on upgrading the old hostel system (Anglo Gold Report to Investors 2008). Even so, the paying of ‘living-out-allowances’ has caused a range of other problems corresponding to outcomes in similar mining communities. Just over the hill from one large compound and close to the road a shiny-new small informal settlement has sprouted up. Its 40-odd shacks are huddled close together within the shelter of a small kopje.

Across the railroad tracks and 10 kilometers to the west lies the cramped and overcrowded township of Khutsong, with a population estimated at over 60,000 (StatsSA) and known for high rates of HIV and AIDS (Morris), extreme levels of poverty, gang violence and a history of protest. Mine workers take the living-out allowances paid by the mining companies to stay here. Interviews held there were friendly and informative, but chronic protests have tested the older parameters of political authority, national territory and identity of the kind described by Ferguson (2002). Older sections of Khutsong boast tarred roads, electricity and

some plumbing, but the burgeoning newer section known as 'Chris Hani' consists of large areas of 'shacks', though the word itself dignifies what are instead creative assemblages of cardboard, wire, mud and tin sheets. Pit latrines are dotted here and there but are often ignored or unused. In November 2013, a few months after these interviews took place, Khutsong erupted in violence that targeted gangs who were accused by community members of terrorizing them with impunity; hundreds of people attacked gang members leaving six of them dead (Tabane). Other violent protests have erupted at election time, directly targeting ANC officials (Carroll). Residents of the whole of Khutsong are united around the causes of their anger: the phrase 'service delivery protests' doesn't adequately explain how to live with unmitigated crime, an unprepared police force, raw sewage in the streets, or the toxic mix of arsenic, cadmium, copper cobalt and zinc (not to mention the by-products of uranium) found in the nearby waters of Wonderfontein Spruit and the Mooi River Loop (Lang). The area was also prone to protests and disruptions up to and during the 4 years when Government/ANC officials looked into re-incorporate the whole of Merafong City, which includes Khutsong and Carletonville, into North West Province; residents and professionals such as teachers were fearful that services and funding would collapse if they left Gauteng for North West (IRIN 2007). One nuance of these particular protests has been the lack of xenophobia-related violence seen in service delivery protests elsewhere, which has been explained by residents' perceptions that they were bounded together by a collective sense of place, highlighting the need to examine local social struggles and their intersections with broader political-economic trends (Kirshner 2012).

Legacies of apartheid are visible everywhere in the West Rand, in the racial element of economic class as expected, as well as in "bodily gesture, verbalized consciousness, and the

order of the landscape" (Morris 2008: 204; Donham 2011; Moodie 1994; Stewart 2013). Government's ongoing but ineffective attempts to address the complex structure of mining's past inequalities are evident in constant tussles around changes to the Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act (MPRDA). The MPRDA includes provisions for the development of a "broad-based socio-economic empowerment charter" which was accepted in 2004 by leading industry parties, including NUM (Government Gazette notices 2004). Among the proposed changes in the Act, one of the latest sticking points is a re-definition of "historically disadvantaged persons (HDPs)"[4] whose ownership of mining shares and profits the Charter is supposed to support. But as Morris notes, the Charter also stipulates that participation in ownership by HDPs beyond agreed levels will not be pursued if it risks the mining companies' viability, e.g. profits. (2008). The orderly and quiet tree-lined streets of Carletonville's planned center belie the daily struggles on (and under) the ground to manage the impact of trying to globalize one value proposition that resonates for all.

2.4 A History of Devalued Labour

From the late 19th century, the South African mining sector has been as well known for labour and wage disputes as it is for the economic development of the country. The combination of vast reserves of low-grade ore, a large unskilled labour force, racially-based policies, and rapid industrialization created the conditions for the distinctive labour regime which still characterizes the mining industry today. Since then, deeply entrenched social and political issues have proved difficult to address such as the peculiar institution of migrant

[4] With some ironic misfires along the way: new definitions reveal apartheid era categorical approaches in that changes proposed in 2013 to the MPRDA effectively remove white women from the definition of HDPs. Refer to MPRDA amendments overview by Bowman Gilfillan Group, www.bowman.co.za/FileBrowser/ArticleDocuments/MPRDA-Amendments.pdf.

labour, related health and educational challenges, and deplorable housing conditions - all predicated on apartheid and extended by poverty.

As workers, managers, unions and investors struggle over how to implement fair employment practices and workplace policies through various internal programs and policies, a range of related issues is thrown into high relief: perceptions and definitions of the value of labour, managerial processes based on a set of assumed but usually foreign values, and how to craft broadly-defined principles of 'doing business' in developing countries which are inherently based on a competing set of values, a poorly understood practice with huge impact on the ground. As illustrations of this impact, the paying of bonuses and 'self-directed work teams' will be used as case studies in Chapter 3.

The organizational nature of mining companies is both flat and hierarchical: relatively flat in their global perspective but locally hierarchical, visible through extreme differences in wage levels, education and skills, which produces a chronic effect on internal cohesion. Managers and technical experts are often sourced from other countries despite the depth of expertise in South Africa; these employees are well compensated for their high levels of experience and skills sets, sometimes more than comparable South African-based expertise (Caldwell). Local hierarchies are further entrenched by the racialized labour structures reflecting historical and continuing disparities in education and job opportunities.

Then there is the metaphysical nature of gold itself, the abstract economic relation to national currencies, and its historical and cultural significance around the world, including and especially its fundamental role in the development of South Africa. Marx observed its magical

character in the cultures of antiquity (1857). Though Antony Sutton's impassioned defense of the gold standard includes a frankly conspiratorial rationale for the decoupling of gold from the industrial economies of the West (which had significant implications the South African gold mining industry), it also provides a rich description of the history of gold as having abstract intrinsic value. Gold coins, for instance, have been traded by weight long after monetary systems were introduced (Sutton 1977). Even today, among precious metal collectors and investors, Krugerrands are the most widely traded gold bullion coin in the world (Goldmart 2014). According to the World Gold Council (WGC), of the total demand flows for gold on a five-year average (2008-2012), 49% went to gold jewelry, 10.8% to technological applications (electronic, industrial, medical and dental), over 38% as investments, and just under 4% as central bank net purchases (WGC 2014). Invoking this abstraction on an individual level, this study's respondents revealed a complex relationship between the intrinsic value of gold and a sense of their own intrinsic worth.

2.5 Mining's Value to South Africa

With 94% of production exported, gold earned South Africa R72 billion in 2012, remaining a "key contributor" to the country's economy; it is the largest mineral export but contributes only 2% to GDP (Chamber 2012: 28). The gold mining industry as a whole directly employs over 142,000 people (ibid.: 30). While South Africa's deposits are large, they are not, in the WGC's estimation, "world class" (WGC 2014); those now exist in Canada, Peru, Australia, Argentina, Ecuador and Mexico. According to the WGC, as measured by "ore grade" - that is the proportion of gold contained within the ore of its particular mines as measured in grams

per tonne (g/t) - larger and better quality underground mines contain between 8 to 10 g/t, and "marginal" underground mines average around 4 to 6g/t. Despite vast reserves, South Africa's ore grade is relatively low, dropping from averages of 5.15g/t in 2005 to 2.91g/t in 2012 (Chamber 2012: 29). Gold extraction is already an expensive process, as gold appears in the Earth's crust with an average concentration of 0.005 parts per million[5]: huge quantities of ore must therefore be worked to extract small quantities of this yellow metal. This last point is crucial to the cost of mining operations as "efficiencies" and cost savings are primary considerations in every aspect of the mining process.

In order to determine the value of gold deposits, the WGC prefers to measure cost per tonne (USD/tonne) which combines operating costs with ore grade considerations. (The price of gold is however measured and set in US dollars per troy ounce.) Using this measurement, Chamber of Mines fourth quarter figures for 2012 show that around 40% of the country's gold mines are unprofitable or marginal, based on cash costs and average gold price[6]. The Chamber of Commerce and other mining leaders argue that on this basis the industry cannot afford any increase in wages and benefits, which account for 50-55% of operating costs (Ryan).

The significance of these measurements and cost analyses are clear when considering the valuing of labour. Jonathan Crush contends that "if a low-grade ore body like South Africa's had been discovered in countries like Canada, Australia or the United States it would have been left in the ground because of the inability to mobilize the right kind of labour force" (Crush 1991:1). At the same time, 'dependency ratios' (the number of kin dependent on an individual

[5] https://www.bullionvault.com/guide/gold/Gold-mining
[6] http://www.bullion.org.za/documents/wages-2013/GOLD%20campaign%20FAQ%27s.pdf

worker) in the mining sector are 10 to 1, and for every mining job approximately two additional jobs are created in other sectors (Chamber 2012). According to the South African Institute on Race Relations, there are 3.2 dependents for every employed black South African.[7] Finally, the stratospheric levels of executive pay serve merely to underscore extreme disproportions in this sector.

2.6 Cultural Roots

Studies done by Pierre van den Burghe in South Africa 50 years ago teased out the stark conflicts in value sets which were eventually institutionalized by the entire conceptual and legal framework of apartheid, but which had their roots in European domination over indigenous cultural values (1961). As he suggests, European cultural values as lived by the Dutch were themselves a tangle of contradictions, grounded in a Christianity mediated by Calvinism, combined with deeply embedded belief in the 'market' as a social force for good. Simon Schama's 1987 history of the Dutch during the period of their 'golden age', *The Embarrassment of Riches,* describes a typical explorer and settler who brought his particular world view to the shores of South Africa as a "third-leg baton carrier in the race that took capitalism from medieval merchant ventures through Renaissance banking to the Dutch international staple economy and onwards at a sprint to the finishing line of British industrialization" (6). This particular description characterizes the energy and self-belief that accompanied these settlers, along with the "mysterious contradictions" that united a destructive tendency toward financial speculation with a fussy obsession with order, hygiene and thriftiness.

[7] South Africa Institute on Race Relations, South Africa Survey 2012, The Demographic Chapter.

As they put those energies and beliefs to work, Alastair Sparks notes, early White settlers grew to believe in "the illusion" which regards Africans as "aliens, foreigners from behind the hedge … people whose real home was somewhere else, in a 'homeland' far away, out of sight" (1991: xvii). Black South Africans came from their homelands to work in white homes, farms, and industries and, Sparks suggest, they came to know more about the white world than whites knew of theirs. "Hedges do not make for mutual acquaintance and understanding" (1991: xviii). Blinded by injustice and divided by long-standing antagonism, the response was weak and fragmented.

2.7 Local bases with international connections

Achille Mbembe locates the intersection of market, social and institutional values. "Eminently indigenous social bases," he writes, are foundational to present-day post-colonial African state entities, regardless of the influence of more recent restructurings (2001, Chapter 1). "A constellation of distinctly indigenous interests" was created in response to African re-appropriation of state forms as well as the rationality given them by colonial forces, institutionally, materially and "in the sphere of the imagination" (40). The outcome was a transformation of local ancestral power structures and dynamics, and the creation of new social and economic alliances in what we'd now refer to as 'sectors' such as cash-crop agriculture, small businesses, trade and transport (40), co-opting old elites in the process and creating new layers of middlemen and facilitators. In this way, he argues, "relations of subjection were introduced and consolidated that broadly perpetuated those the colonial state had initiated" (40). The following passage is a comprehensive summary of how the "indigenization of the

state" and the modalities for establishing authority "involved no reciprocity of legally codified obligations between the state, powerholders, society, and individuals" (42):

> The postcolonial states, whether financed by their peasantries, whether "aided", or whether indebted, were strongly influenced by the modalities of African integration into world trade in the forms they took and the way their ruling elites were integrated into international networks. The revenues extracted from these transactions helped to: 1) structure local systems of inequality and domination; 2) facilitate the formation of coalitions or inflame factional struggles; 3) determine the types of external support that these elites enjoyed. The forms of local exploitation of the labor force (taxation, levels of contributions, etc.) – in short, the structuring of the relations among state, market, and society – also depended on the modalities of this integration into world trade. As earlier, pre-colonial days, it was through revenues extracted from long-distance trade that relations of subjection were financed, shortages avoided, values created, utilities consumed, and, in the last analysis, a process of "indigenization" of the state carried through." (41)

Local bases were thus 'connected to and simultaneously maintained with the international system' as valuable mineral resources in South Africa were exploited to an ever greater degree (41).

Chapter 3

Valued and devalued in Merafong

"An erosion of self-esteem is one of the commonest forms of dispossession."

Chinua Achebe, *Home and Exile*, 2000.

3.1 Introduction

We will now meet a few people who live and work in Merafong, the municipality which includes Carletonville and the nearby township of Khutsong. We also meet two executives who live in Johannesburg but whose livelihood and purpose are centered on the West Rand. The people introduced in this chapter represent the complex ways in which interpersonal relationships are deeply implicated in the production of knowledge in the workplace; knowledge which is informed by concepts of value, from determinants of the value of wages to determinants of the value of human meaning-making.

We will also return, as Graeber suggests, to Kluckhohn's Rimrock project by listening to how people may perceive value "as different ways of imagining what life ought to be like" and not just as different ways of "perceiving the world" (Graeber 2001: 22). Focusing on a concept of value as what life ought to be like also illuminates why people might misunderstand one another.

Because the questions asked of them demanded a certain amount of deeper self-reflection, most of my respondents could express a sense of self-awareness in broadly similar conceptual terms: class consciousness, injustice, and insecurity; how the most visible point of contention around these issues is the wage gap, and how inadequate that point of contention

ultimately is in answering a need for dignity and value at work. A critical problem is "whose income is stabilized at the expense of whom, not just a problem of calories and income but a question of social justice, or rights and obligations, of reciprocity" (Scott 1976: vii). Depending on where one falls within the hierarchy also seems to determine how one imagines what life ought to be like. Low-wage workers tend to provide rich and detailed descriptions of imaginary futures while mid and higher salaried workers described more immediate desires.

Current conflicts therefore cannot be distilled down to a clear-cut case of cold-hearted management versus desperate exploited labour. Average mine workers earn comparable wages to teachers, nurses and other professionals with higher levels of education who are not as inclined to violence and protest. Yet teachers and nurses often work under similar conditions. Michael Ralph argues that "a value theory of labour should ideally build upon moments when creative action works to articulate new social networks" (2008: 17). The findings of this study suggest that the specific conditions of mine work, with its competing value-driven processes and formations of identity through 'badges of ability' which often go unrecognized and unrewarded, may obstruct creative action, forming the basis for a sense of exclusion and diminished citizenship, rather than propelling people towards imaginary futures where they are allowed the "creative potential of [their] human energy" (Ralph 2008).

3.2 Sketches

3.2.1 Robert

Robert has been a machine operator, *aka* rock driller, for 15 years. He is 47, calm but steely, righteous and questioning. He has held a variety of underground positions over the

years and is proud of his current title. He works in Mponeng, where 4000 people descend in triple-decker cage elevators every day, with the first 2.5 kilometres taking approximately 6 minutes to descend. He must take another cage trip and a 20-minute walk before he reaches his current position on the mine face.

Union membership is essential from his perspective. His stories of the days before legislative changes around work conditions are stark reminders of the growing pains the whole industry is still suffering from. He also sees an unavoidable connection between the hard work or rock drilling and the clashes in Rustenburg. The work he does, he says, has meaning to him "as a man, as a father, as a person". The extreme challenge of drilling work is hinted at in this brief excerpt from Paul Stewart's (2013) description of the stopes these men work in:

> The dimensions of a modern back-fill stope, over 3 km underground, reveal the cramped nature of this working environment. The stope-width is from 80 cm. The depth of the stope is approximately 170 cm. The length of the stope is generally between 30 to 40 metres and runs at an angle of between 15 and 30 degrees and has a target ambient temperature of 28.5 degrees Celsius. Drilling horizontally into the rock face here is taxing, rigorous and dangerous, hence its status and the social attitudes it engenders.

Mineworkers often blame management for not providing proper protections, but Robert has an additional perspective on safety issues. He patiently offered a variety of different reasons for safety lapses, which include work-arounds and misunderstandings due to the use of "the mine language" Fanakalo. Fanakalo is as prevalent as it is misunderstood; used entirely flexibly, with different words thrown in depending on the ability of the speaker, it is also interpreted differently depending on the ability of the listener.

Robert has little interest in gold itself; but for him it is more than simply "part of the job I do. Yes, for every bit of rock I break in that shaft I'd like to take a bigger piece of that gold. These wages are not enough for me, for all of us. The money don't tell you that we are as important as the price of that gold. That makes me angry, yes. Are we not more important than that gold rich people like so much? Are we not the ones that allow them to wear it and buy and sell it and whatever they do with it? Tell me that. Why can't they see that we are important? Do they think about us at all?"

Work is his life now, however. He has no plans to go anywhere else, or retire any time soon. But when he does leave the mine, Robert says he will go home where his wife and mother and sisters are, home to the Eastern Cape where he will farm and find out if he "still likes his wife" [said with a quiet laugh]. Home is "where people share and support each other, where life is quiet and not so fast, where no one tells you what to do, where I am the boss".

> Money measures everything, including me, all of us. Especially us at the bottom. Is that right? Do you think it's right? Is it right that I'm not having a good education because of them, and how their sons are taking better paid jobs than me? I will take their bonuses and allowances now because the government won't look after me. I make this choice.

3.2.2 Zachariah

17 years ago, Zachariah was an apprentice plater/welder at one of the Western Deep Levels reefs and within three years was promoted to Master Artisan. Today he is a Human Resources Development manager who has also participated in, designed and led a range of training programs over the years. His perspective on the hierarchical structure of mine

operations, as well as transcultural value conflicts, is wide and deep, but he is also what might be called a convert. He is a true believer in 'training' as a way of achieving organizational unity. His father had been a mine worker at Vaal Reefs but "wasn't interested in joining the white men in their offices". He is extremely proud of his own 'badges': his office wall is plastered with certificates of training completions, awards, and photographs.

> There should be no office conflicts. There's a company culture and you just have to get on with it. The Bantu education system was rotten. You have to be ambitious like me to get through that. Some of the older guys never got past it, and the younger guys – well, no one has done much for them in school either. The thing is, we do share a lot of the same values – Xhosas believe in obedience, sacrifice and respect, but who wants to respect the supervisor who shouts at you? You have to control yourself, your anger, otherwise those guys win.
>
> The fact is that mine work is hard and dangerous. I think everyone knows how dangerous it is but they don't really want to think about it too much. We have to keep mining, right? Isn't it all about jobs and the economy?
>
> In my job I have to be aware of how people think and feel for sure. But life is hard and you just have to get on with it. I've been down there even if I was mostly above ground with low-paid guys, and still I get accused of not listening to or understanding their problems. But I'm just a tool in this place too – ok, I get paid a lot more than they do, but you know?"
>
> There's one thing that really bothers me. This use of Ubuntu by the foreign managers, they use it too freely and too simplified. What they really mean is to just get along, our way.

The topic of bonuses as incentive payments was discussed. Everyone knows, he says, that shaft workers often circumvent safety rules in order to meet the production goals that have been set by managers. "But those guys don't care." When asked which guys he was referring to, he laughed and said, "Good question! Maybe all of them – guys underground don't care about production goals except to get the bonus, and they don't think the guys at the top care about them, so they might as well take the bonus."

Zacharia's future plans take him home to KwaZulu-Natal in "a house by the sea, I hope". He tells me he worries about South African leadership, but says he won't spend too much time worrying or it "gets in his way". He says he's considered to be 'upper-class' in South Africa but having travelled a bit he knows that in a more industrialized country he would be in the 'middle-class' bracket, so is "happy to stay where he is". "Gives me a certain status, you know? I'm going to make sure my family has everything I never had, and yes, that it's Western life-style – I'm ok with that." As Scott observes, "Rejection of elite values is seldom an across-the-board proposition" (1976: 239).

3.2.3 Frans and Mimi

Quiet, fair-haired, tall and thin, Frans looked on with a skeptical expression as I spoke to young female trainees at dinner in a simple Carletonville guest house. A former shaft steward, Frans is now an electrician working for another former white supervisor. He wears one of the white working class 'uniforms' of beige shorts, vellies and a safari shirt, and an ever-present cigarette hangs from his mouth. Over time he became more talkative, and admits that his understanding of cultural norms "took a beating" in the years running up to and after the end of apartheid. In particular, he tells me that he hardly ever thought about "the blacks" as other than necessary tools which were nonetheless terribly important to his day-to-day life. "I never thought much about them if I didn't have to; it was easier that way. It's not that I didn't see their life was hard, but we wanted to believe we were superior and our government told us we were, ne?" He described how his views were entirely tainted by what he himself called the "subversive" language used by his parents and schoolteachers. His teachers were "very subtle" in how they characterized indigenous culture.

Mbembe offers one of the more stark passages about the perspective of colonizer towards colonized, characterized by a "clear difference between being and existing",:

> The colonized is in no way someone who accomplishes intentional acts related by unity of meaning. The colonized cannot be defined either as a living being endowed with reason, or as someone aspiring to transcendence. The colonized does not exist as a self; the colonized *is*, but in the same way as a rock *is* – that is, as nothing more. And anyone who would make him/her express more finds nothing – or, in any event, finds he/she expresses nothing. The colonized belong to the universe of immediate things – useful things when needed, things that can be molded and are mortal, futile and superfluous things, if need be.

The "value" of this 'being-a-thing' of the colonizer is predicated on "the usefulness [that] makes them objects, tools" (2001:187).

A turning point for Frans was the process of Mandela's release and subsequent election. He speaks of Mandela in terms of respect, and says he also started paying more attention to "how things work" (economically and politically) by reading the annual reports of the big mining houses and comparing it with what he saw and experienced on a daily basis. (He is currently very interested in a mining executive who is "South Africa's richest black man".[8]) He holds deep suspicions about the efficacy of BEE and its various iterations, which he compares to the subsidies whites used to receive from previous governments. The ambiguity and insecurity he expresses is evident in every conversation.

> I don't blame these guys for rioting. We were never treated like that. At least when we came out of the shafts at the end of the day we had somewhere decent to go to at night. And my father he was a miner too – the house came free with his work. He didn't even have to pay for new light bulbs.

[8]Forbes. 27 January 2014. "Motsepe gives $10 million to fight HIV/AIDS in Africa", <http://www.forbes.com/sites/mfonobongnsehe/2014/01/27/south-african-billionaire-patrice-motsepe-gives-10-million-to-fight-hivaids-in-africa/>

> But ag I start thinking like I used to – these okes they don't work, they're dronkies, they don't understand how to learn and do things right. They'll never get ahead. But maybe I don't want them to! Then where would I be, ne? But hey, I'm not supposed to say things like that to people like you.
>
> But I see now that they had to change to do things our way because we forced them to. Maybe I have to make some changes to, but ag it's hard. I don't really want to change who I am.

Frans, sitting comfortably at the table every day with other guests, is the husband of Mimi who manages the guesthouse; they have pragmatically retreated to two rooms at the side of the house in order to earn extra cash. The guesthouse itself is simple and inexpensive, and is provided with a steady stream of safety and health trainees from the larger mining companies. I watched how Mimi fussed over the young women in her house, ensuring they ate enough when they were obviously tired, speaking to them with respect. She shifted between English and Afrikaans, however; and they were quietly skeptical of her, allowing another guest, an older Sesotho female trainer, to translate and converse.

Mimi told me her father and mother worked in Rustenburg but lived on a small farm plot in Marikana which was "idyllic, lovely hills – we ran and played all over those hills". She attended the Marikana School which was held in a former single family house and said the 'library' was in the one-car garage. She returned to Marikana four years ago and "I was shocked to see how it had become! Everyone there was dark, dark, dark. And it was a mess!"

> The Minister (of Mining), she comes all the time to Carletonville. Every time there's a conflict of some sort between workers and the company, they [government representatives] all come running and invite the media and make a

> big noise. But they don't come when the water is polluted, or the schools collapse or the crime is bad. And those people in Khutsong, they chased away the ANC when they tried to pass them all off to North West Province! We're just trying to do what God says is right, and what God says is right is to help everyone we can.

3.2.4 Joyce

> I always wanted to work for myself and not just for a husband at home. I had a husband who is late, and I have three children who are all big now. But I don't work just for them or for him. My husband, he also worked on the mine – we went together. I like to work like this – look at me! I don't need no one. It was harder at first when I was younger and its hard now. These men, they are the biggest problem. Down there, they do things to women and they do it to show you they are boss. They hurt me – one man hurt me. But I never told my husband just my sister. Who else was I going to tell? The shop steward or supervisors? These men, they are not bosses, they are children. Except maybe when they get old. (*laughter*)

Joyce is 42 years old and shares accommodation in Khutsong with another woman miner. It is a "proper" wooden shack, which has been carefully sealed up against the weather and secured with locks at the one window and door; communal water and toilets are nearby. The walls are covered with family photographs and pictures from magazines of favorite actresses and beautiful landscapes. A photograph of Mandela rests on the top of the doorframe.

She said she would stay on the compound if there were any for women as she heard they'd upgraded the men's rooms (!). She is round and strong and laughs a lot, and she is proud of passing the fitness and health tests which are a prerequisite to working underground (and are given to women after returning from childbirth as well). Her parents figure strongly in

her personal narrative. She believes her own confidence comes from the fact she had no brothers, as she and her sisters were all treated "like the boys". The little schooling she had naturally didn't play much of a role in her life or leave much of an impact, but the idea of working hard to maintain dignity and do more than survive seems to have done so. She is proud of being able to take care of herself and believes she earns communal respect by doing so. Nevertheless, she knows that men like Zachariah get noticed for working hard are more likely to get promoted. The women in this study were outspoken about discrimination towards black women in mining.

> My husband he hit me a lot. He liked the money I earned but he didn't like women in the mines. I know many of the other women suffer the same. Maybe it's the mines, or maybe it's just these men. I don't want to think about it now, and work keeps me very, very busy – I like it like that. All day I'm fixing things, carrying, going there and going here. My children, they say I can stop work anytime, but no it keeps me busy. It's my own money, even though it's little and I can buy some things for my grandaughter.

> Those bonuses, they are bribing us to work faster. It's corruption down there! We all work for it. Anyway, who is deciding what I'm worth, I want to know? I want a better wage.

3.2.5 Bongi

"Sharp, my lady! Unjani!" Bongi is dressed well when he's off work; he could easily appear in an Edgar's ad featuring fun-loving twenty-somethings. When he's off work he wears red skinny jeans, tight t-shirts, a cap and trendy low-profile shoes, and each time I saw him he sported a different hair-style.

The most vivid descriptions of shaft work came from Bongi. He is gregarious and expressive using both words and body language to convey a scene: the sounds of drilling and the fans, the assaults of heat on the body, being in such close proximity to the crushing weight

and hardness of the earth; the impact of all this on what Mbembe refers to as 'bodily subjectivities' (2001).

Bongi inhabits what Donham calls "a finely tuned and constantly renegotiated sense" of what is his due (2011: 18), which motivates his own understanding of self-fashioning as a compelling combination of dignity, rights, fashion and gusto. Some of these traits lead him into debt. He and Mandla both spoke about their personal debt; Bongi said that some of their motivation to strike was based on the constant struggle to balance their debts and understand creditors' tactics.

> I want the same thing the guys in the office have – I am a man too! Anyway, without us they wouldn't have a job. Do they owe as much part of their salary as we do? I pay 40% - 40%! – to the people I borrowed money from. And I borrowed money from my cousin too. I'm going to pay him back first.
>
> I like those bonuses but you know what? We sometimes hide the problems to get that money, and so do some of our bosses. That makes them look good, when there aren't any problems.

Bongi's descriptions of his future plans are filled with dreams of love, peace, ease and comfort; yet it's an urban-based vision which sees him walking down the streets of Johannesburg – "where the ladies are!" – laughing and going out with friends. "There's noise, but not blasting noise, no. Music, the guys are laughing, I've got a sharp lady with me, cars speeding by, and I'm going to have one too! And I'm not going to worry about anything – what job I have next I'm not going to be afraid."

Safety issues are akin to low-level violence on a psychological level. The threat of injuries is always on the minds of all underground workers. Bongi offered an explanation of "planisa" (making a plan, a truly southern African phrase) when mine workers are left to work

around a particular challenge without having the tools or resources which were promised to them. He also described how he and his co-workers take note of who's in the elevator cage every day because they don't really trust that someone "at the top" will remember their names or contact their relatives in the event of an accident. Memories of bad accidents have left behind a certain amount of distrust and fear, but he has a well-developed capacity to reframe his stories in front of the right audience. Donham's insights into how violence projects back onto past attitudes are evident here: Bongi twice told me the story of a co-worker who lost an arm, but details had changed regarding who had done what. The second time I heard the story, he added an element of previously felt tension that he hadn't included in the first version. In the second telling, his team had been arguing with the supervisor over production goals for the day, and in their anger and distraction a winch cable broke. In the first telling, there were no arguments and the story was told as a way of conveying the banal reality of underground accidents.

3.2.6 Jim

Jim has been active in the mining industry for 36 years, beginning as an engineer for a large gold mining house directly out of a university in the Cape, getting promoted to production manager and eventually rising to Senior Vice-President. He has moved between companies and to different areas of the country, working also in the platinum and diamond sectors before returning to gold. He spoke of mining and capitalism as positively informed by the Protestant ethic, that is in ways that value hard work, time as a commodity, and accumulation as "the power to transform South Africa".

"Corporations have the power to transform the economy if the state would just deregulate labour ", he says. "Mostly they don't understand the burdens of external corporate debt, and the debt to shareholders is not an obligation we can ignore – they invest in us! - and there are internal regimes for managing those realities. All the right laws are in place now after 1994; why have all these other regulations? It just messes up our ability to hire people because you have to see what they're really like on the job, and if they don't work out you can't get rid of them and hire someone who does work out. I never had that luxury, that's for sure. I had to prove myself from the start – there was always another guy who could follow me if I stuffed it up. "

Jim's perspective on value is resonant of Weber's 'Six Major Principles' of bureaucracies, and then tinged with Fordist approaches to the structure of integrated jobs and work day routines which seem to live on robustly in the mining industry. Hierarchies, rules and processes, functional specialties, technical qualifications as the basis for employment, being 'purposely impersonal', and a mission focused externally on shareholders and internally on the value concept known as "shared value" – these are all presented as Jim's "values". He speaks of 'contingencies' but these involve assessing particular kinds of risk that are important to a business's bottom line – the risk to property and profits during strikes, for instance. When it was suggested that contingencies might also include accidents to mine workers with related social costs, there was a pause, then: "This happens. It's mining. It's getting better and we have to get better. We all know the risk."

> The thing is, the market sets the price of commodities, therefore the company must manage its resources with the profits and losses as dictated by

> the market. We put a price on our labour locally for sure, not globally at all – how would we do that? But really, the gold price determines *everything*, every aspect of company decision-making from wages to investments in infrastructure. But because we can't always predict what the price will be, we have to make decisions now to conserve all our resources for a rainy day.

Jim was generous with his time, explaining the operational layout, how people and products moved around. There are two ways of looking at mine installations. One is an appreciation *a la* Jim for the prodigious amount of vision and technical knowledge and energy that goes into creating these places of multi-layered value, involving expertise of so many kinds and the coordination of so many different elements. The other is the prodigious use of human resources for such purely capitalistic purposes. When I mentioned that van den Berghe called this a "colossal waste" (221), he looked skeptical. "Gold is no longer king – maybe platinum is now – but gold was the foundation and the backbone of South Africa! There's no waste of human resources here – everyone is working hard, employed – what more do you want to see?"

3.2.7 Mpho

A **'**learner miner' with a grant from the Mining Qualifications Authority, Mpho was introduced to me by Jim who takes in interest in what he referred to as "the new South Africa", by which he meant the rising numbers of educated and trained mining (black) staff at all levels. Mpho is very anxious to succeed. She explained how she was always good at maths and was chosen for a series of scholarships and grants which she believes have led her to her present position. She expresses gratitude for these opportunities, and pride in her own independence

and her ability to shield herself from other pressures inherent in her place in the industry. She is particularly aware of the risk to women in the shafts, telling me about some of her colleagues who have resorted to sexual favors as a way of balancing their financial obligations.

Her pride in her position, and the opportunity it affords for a stable career of long duration, is nevertheless tinged with the anxiety of having to "get along" with her supervisors, trainers and colleagues. She's not convinced that some of her cohort, who are white, are completely respectful of her and her abilities, and she finds herself behaving in ways that are not, she says, "like myself":

> When I go into one of the training rounds, and everyone is there getting ready for the day and pretending they know what is going on, pretending they know everything, I know I am feeling nervous, and I start smiling and acting silly because I am nervous. I want to be respected – I deserve to be here! I worked hard all the time through school to be here. Maybe it's fair that they have more money because they have more education, but not SO much more. But I don't know why I feel like a small child again. There's no one to talk to about this. I just need to be better than everyone else, to look at my colleagues in the eye and smile like a grown woman not a child. I want the same things they do. I want respect. I feel double discrimination because I am a woman and I am black.

She explained how she feels the burden of representing her family because of the expectations of her parents who tell all their friends about how she's going to take care of them when they're very old. Her own emotional responses, under pressure from home and company, seem to function like Arlie Hochschild's "shock absorbers" (2003), shielding her from forces she can't control. She said she is "like a tree bending with the winds" but isn't sure if she is able to root herself anywhere else despite a striving for mobility and success. It seems "too risky" to go look for work in another company. So while Mpho and her cohorts are given certain advantages, there is a tension between being grateful for "the gift" and being

dependent on it. Asymmetrical corporate power relations are found in these programs which are viewed as both opportunities and cynical responses to concepts behind BEE legislation.

3.2.8 Mandla

"Who are these guys in their cars? What do they do all day? What do they do on those computers? My cousin has a Samsung Galaxy and I know how much time he spends doing nothing on that! I bet those guys are just looking around and playing games and laughing all day."

Mandla is 36 and told me he has four children - two with his wife who lives in Soweto, and two with his 'girlfriend' in Khutsong where he stays most of the time. He "sometimes" sends some money to the family in Soweto but he says he's not worried about them as his wife has a job there. He does talk about them with pride and acknowledges his responsibility for them, but says that his girlfriend won't let them visit, and gets upset with him when he travels to Soweto to see his wife and kids there.

Like Bongi, he describes his daily environment with evocative language, and spent time telling me about various accidents he has seen and the impact those have on him and his colleagues. Once after a death, he said he and his Xhosa colleagues asked to avoid a particular shaft where the accident happened, saying doing so would have been like "shaking the bones" of the dead, and deeply disrespectful. He shook his head when asked how he felt about the mine's attitude towards their beliefs, saying, "They don't understand that it just means we will have another accident, and another and another. That is the way it works." Every time they go past the scene of an accident they are quiet for a brief moment. Xhosa custom, hardly unique,

views such a place as sacred. When Jim was asked about such beliefs and practices, he called it "just superstition" but acknowledged, "well yes, there'd be some funny feelings if I asked some of my friends to go directly back to work where a death of one of our friends happened, at least not without holding some sort of ceremony first".

To Mandla, senior company administrators like Jim are nearly invisible but still powerful, making decisions that they seem to be unaccountable for. When he considers protesting, Mandla says he wants "those guys to come see us and answer our questions. I'm trying by all means to make survival and it's very hard. My girlfriend she's making sorghum beer and selling that in Hani and that's her job, ok. But we never know, me and the guys, if we have a job for a long time, you know? How do I know what they're going to do next? They can close my shaft or get some big machines to do our jobs. That is affecting us!"

3.2.9 Julian

Julian is South African born but spent some years in the United States, working for a US-based gold mining company with global assets. His economic perspective is global, but his understanding of the South African environment is based on his own background, experience and observations; he is embedded in a very different daily experience of corporate life. Julian's office library exhibits his interests in history, biography, politics, economics, and sociology. Recent publications on leadership and the Harvard-born strategy model known as the Balanced Scorecard sit alongside volumes by Adam Smith and Max Weber. He understood the focus of the research immediately, but began the first interview with what he termed a "briefing", rather a strategic view of relatively recent changes in company structure. These particular

governance changes, he said, might have indirectly contributed to some of the anxieties among the labour force at all levels, even while it brought South African gold mining into alignment with international standards in governance, accounting, management and transparency. The history he tells illuminates some of the elements of a "valorizing logic of capital".

The current configuration and strategy of the mining house under discussion was the outcome of a change in management structure which had a number of ripple effects. In "the old days", he told me, 11 different publicly traded companies were managed by one team based in "the mother company"; a few of these companies shared a single geological reserve which meant that assets and costs had to be shared in order to balance returns to the separate groups of shareholders in each company. Risks were centered in just one geological area, the Witwatersrand Basin. An incestuous sort of relationship existed in and among the boards of these companies as well, with the majority of their members coming from the holding company which also directly employed the senior managers. Finally and significantly, the holding company charged a fee based on the volume of mined ounces rather than on profits from those.

Julian then described how the present company's structures were brought into line with international governance and accounting standards and by developing more independence on its board. Its shares were listed on the New York and Sydney exchanges as well as the JSE. Internally, "a significant strategic shift" was made by deciding to concentrate on "the production of profitable ounces [of higher grade], not just on the production of volumes of ounces". This shift had two effects: one was a reduced volume in overall ounces produced; the

other was an “enhanced approach” to labour productivity down the line. Enhanced productivity can take many forms, from bonuses paid for greater production, to executives and down to shaft workers.

One initiative was the creation of “self-directed, multi-skilled work teams”. These teams have been the focus of a few studies over the years (Strydom 2002, Phakathi 2002) and form the basis for the following brief look at value conflicts that are revealed as work teams are formed, trained and implemented. The outcome of this process of transformation is itself revelatory: managers understand only that their rational goals are not being met, and that workers are disenchanted. “I’m aware of the pressures put on workers to improve productivity which leads to their bypassing certain safety procedures”, Julian said. “I know that women are at risk in unacceptable ways. The company has tried a number of different approaches – training, security, lecturing soft and hard - and none of it seems to be working well. I honestly don’t know what to do about it.”

An extensive discussion about how ‘motivational values’ impacted shaft workers elicited some nuanced responses. Julian commented on how an increasing integration of business, humanitarianism, university and government leads to all of those sectors adopting similar language and organizational structures based predominantly on a homogenizing organizational culture. David Harvie and Keir Milburn refer to this organizational privileging of market value the “ethical framework [which] determines the way in which organizations value human actions and, hence, the way that (market) value organizes human relations – or labour” (2010: 631). Work teams and bonuses and the constant rhetoric of shared value have rather led to worker

disenchantment and a “distant contempt of their employer” (Fassin 2013:255), rather than the secondary results which centered on rising production but hoped also for greater integration and respect.

3.3 Value Conflicts in Practice: Self-directed Work Teams

The near-totalizing effect that market value frameworks have on organizational culture is exemplified by the implementation of ‘self-directed work teams’. This concept contains two main sources of value conflict and dissension considered by Pierre van den Burghe in 1961: each ‘culture’ has its own “idiosyncratic value system”, and the dominant White culture “contains within itself crucial contradictions” (218). When I mentioned to Jim and Julian the practice of “planisa” Bongi had told me about, they both referred me to T.S. Phakathi’s 2006 study of the work team project undertaken by their mining house, which was designed to coordinate all aspects of mine work especially at shaft level, with the goals of increasing production and improving safety statistics.

Phakathi’s case study of a self-directed work team in action in a gold mine reveals not only how value conflicts are embedded into specific management practices, but how outcomes can substantially reduce the original objective of the initiative. Self-directed work teams are a global bureaucratic phenomenon (see Fisher 1999), and are, according to both Julian and Jim, supposed to enable and empower individual workers to take on more responsibility over their own jobs while working seamlessly in a team. The idea is to motivate and inculcate mine workers into an integrated culture and promote loyalty by ensuring they understand the whole nature of the business and their role in it. The ‘nature of the business’ is specifically what

drives “success” (i.e. profits) and what can cause failure (i.e. the loss of your job due to low profits). Time is therefore spent at the beginning of each training session, as Phakathi’s ethnography outlines (6-9), in presenting a company’s “vision” as well as any external influences workers are supposed to take into account such as the daily market price of gold. Training in technical, administrative, and interpersonal skills is offered with a view to creating a cohesive team in which everyone understands others’ roles and learns to communicate appropriately (Strydom; Phakathi). As further described by Jim, specific concepts are introduced as values -- team work; accountability; respect; community; individuality; rationality, trust, commitment and initiative – but with little obvious recognition of inherent contradictions within this particular value set.

Despite some mixed outcomes, the concept continues to shape the orientation, training and expected habits of shaft workers. Phakathi notes some positive and negative outcomes emerging. There is a greater integration of workers from different shifts so that they could communicate about aspects of shared jobs. Underground workers are also introduced to how broken rock moves from shaft to surface. However, there is a belief that (white) supervisors are given the option of attending training, while low-level workers are not – this increases “social distance” and equal participation, extending a cultural divide already deeply entrenched in historical terms. The impact of important elements is overlooked. For instance, despite years of attempts to ban the use of Fanakalo it is still the *lingua franca* “deeply embedded in the culture of all underground workers…. heard even around restaurant tables in well-heeled Johannesburg establishments” (Phakathi: 10). A lack of required materials leads to “borrowing” of one team’s resources by another. “Planisa” includes those activities mine workers take to

negotiate these obstacles as well as get around them. Phakathi's case study concludes that the concept of "planisa" is a culture that's adopted in "situations of organizational constraints" which, despite Jim's frowning response to this interpretation and the chronic possibility of accidents, actually engages workers to solve problems and "counteract the malfunctioning of work organization in *subtle* and *tacit* ways" (14).

Yet these are not the most serious problems. All the respondents who are underground workers reported the sort of cuts and work-arounds regarding safety operations and production pressures which then result in hazardous drilling or blasting conditions, yet none of them said they felt comfortable telling their supervisors directly about these problems. Why? The scope of this study didn't allow for a further investigation but Robert and Zachariah both suggested that work-arounds are another form of resistance to what workers understand to be a chain of command which is under pressure to "produce" while keeping costs low. Hence, efforts to promote a culture of respect and transparency don't seem sincere. Robert told me he was in a team which changed its members numerous times over the course of 3 months, bringing in new and untrained workers and transferring trained workers out, thus introducing instability into the team structure and demotivating the entire group. He was himself transferred to a different team after 3 months, a disappointment to him as he had reached a level of informal command and authority that satisfied him personally. "These teams, they don't really work and those managers don't really mean what they say." The effect is not only in mine workers inability to develop their skills and experience, but in how they interpret their employer's implied promises. The "badges of ability" which are achieved from work force training are immediately devalued by the lack of sustained commitment. Institutional practices

designed to provide opportunity are undermined by the institution's concurrent need to maintain its own hierarchy.

The end result is a strong sense of a "divide between the few people who have *been allowed the freedom* to develop personal resources that others will value" (Sennett 1972: 73, italics added). While Jim and Julian may be anxious and mildly challenged by the insecurities built into the global economy, low-wage workers continue to be excluded from the realm of possibility. One reason why teams and bonuses often backfire are because bonuses are ultimately a 'one-size-fits-all' reward offered by managers to solve *their* challenges, but the burden of those challenges is placed on those with the least power and accountability for them. Bonuses are thus interpreted as contingencies along with health and safety courses – terms of employment imposed by the job itself. Perceived as controlling, felt as punitive, they are considered as a form of redemption.. Further undermining the purpose of self-directed work teams is the practice of promoting and transferring people in and out, a lack of resources and a lack of consistent commitment; work teams are ultimately perceived as a sham.

Chapter 4

Navigating the Constellations

4.1 Introduction

So what do all these voices tell us? Challenges and answers are found within the demographic variation represented herein, not only among the ranks of the demoralized subaltern. The range of customs, behaviors, expectations and cultures place moral and ethical demands on those working within their institutions. As Chris Hann notes, while Polanyi recognized that the infiltration of the market into any society provokes defenses of all varieties, these are "not limited to the foundation of trade unions and friendly societies but include nationalist protectionism … [and] elites have moral norms too" (2010: 196). The useful framework provided by a moral economy that represents and reflects the contrasts and dynamics between the market economy and the moral and/or barter and gift exchanges of the peasant is equally useful in capturing the beliefs and values of those who "may sincerely believe that the market and private property offer the best moral guarantees available" (197). It would be nice to think that the constellations of value found in each of these domains creates a universe of opportunity and tolerance, but it is equally possible that their differing applications and patterns create resentment as well as the longue duree of *ressentiment* among all domains.

This concept of "value orientations" is broadly based on the comparative study of five different cultural groups in the Southwestern United States known as Rimrock, supervised by Clyde Kluckhohn, his wife Florence Rockwood Kluckhohn, and assistants beginning in 1949. A definition of value was offered by Clyde Kluckhohn (1951) as "A conception, explicit or implicit,

distinctive of an individual or characteristic of a group, of the desirable which influences the selection from available modes, means and ends of action." Based on some preliminary findings, an operational Value Orientation Theory was proposed by Florence Kluckhohn and Fred Strodtbeck which suggests that all human societies answer a limited number of universal problems, that there are a limited number of value-based solutions which are universally understood, and that different cultures preference some over others (Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck 1961). Five core assumptions were used as the basis for questions and suggested answers which would describe the value orientation profiles of different cultural communities. The core assumptions enabled the structure of "value orientations" regarding time, activity, relations, person/nature, and character, or innate human nature. As Graeber explains, Kluckhohn's attempts to define value by comparing systems of ideas within 5 different cultural communities led to constant redefinitions of value itself, a from there a general sense that his project had failed, which Graeber concludes was due to a lack of "an adequate theory of structure" (2001: 5). However, the 'appealing key idea' of the Rimrock study, as Graeber writes, was that "what makes cultures different is not simply what they believe the world to like, but what they feel one can justifiably demand from it" (ibid). The "conceptions of the desirable" thus presupposes a level of agency and action. Agency and action in the South African context is often characterized as negotiation and contestation.

Definitions of what is valued by respondents, especially when they fashion an imagination of the future, are indeed influenced by their "conceptions of the desirable", but the mutability and contrasts of value within actual core assumptions in their world means that an actual measurement of preferred solutions would be difficult to make at best. For Kluckhohn

and Strodtbeck, the notion of mutability refers to whether we are born the way we are and are unable to change, or can learn to change in any direction (1961). They proposed a way of measuring orientations through intensive interviewing, and using 'appropriate' real-life situations (within the targeted community or culture) when investigating a particular value[9].

This research aims to compliment existing literature by providing a review of ordinary people's understanding and critiques of value conflicts especially where the result is inequality and resistance; it revealed other themes that have been studied elsewhere (Sennett and Cobb 1972; Bourdieu 1999) in that outside perspectives introduce the power to legitimize or delegitimize an intrinsic sense of self. Additionally, much like Jennifer Hochschild's 1981 study of why Americans reject socialist tendencies, people are more likely to expect fair wage differences over equal distribution. In this theoretical context, Graeber's summary of Marilyn Strathern's concept of value makes sense: "the value of an object, or a person, is the meaning they take on by being assigned a place in some larger system of categories" (Graeber 2001: 41). The range of intrinsic and extrinsic perspectives provides the proving ground for contestations of value in the mining industry.

Given the array of different values expressed through the multiplicity of ethnic groups, histories, races and languages, it is difficult to rely on reconstituted empirical identities, such as "individual" and "group", to create a coherent social picture of this context. Coherence and order might instead be easier to discern where different constellations of value come into contact with political processes embedded in relationships, especially those relationships that

[9] This appears to offer an approach to the problematic but influential emic-etic dilemma later proposed by John W. Berry (1969). On Cross-cultural comparability. International Journal of Psychology, 4(2), 199-128.

are influenced by aspects of resentment and *ressentiment*. As Fassin argues, it is the people in a relative position of privilege who feel resentment, while it is in the experiences of the powerless or dominated where *ressentiment* is embedded. Sennett argued that resentment can also be the result of one's social class or position. While wages and salaries denote a sign of inequality it is only one element in an culture which idealizes investments, distribution and movement of capital as the solution to a more equitable society without consideration of major factors which impact upon social bonds.

Furthermore, exchange and exchange-value are implicit in the relationships among people in this sector: Marilyn Strathern's concept of the "composite person" (1988), representative of the force and agency of one's relations, also emerges in this context, in direct opposition to the autonomous self-determination promoted through market values imposed by a multinational. If interdependence and difference, as Strathern says, create the conditions for relations between composite persons, then exchanges between them can advance difference or similarity. Self-directed work teams are supposed to bring together different and disparate 'composite persons', what the Western (and market) model considers a 'group', and everyone enters into this arrangement with differing hopes and with their own understanding of collective action: that is, different ethical and moral concepts of reciprocity and obligation. But there's an inherent paradox, evidenced by [mostly white] executives expecting individuals in the group to become culturally homogenous and together promote company 'values'; and by team participants whose expectations include a strong measure of what's due to them as individuals but who are yet bounded by their collective experiences. This seems to be a strange inversion of what we usually conceive of as the Western/individualist vs.

'indigenous'/collective. Constructing such teams of collective individuals is based on a tension between individual autonomy and group interdependency.

In this regard, comments from this study's interlocutors are in line with Strathern's conception of people making themselves known through the responses they elicit from others, and are emblematic of another challenging aspect of globalization: the fluid, flexible, insecure and interdependent time and space where "human beings construct their intimate, everyday life-worlds at the shifting intersections of here, there, elsewhere, everywhere" (Comaroff 1999 b: 295). People look for a path to transcendence as well as sovereignty in the constellations of value that are part of the landscape of those shifting intersections.

4.2 The Sign of the Wage

Historically, alongside the recruitment of labour from within and without the country's borders, legislation which forced South African black workers to enter the labour regime is now understood to be one of the more harmful and entrenched examples of value conflicts, and legitimized the hegemony of capital's time and wage regimes. And while we now like to acknowledge that it is impossible to put a value on human life, it is equally impossible not to do so when we consider such things as insurance premiums, or an employee's costs and benefits. That means assessing life's dollar value, and where there is an abundance of available labour, labour's dollar value is low. The abstract calculations of cost-benefit analyses make the fragility of human life seem almost intangible, especially at the lowest level.

Current negotiations around wages and benefits may recall Moodie's 'rules of the game', but wages have always been a flash point for the South African gold industry which has been "uniquely positioned to shape the basis of the international money supply" because of its high output (Breckinridge 1995: 272). In "'Money with Dignity': Migrants, Minelords and the Cultural Politics of the South African Gold Standard Crisis, 1920-33" Breckinridge recounts an attempt to pay mine workers in notes instead of the gold coins they had been accustomed to, setting off "a prolonged struggle between the South African state, mining capital and migrant workers over the form of wages, the monetary role of gold, the metaphysical characteristics of money and the value of labour" (ibid.: 271). Embedded in these issues are also found the twinned aspects of pay as a measure of labour's self-worth and pay as an employer's measure of labour's worth. The balance of power in this regard is being challenged once more, crystallizing around wage negotiations and the value of labour.

The level of wages and salaries also enables different *expectations* of a standard of living, but an acceptance of what constitutes a socially accepted standard of living isn't clear-cut across economic class. Bongi told me he'd like to be able to see movies, shop at Woolworth's and eat at restaurants "as much as I like! Why can I not have that too?" For him poverty is also a deprivation of experience, but he boosts his self-esteem with energetic displays which could be perceived as aggressive and defensive. On the other hand, when Joyce was asked what she'd do with more money, or if she'd like to do those types of things, she laughed hard. "Me, I want to go somewhere rural, maybe back home and live like everyone else there." Jim and Frans reluctantly admitted they didn't understand how "people" lived at the bottom of the pyramid. As with other issues thrown up through this inquiry, it wasn't possible to delve into

generational or gender-based perspectives, but it's noticeable that men were more likely to hint at how poverty restrained their sense of individual autonomy and elevated their feelings of powerlessness and dependency.

4.3 Hidden Burdens of Work

There is a widespread acceptance of how and why income differentiation is based on merit, yet that's where acceptance ends among mine workers. Richard Sennett, who explores how people cope with the demands of capitalist work structures and forces, has described how the values embedded within those structures and forces can cause angst and confusion. In *The Hidden Injuries of Class*, he and Jonathan Cobb interview people who would be considered examples of immigrant success as found in the American cultural lexicon, are guided through corridors of education and 'upward mobility', but who nevertheless question their own worth and doubt the measure of their achievements (1972). Similarly, representing the 'technological elite', Jim, Julian, Frans and Mpho feel empowered and certified by obtaining "badges of ability" through formal education and higher levels of training, but the others demonstrate how the inherent promise implied by those badges is undermined where hierarchies of class structures dominate.

Richard Sennett contends that aspects of the 'new economy', specifically depending on flexibility and an abstract type of management culture, have an ever-deeper impact on self-worth and self-understanding, leaving workers feeling unmoored and unmotivated (1998). This development has grown substantially through the expansion of the global economy. Expectations of work – previously defined by structure and stability – have altered, with short-

term jobs and contracts replacing long-term stable careers, and skill sets evolve so rapidly even "the middle class experiences anxieties and uncertainties more confined in an earlier era to the working classes" (2000: 55). Within a competitive landscape of short-term contracts and fewer opportunities, even middle and senior managers make decisions in order to secure as much stability as possible. In line with these observations, Julian and Jim feel especially tied to their jobs and their employers; as employees who can be moved from country to country, Julian and Jim feel especially vulnerable, with Jim saying "I supposed I'd have to go just to hold on to my job and the company pension. I used to think living in a different country would be great but it makes me feel more vulnerable than ever." It would otherwise be surprising to listen to senior managers express feelings of displacement as well as not understanding where their own accountability lies. Sasson dissects the "novel assemblages" produced by "a proliferation of normative orders taking the place of state frameworks, "potentially profoundly unsettling of what are still the prevalent institutional arrangements … for handling questions of order and justice" (2008: 62). Her project contrasts with mainstream arguments against globalization which "has tended to assume the binary of the global versus the national" (ibid.); she contends that the radical push-pull dynamic at present is allowing for a co-existence with older orders within whose legal and commercial frameworks we still expect to exist.

Thus in the absence of stable work, the importance of *place* has increased (2000: 56). Another rich area of study is found here: because of 24/7 communications, upper and mid-level managers are more prone to suffering the consequences of their work's incursions into their private spheres than 'wage' labour; however, wage labourers' inability to escape hardship when off work leads them to fantasize about life '*ekhaya'.*

Because “work is such a problematic frame for the self [as] it tends to equate worldly success and personal worth”, these conditions “might suggest an unrelievedly bleak view of the culture of the emerging political economy” (ibid: 57); and yet Sennett contends that if people can detach themselves from their material circumstances, they might find other ways to understand their value as citizens. The elements needed to enable that process of detachment are found in the “signposts” and rituals of democracy, rather than the processes, along with “provisional decisions that help people to orient themselves and evaluate future conduct” (ibid: 59).

Mine company employees demonstrate how racial and class structures are organized such that “the tools of freedom become sources of indignity” (Sennett 1972: 30). The meaning of merit, and what constitutes merit, varies between low and high wage workers, though higher paid respondents were more likely to talk about their own ‘added value’ to their work and employer. In order to ‘make sense’ of the confusing narratives of his Boston respondents, Sennett ‘recasts’ the concept of self-worth as an issue of freedom and dignity within a social structure where “class is a system for limited freedom” (1972: 28). Class doesn’t just limit the freedom of the weak, he argues; the powerful are constrained by the very structures and expectations that maintain their power. One of the ways this happens is through knowledge: formal education and the access to networks gained therein are presented as a broad right for all, and a source of national strength. But what happens when that right is unavailable for many, or if the promise held out by higher qualification is undermined by inconsistency, dismissive attitudes and poor management? “The use of badges of ability or of sacrifices is to divert men from challenging the limits on their freedom by convincing them that

they must *first* become legitimate, must achieve dignity on a class society's terms, in order to have the right to challenge the terms themselves" (1972: 153).

A review of media reports and interviews reveal strikingly similar experiences and narratives among machinists and other mineworkers. Stewart argues that the devaluing of rock drillers' inherent skills has been a catalyst for recent strikes (2013). Mbembe's "technologies of domination … operate behind a façade"(2001: 62). He asks: who has the right to take power and govern, in what circumstances, how, for how long, and on what conditions? Who has the right to the product of whose work, and for what compensation? When may one cease to obey authority, without punishment? To whom do a country's riches belong? (ibid.). These essential questions can be seen to not only reflect a demand to hear the voices of the subaltern, but they also serve as a reminder as the old orders are upended on a global scale.

4.4 Value as imagination and creativity

Re-engaging with one of Marx's starting points, David Graeber analyzes the critical role that creative imagination plays in the creation of social structures, and compares this with Mauss' concept of reciprocity to discover how exactly people are likely to create structures of relationships. The "classic issues" of anthropology, such as totemic rituals, Kula and potlatches are precisely about the creation of new social relations and new forms (2006: 410). The "structures of relation with others come to be internalized into the fabric of our being" so that value – the potential for creative power – will not be realized except by coordinating with others. By studying what different societies consider their most valuable tenets – national character, rituals, artifacts, 'traditions' – Graeber tries to formulate what might characterize an

emergent alternative to dominant economistic theories, those based on "economically rational" and individualistic assumptions. These assumptions are used to predict behavior and preference but are innately incapable of understanding social structures (ibid.).

So by looking anew at the 'fetish', for example, he highlights an idea probed by William Pietz in a series of three essays entitled "The Problem of the Festish" (as cited in Graeber 2006) in which the fetish was not necessarily a product of particular culture, but was a concept generated by a confrontation between African and European traditions and the people who were trying to understand those very different worlds. The fetish was "born in a field of endless improvisation, that is, of near pure social creativity" (410). "We create things, and then, because we don't understand how we did it, we end up treating our own creations as if they had power over us" (411). He argues that the European obsession with the value of materiality, combined with a lack of interest in the inherent value of social relations meant that they couldn't see what the creators of the fetish understood: they were simply the "means" for creating new responsibilities, associations and contracts. Fetishism is an "illusion" (411) for people who fail to "recognize the degree to which they themselves are producing value" (2011: 69). Ferguson concurs: "the idea that keeps cropping up in the ethnography of Africa is not that the human world is ruled by powerful objects, but that all of the world, even the natural, bears the traces of *human* agency" (2006:74). Here is Julian again: "Isn't it ironic that it's us Whiteys who see gold as a fetish?"

As conceptualized by Marx, commodity (i.e. gold) fetishism translates the subjective social relationships of production into objects which people come to believe hold intrinsic

value. "The commodity form, and the value-relation of the products of labour within which it appears, have absolutely no connection with the physical nature of the commodity and the material relations arising out of this" (1867:165). There is evidence that people at all levels of the mining industry both fetishize and exploit the production of gold at deeper social levels, within and across different value domains, and how social structures are created around it. The particular power and 'magic' of gold is a phenomenon existing for millennia; the totalizing effect of the capitalist structure helps to enable mining's claims for its critical role in South Africa's economic life and health through employment and exports earnings.

Exploitation, on the other hand, is the "means by which some people appropriate the surplus value generated by others" (Graeber 2011: 69). Different dimensions of exploitation are revealed in the mining industry, from the valuing of labour to the vagaries of state intervention and legislation around licensing. Scott makes a case for an operational concept of exploitation which relies on a balance of exchange between the state's levels of coercion and values associated with the development of peasant (in this case, agrarian) culture. The South African state, in its various guises, may present an intriguing study of a existential identity crisis: it relies on the interests of capital to survive in its current form while supporting the concept of 'traditional' values through official narratives, its leaders' personal choices, and a purposefully ambiguous relation with indigenous governance structures. As noted in Chapter 1, such ambiguities and contradictions are often exploited by corporate interests, individuals and communities alike. Scott provides another example: people may accept the principle of land ownership but reject specific landowners who 'violate the duties of land ownership' or other local values (1976: 239).

Scott defines three elements of a "viable analysis of exploitation": the relational or exchange quality of social relations must be observed; it must be based on prevailing notions of "fair value"; and "it must seek out the shared human needs that social actors expect from these relationships" (165). Some of these expectations are founded in the experiences of past traditions, expectations and behaviors of others, and how they have "proceeded to similar goals in the past": "To say that people are born into society is not to deny their capacity to create new forms and break old ones; it is merely to recall that they do not walk out on an empty stage and make up their lines at random" (166). The dichotomy between dreams of 'the commons' that prevail in mine workers imaginations, and prevailing economic conditions in which they actually live, confounds their daily perspectives. Many of this study's respondents express deep ambiguities between their dreams of a 'traditional' way of life founded on common and shared networks of support and value, and an interest in attaining the kind of individual self-reliance that is perceived to be grounded in having lots of money. Instances of "self-styling" – the way in which "current African imaginations of the self are born out of disparate but often intersecting practices" (Mbembe 2002: 4) will have an impact on their future expectations.

4.5 Problematic Universals

The literature on the concept of universal values is large and contentious, a tangle of universal versus relativist positions, or monist vs. pluralist. Multiculturalists who argue for the normative promise contained in the idea of the universal have been met with sharp challenges (Young 1989; Sen 1999). Theories of universal values (Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck, Inglehart and

Welzel, Schwartz) have produced sufficiently similar value concepts to suggest the validity of the existence (or assumption) of a universal set of human values. This assumption has had far-reaching impact, and people struggle to make sense of and often resist those norms born of such values.

Multinational companies are by definition composed of the multicultural – across people, landscapes and operations which enables companies such as mining conglomerates to adopt or impose sets of values they believe will create a cultural norm to which all employees can subscribe. The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights has spawned a host of parallel statements intended to 'bind' or protect individual and community rights in different contexts and places. The mining industry is regulated (voluntarily) by global instruments of norms and regulations such as the International Council on Mining and Minerals and the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative, and its members subscribe to a handful of other instruments: the UN Global Compact, the Global Reporting Initiative and the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights. Most major gold mining companies are signatories to the best-known of voluntary standards and norms such as the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights, the Responsible Jewelry Council, the World Economic Forum, and the London Bullion Market Association which are designed to prevent and address human rights and environmental abuses, or "improve the state of the world"[10]. Mining houses are accused of not taking some of these standards seriously; nevertheless, the rhetoric of universal values has entered the general

[10] http://www.voluntaryprinciples.org/for-companies/; www.weforumorg/our-mission; http://www.lbma.org.uk/membership

lexicon of their public utterances, the management approaches of their senior leaders, and the expectations of the most vulnerable in the industry.

4.6 Measurements of Attitude

Related to the concept of universal values, the World Values Survey (WVS) is an ambitious attempt to measure 'value' and cultural change across more than 50 countries and synthesizing over 30 years of data collection in the process; there are over 100 social scientists spread across the globe involved in the surveys. Its main drivers, Ronald Inglehart and Christian Welzel, have devised two broad dimensions of cross-cultural variation across the world's cultures, which capture many ideas heard among respondents of this study.

In terms of its attempt to categorize and capture value sets, the influence of this work and its terminology is pervasive. For instance, the phrase "emancipative values" came up in a conversation with the senior vice-president of a mining house; these are described by WVS as objective factors which favor democratic attitudes, such as a Protestant heritage and economic prosperity (Welzel 2007). Jim is a believer in the emancipative power of a deregulated global economy, that the individual choices made by low-wage workers (maintaining two families, for instance) was a critical obstacle, and that a less "reckless lifestyle" would enable greater prosperity. Quite apart from the leaps of logic contained in this viewpoint, it reveals the depth of habitus, of particular and preferred values such as thrift and self-discipline, held by those who make decisions and which have such profoundly subjective effects. These cultural traits, combined with dominant forms of economistic reasoning, provide "the demoralizing logic of

legitimation" (Ferguson 2006: 71) which leads to such profound levels of resentment and protest.

4.7 Institutional Morality

As Ferguson notes, ethnographies of southern and central Africa reflect a "pervasive theme" – "the relation between matters of wealth, production, and prosperity, on the one hand, and moral and cosmological order, on the other" (2006: 71-72. This theme has allowed for "a flexible repertoire [which provides] a rich moral vocabulary for talking and thinking about issues of wealth, prosperity, profit, and exploitation in a variety of specific contexts" (ibid.). However, the variety of specific contexts must include the Dutch/Anglo/American corporate institution, for as Chris Hann points out, "France did not need the concept of moral economy to counter hegemonic utilitarian legacies" (2010: 197). Put another way, corporate institutions create and maintain their own moral economies, supported by and infused with a set of values and value-specific activities and expectations.

For managers and industry leaders such as Jim and Julian, the relationship between organizational and occupational commitment, and individual or community values is highly problematic. They have spent enormous time and money trying to inculcate specific "soft" sociological values in order to support the "hard" economic values of profit and sustainability. The time spent among employees discussing company values is presented as what Jarret Zigon refers to as "institutional morality" (2010), with institutions being defined as "formal and non-formal social organizations and groups that are part of all societies and wield varying amounts of power over individual persons" (6): these can include multilateral groups such as the UN,

organized religions, states and their governments as well as corporate institutions. "Institutional morality, then is a significantly influential moral discourse that is oftentimes supported by very real expressions of power, but which, nevertheless, is not totalizing and is more akin to a very persuasive rhetoric than it is to a truth" (7). The average South African is tacitly bombarded with and interpreting the moral and ethical discourses that flow from the plurality of institutions she or he is subject to. The nature and condition of labour undermines those values "in the sociological sense – conceptions of what is ultimately good, proper or desirable in human life" (Graeber 2001: 1), and the ambiguity expressed by managers and investors towards those realities can be understood as internal value conflicts. On the other hand, as Zigon notes, these moments of personal reflection when an individual is in commune with her or his own 'moral dispositions' could provide moments "of freedom, creativity and emergence" (9).

Thinking back to conversations with Julian and Jim, despite their growing misgivings, economic techniques are preferred as ways of legitimizing and privileging the corporate model as being "good" for all South Africans. Narratives about "increasing shareholder value" are found in everything from financial reports, to corporate social accountability program explanations, to marketing which lays out rationales for health and training programs. These narratives take on a moralizing tone and are explicitly designed to create a ripple effect of perceived prosperity throughout an organization – AngloGold Ashanti is particularly adept. At the same time, technical terminology ("producing efficiencies") is embedded in much of the same literature. Thus, "the morality of the market denies its own status as a morality, presenting itself as a mere technique" (Ferguson 2006: 81). However, as my respondents

demonstrated, “reducing questions of public policy to questions of economistic technique runs afoul of a well-developed African talent for understanding questions of poverty and wealth in a social and moral frame” (ibid: 83). Each of my respondents, no matter where they sit in the hierarchy, express a measure of skepticism regarding this dichotomy between bare market terminology and fundamental morality.

4.8 Mediators of value

In the current environment, there’s a broad distribution of the spaces where ongoing negotiating of equivalences takes place - between people and things, of the value they put on their labour, or on others’ labour, the actual price paid for those ‘things’, among relationships. These spaces are varied and comprise associations, the unique structure of democracy in South Africa, language and the media that transmits it, the nature of work itself, and significantly, strikes.

Unions mediate and negotiate the constellations of value both technical and ideological; not just to negotiate wages and salaries as actual intermediaries between company representatives, workers and government, but as exemplars of labour’s dignity. Unions are one of the “relays of power” devised to ensure an equitable “allocation of utilities and enjoyments” Mbembe 2001: 43). In the current environment however, workers view relationships between public power and private gain as unbalanced and unjust, and many believe that unions make concessions and tolerate a certain amount of pain in order to maintain their own power position. Other relays are created through churches, associations, chieftaincies and other customary institutions, in social gatherings, and deep in the shafts.

The concept of work is an area of common measure, for workers at all levels perceive work as both honest "sweat" which builds something respected, shared and socially valued, and trickery through which one exploits or "eats the sweat of another" (Ferguson 2006: 72). Robert's hesitation in joining strikes is a case in point: he sees those workers who are quick to join a strike as shirking work, and he hates the periods of time during which his association calls for downed tools. "I'm not doing enough. I don't feel like a man when I'm not working". The latter sentiment crops up often among those referred to as the 'precariously-employed'. In a similar vein, Jim, Frans and Mimi all expressed a sense of self-worth through the sheer nature of work itself, while Mandla's view was closer to a sense of anxiety regarding the potential loss of work and wage. Honest and hard work is morally compelling both individually and collectively, but is accompanied by enormous strain.

Most people expect to find the relays of power and mediators of value in the powers of the state, and yet the promise of democracy to balance the interests of the market with the commons is under threat. What we call democracy assumes there is an aspect of choice and national dialogue mediated by politicians, local leaders and the media. The perception instead is that decisions are made by a small network of business and government leaders and, to paraphrase Mbembe, foreign 'tutors' such as the World Bank and other technocrats with bilateral agencies of foreign governments (2001). Policy is therefore made far from the ground, leaving individual workers feeling disempowered and devalued.

The state's failure to provide jobs, and specifically protection of wages from inflation, is seen by many as the ultimate political and policy failure, and providing some context for

mineworkers' claim of poverty. Zachariah provided a perspective on this point when he explicitly decried a form of bankruptcy he saw in the current government's lack of a consistent and compelling ideology. He perceives a difference between the government and "Mandela and his friends" in these terms. "We know what the old man stands for, even if we didn't always agree, but this crowd doesn't say much that's clear so it seems they just want money. That's all we can see. There's no human value in that and it's just demoralizing to most workers and makes us all cynical." The value-neutral approach that government seems to be taking, despite occasional progressive rhetoric from leaders, does not allow for sufficient space within civil society for discussion of national identity, fostering trust, or reducing burdens on the general public (such as the tensions between South African citizens and other Africans).

For some, the desire to disrupt these forces is enough of a motive to strike. Many people turn inward in order to create a life within acceptable cultural confines; others reinvigorate family alliances, depending on and reinforcing clan antecedents,[11] and create communities of identities that seem to rely on imagination as much as prior knowledge of the meaning of home, the importance of ancestors, and of ethnic identity. But for many the demand for wage increases is a reaction against a sense of demoralization that comes when one's craft and "sweat" are disrespected.

Bongi and Robert both see the "illegal" strikes as legitimate protest against the 'illegitimate' and immoral economic values which denigrate their labour, and forcing them into tough choices around housing, personal relationships, and how they meet their financial

[11] Nelson Mandela's funeral provided a public platform for explanations and discussions of what was portrayed as traditional forms of bereavement, thereby validating the existence of on-going misunderstandings among racial and cultural groups.

obligations – those debts, in fact, which are incurred in order to accumulate culturally-significant wealth such as paying lobola or buying cattle, and which are otherwise regarded as separate from the concept of commercial exchange. Claims by executives and investors that mine workers' wages are more than adequate are interpreted by many as truly dishonest. Individual state representatives and some anti-apartheid leaders, seen as allies of mine company executives, are in turn viewed as "an instrument of the exploiters….the tool of those who get fat 'eating the sweat' of honest working people" (Ferguson 2006: 85).

Chapter 5

Conclusion – A moral economy in flux

This research project asked questions about different value orientations among employees in a mining community and how those have an impact on conceptions of self-worth. The concept of a 'moral economy' has served as a framework for understanding individual views on how employees are valued in their workplace. In addition, the idea that people respond to past and current injustices is captured in the related concepts of resentment and *ressentiment*, as well as the real and perceived injuries emanating from social and management practices privileging education, teamwork and monetary incentives. The interplay between action and rhetoric presented an epistemological challenge to understand the ways people interpret what they see, hear, read, believe (or not), and what is spoken and remembered or ignored. Qualitative interviews with a range of low-wage and high-salary individuals took place in and near Carletonville on the West Rand. Interviews were based not on a definition of 'value' but on eliciting different interpretations of the way people experience being valued or devalued; and asking questions about how they view other's role in that process, and their dreams of the future. Results show that their moral economy is in flux, as individuals are subjectively (and continually) redefining their worth and place in an environment whose totality of value sets are often incommensurate, and often lead to subtle as well as violent acts of resistance. Moreover, framing issues in terms of values seems to cause people to experience more self-involvement and to perceive less common ground.

A construction of a moral economy must encompass the variety of ways in which value embeds and reflects economic and ethical questions among mine workers. Even when acknowledging some discordant and oppositional perspectives in people's value beliefs, the supremacy of the individual is incommensurate with other expectations of reciprocity and community which are not only held by indigenous groups but are built into the pursuit of badges of ability promoted by a mining company. Thus the mining industry's dynamic environment of value differences is not only informing people's actions but also their individual sense of self, one that is in flux. Individual pursuits of self-interest are modeled by executives, promoted within company narratives, and desired by individual employees. The social context is defined by the ideology of the global economy which privileges individual self-interest over community. Caught between wage regimes determined by the value of the mined product on the market, and an acceptance of merit and education as markers of hierarchy valuing individual activities at work becomes a complex and ambiguous exercise. Levels of long-term *ressentiment* grow, and continue to affect interactions between citizen and government.

In his exploration of the ethics of survival, Didier Fassin contends that despite the powers of the market and the state, "democratic forces tend to produce alternative strategies…. And people themselves, even under conditions of domination, employ subtle tactics that transform their physical life into a political instrument or a moral resource or an affective expression. (2010: 93-94). Inherent values provide the foundation and design, and guide their tactics for creating and maintaining a viable and desirable social life. Traditional concepts of value such as community, family and the purpose of work are being adapted or transformed to fit into a South African polity which is deeply embedded into the global

capitalist system. In the larger political and economic context, these negotiations are happening while new types of global and transnational systems, those which make space for and mediate the operations and values of multinationals, are transforming the valences of earlier forms of state responsibility and capacity.

More work needs to be done to understand how and where sets of assumed values are being contested and negotiated at every level of society, some of which actively undermine others. As noted in previous chapters, while all respondents embrace the idea of policies and activities which encourage equality in social and political realms, they distrust the idea that an equitable distribution of wealth would allow them a sense of self-worth or opportunities that arise by getting paid more on the basis of merit and education.

These concerns are compounded by the challenges brought by interconnected global processes and pressures as described by Ferguson (2006). The result is an unstable world of alienation and disenchantment, devaluation and national insecurity which are cultivated on an individual human level (cf. Sennett 1972), where people are forced to find ways to create and validate identities they can ultimately live with.

The event that drove the mine workers to their deaths at Marikana is not only an indication of disparities (Sole) or the breakdown of bargaining structures, but can be seen as further evidence of a struggle to maintain dignity under deplorable conditions, and to re-establish a sense of authority and presence. Marikana is in our rear view mirror and is still unresolved. Conflict and protests continue to revolve around wages and working conditions, and labour-focused rhetoric around these conflicts is expressed in cadences which call attention

to the legitimacy of 'human value' as it relates to 'labour value'. As the process of destabilization and dislocation of power takes place, different movements reconstruct and legitimize authority, and assert that value in myriad ways.

On the surface, wage protests seem to reflect purely economic concerns, with an emphasis on specific wage levels and percentages. Reports from the frontlines of protests and union negotiations, both before and after Marikana, focused heavily on a required wage of R12,500 while the increases demanded ranged from 5% to 100%. But in fact, the demands from striking workers reflect something far different and more significant than the monetary value and conditions of mine work. Van den Burghe noted how Europeans uncritically assumed that economic rationality and materialism are universally valid concepts" (1961: 221) and the validity of that position is still being debated.

In light of my respondents' comments, addressing these issues will require more than a restructuring of labour relations or regulating multinational business. Yet myriad stresses on mining communities that cut across racial divides: at the lower end of the wage scales, fears of retrenchment, mechanization and unemployment; the disruption of strikes and associated risks; particular organizational work cultures, and differing concepts of value – competing, conflicting or converging – with manifest or latent consequences. Meanwhile, workers at the mid- and upper levels are trying to make sense of their place in an unstable world of work where 'flexibility' is regarded as possibly threatening. And as Noam Chomsky has noted (1999), labour has an uneven relationship with this new kind of flexibility; labor, unlike capital, is not as

free to move across borders, while capital is free to pursue international networks and increased cross-border trade.

There are signs that mining companies and multinational finance and development agencies have shifted their focus from mostly market and shareholder considerations to a greater acknowledgment of the social risks associated with strikes; these signs might be affecting the transformation of political and economic responses. Participants in recent Mining Indaba events spent considerable time discussing what is meant by 'shared value' ('Who's sharing? Which value? Whose shares?'). Regardless of economic implications on national interests such as cycles of debt, migrant labour and poverty mitigation, how people interpret and work within a vortex of different value sets has a profound impact on definitions of inclusion and national identity. There's at least no lack of intense and lively debate, especially in the media. Marikana and the protests have thus re-introduced an inquiry into the value of labor on a more subjective level: how do people negotiate through the twin needs to maintain identity and transcend difference within a world of divergent or unequal value? The warp and weft of belonging and exclusion have uneven patterns of tension.

Is it possible to construct the moral economy of inequality under current conditions of transformation and upheaval in the mining sector? In his essay 'Moral Economy", Chris Hann refers to the "elusive" nature of moral economy as a concept (2010: 91), its use dependent on how it is defined. He reiterates Fassin's "belief in its potential for emancipatory politics" (93). My respondents revealed many of the underlying rationales, arguments and justifications for expressing a belief in certain sets of values, but patterns are complex and even contradictory in

the current context. For instance, there is little popular consensus of what might be considered legitimate or illegitimate social and economic practices that might minimize inequalities. If anything, a mining community jettisons the conception of a moral economy as encompassing a normative dimension, and yet the values therein can be understood as the way in which "actions become meaningful" within a larger "real or imagined" social system (Graeber 2001: 254). As Chris Hann notes, we ought, like Durkheim and Mauss, to look at "the greater diversity of the economics community" (2010: 197); we can't and shouldn't pick and choose the agencies and mediators of socialization, where values are distilled.

The landscape of power is being refashioned, but the old maps and landmarks are no longer the only tools we have. Twenty-five years ago, civil disobedience and sabotage, township music, and the profound and influential discourse of the black consciousness philosophy provide some means of internal resistance to the immorality of the dominant power. Today those old landmarks are either shelved or irrelevant; greater communication allows for new landmarks and signifiers to be ever more mobile. Even so, the map is dense with new pathways and destinations, and there are plenty of new distractions along the way. Furthermore, while South Africa showed the world and themselves what it meant to be "African" under difficult circumstances, the global nature of that discourse hid a more particular view of what it means to be "South African", so that the struggle for identity must now necessarily take different forms. Perhaps xenophobia is just a disturbing and destructive example of a need to protect oneself from external threats while the necessary healing and renewal of self can take place. All this is taking place while navigating through the field of incommensurate value sets.

Donald Donham concludes that, ”telling deep stories – that capture the dialectic between intention and consequence in particular contexts – will not automatically improve the world, but attempting to do so seems the necessary, if not sufficient condition for hope” (2011:188).

Robert left me with a line of haunting beauty: “I know, and God knows, how important I am.”

“There is not much assurance or sense of closure, not even much sense of knowing what it is one precisely is after, in so indefinite a quest, amid such various people, over such a diversity of times. But it is an excellent way, interesting dismaying, useful and amusing, to expend a life.”

Clifford Geertz, *After the Fact: Two Countries, Four Decades, one Anthropologist,* p. 168.

Works Cited

Achebe, Chinua. *Home and Exile.* New York: Anchor Books. 2000. Print

Agamben, Giorgio, and Daniel Heller-Roazen. *Homo Sacer*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998. Print.

Allen, V. L. *The History of Black Mine Workers in South Africa*. Keighley: Moor Press, 1992. Print.

Appadurai, Arjun. *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986. Print.

Bourdieu, Pierre. The Logic of Practice. Trans. Richard Nice. Redwood City, CA: Stanford University Press, 1990. *Google Scholar.*

—— *The Weight of the World: Social Suffering in Contemporary Society.* Trans. Priscilla Parkhurst Ferguson. Cambridge, MA: Polity Press, 1999. Print.

Breckenridge, Keith. "'Money with Dignity': Migrants, Minelords and the Cultural Politics of the South African Gold Standard Crisis, 1920–33." *The Journal of African History* 36.02: 271-304, 1995. Print.

Burawoy, Michael. "The Extended Case Method." *Sociological Theory.* 16: 1 (March 1998): 4-33. Web. 14 July 2013.

Caldwell, Jack. "Why mining geologists deserve to earn $100K on graduating." *Mining.com* 5 April 2012. Web. 11 Jan. 2013.

Carroll, Rory. "Townships in revolt as ANC fails to live up to its promises." *The Guardian* 22 Feb. 2006 US Edition. Web.

"Census 2011, Statistical Release (revised)." *StatsSA*. Statistics South Africa, 30 Oct. 2012. Web. 21 Jan. 2013.

Chamber of Mines of South Africa. “Facts and Figures 2012.” www.chamberofmines.org.za. Web. 21 Jan. 2013.

Chomsky, Noam. *Profit Over People: Neoliberalism & Global Order*. New York: Seven Stories Press, 1999. Print.

Comaroff, Jean, and John L. Comaroff. "Occult Economies and the Violence of Abstraction: Notes from the South African Postcolony." *American Ethnologist* 26.2: 279-303, 1999. Web. 12 July 2013

Crush, Jonathan, Alan Jeeves and David Yudelman. *South Africa’s Labor Empire: A History of Black Migrancy to the Gold Mines.* Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1991. Print.

Crush, Jonathan. *Contract Migration to South Africa: Past Present and Future.* Cape Town/Kingston: Southern Africa Migration Project, 1997. Web. 12 July 2013.

Davenport, T. R. H., and Christopher C. Saunders. *South Africa: A Modern History*. Hampshire: Macmillan, 2000. Print.

Donham, Donald L., and Santu Mofokeng. *Violence in a Time of Liberation: Murder and Ethnicity at a South African Gold Mine, 1994*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011. Print.

Dumont, Louis. *Essays on Individualism: Modern Ideology in Anthropological Perspective.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986. 12 July 2013.

Elyachar, Julia. *Markets of Dispossession: NGOs, Economic Development, and the State in Cairo*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2005. Print.

Fassin, Didier, and Richard Rechtman. *The Empire of Trauma: An Inquiry into the Condition of Victimhood*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009. Print.

Fassin, Didier. *When Bodies Remember: Experiences and Politics of AIDS in South Africa*. Berkeley: University of California, 2007. Print.

------."Ethics of Survival: A Democratic Approach to the Politics of Life." *Humanity: An International Journal of Human Rights, Humanitarianism, and Development* 1.1: 81-95, 2010. Web. 7 Nov. 2013.

------. "On Resentment and Ressentiment: The Politics and Ethics of Moral Emotions." *Current Anthropology* 54.3: 249-67, 2013. Web. 7 Nov. 2013.

Ferguson, James. *Global Shadows: Africa in the Neoliberal World Order*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2006. Print.

First, Ruth. *Black Gold: The Mozambican Miner, Proletarian and Peasant*. Sussex: Harvester, 1983. Print.

Fisher, Kimball. *Leading Self-directed Work Teams.* New York, NY: McGraw-Hill, 2nd ed. 1999. Web. 23 March 2013.

Forrest, Kally. "Marikana Was Not Just about Migrant Labour." *Mail & Guardian Online*. Mail & Guardian, 13 Sept. 2013. Web. 21 Oct. 2013.

Graeber, David. *Toward an Anthropological Theory of Value: The False Coin of Our Own Dreams*. New York: Palgrave, 2001. Print.

------. "Fetishism as Social Creativity: Or, Fetishes Are Gods in the Process of Construction." *Anthropological Theory* 5.4: 407-38, 2005. Print.

Inglehart, Ronald and Christian Welzel. “Values, Agency and Well-Being: A Human Development Model.” *Social Indicators Research*, 97 (1) 2010: pp. 43-63. Web. 15 March 2013.

Hann, C.M. “Moral Economy.” *The Human Economy.* Eds. K. Hart, J. Lavalle & A.D. Cattani. Cambridge: Polity Press. 2010: pp.187-197. Print.

Hann, C. M., and Keith Hart. *Economic Anthropology: History, Ethnography, Critique*. Cambridge, UK: Polity, 2011. Print.

Harvie, D., and K. Milburn. "How Organizations Value and How Value Organizes." *Organization* 17.5: 631-36, 2010. Web. 18 March 2013.

Hochschild, Arlie Russell. *The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling,* Twentieth Anniversary Edition, With a New Afterword. Berkeley: University of California, 2003. Print.

Hochschild, Jennifer. *What’s Fair? American Beliefs about Distributive Justice.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981. Print.

"Interactive Gold Price Chart and Downloads." *World Gold Council*. Web. 20 Jan. 2014. <http://www.gold.org/investment/interactive-gold-price-chart>.

[IRIN]. “Provincial Border Dispute Threatens School for Challenged Children.” IRIN News, 6 June 2007. Web. 21 Jan. 2013.

James, Wilmot Godfrey. *Our Precious Metal: African Labour in South Africa's Gold Industry, 1970-1990*. Cape Town: D. Philip, 1992. Print.

Keynes, John Maynard. *A Tract on Monetary Reform.* London: MacMillan & Co., 1924. Web. 14 April 2013.

Kirshner, Joshua D. “’We are Gauteng People’: Challenging the Politics of Xenophobia in Khutsong, South Africa.” *Antipode* Vol. 44 No.4 2012: pp. 1307-28. Web.

Kluckhohn, Clyde. "Values and Value-orientations in the Theory of Action: An Exploration in Definition and Classification." *Toward a General Theory of Action*. Ed. Talcott Parsons. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1951. Print.

Kluckhohn, Florence Rockwood, and Fred L. Strodtbeck. *Variations in Value Orientations*. Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1973. Print.

Koselleck, Reinhart. "'Spaces of Experience' and 'Horizon of Expectation': Two Historical Categories." *On the Semantics of Historical Time.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1985; 1st ed. Frankfurt, 1979. 267-288. Web. 24 Feb. 2013.

Lambek, Michael, ed. Ordinary Ethics. Anthropology, Language and Action. Oxford University Press. 2010. Print.

--- "The value of (performative) acts." HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory [Online], 3.2 (2013): 141-60. Web. 15 Feb. 2013.

Lang, Stephen. "Toxic Radioactive Water: The True Price of Gold Mining in South Africa." *Inter Press Service,* 26 Feb. 2011. Web. 23 Jan. 2013.

Lichterman, Paul. *Seeing Structure Happen: Theory-driven Participant Observation.* Methods of Social Movement Research, eds. B Klandermans & S. Staggenborg. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002.

Marx, Karl, and Friedrich Engels. *Capital: Critique of Political Economy*. London: Penguin Classics, 1992. Print.

Marx, Karl, and Saul K. Padover. *The Essential Marx: The Noneconomic Writings - a Selection*. New York, NY: New American Library, 1978. Print.

Marx, Karl. "The Chapter on Money, Part II." *Grundrisse: Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy*. Trans. Martin Nicolaus. London: Penguin, 1973. Print.

Mauss, Marcel. *The Gift: Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies*. Mansfield Centre, CT: Martino, 2011. Print.

Mbembé, J.A. *On the Postcolony*. Berkeley: University of California, 2001. Print.

Miller, Daniel. "The Uses of Value." *UCL Anthropology*. University Collage London Anthropology. Web. 11 Feb. 2014.

Mining in South Africa. Chamber of Mines of South Africa. Web. 20 Jan. 2013.

Mining Technology. Website for Mining, Tunneling and Quarrying Industries. Kable Intelligence Limited, 1997. Web. 21 Jan. 2013.

Moodie, T. Dunbar, and Vivienne Ndatshe. *Going for Gold: Men, Mines, and Migration*. Berkeley: University of California, 1994. Print.

Morris, R. C. "Rush/Panic/Rush: Speculations on the Value of Life and Death in South Africa's Age of AIDS." *Public Culture* 20.2: 199-231, 2008. Web. 15 March 2013.

Munn, Nancy D. *The Fame of Gawa: A Symbolic Study of Value Transformation in a Massim (Papua New Guinea) Society*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986. Print.

Nel, A. and J. Pienaar. “Characteristics of an effective self-directed work team in the gold mining industry.” *Journal of the South African Institute of Mining and Metallurgy.* Vol. 106. March 2006: pp. 179-186. Web. 25 March 2013.

Nite, Dhiraj, and Paul Stewart. *Mining Faces: An Oral History of Work in Gold and Coal Mines in South Africa: 1951-2011*. Johannesburg: Fanele/Jacana, 2012. Print.

Norman, Nick, and Gavin Whitfield. *Geological Journeys: A Traveller's Guide to South Africa's Rocks and Landforms*. Cape Town: Struik, 2006. Print.

Phakathi, Timothy Sizwe. "Self-directed Work Teams in a Post-apartheid Gold Mine: Perspectives from the Rock Face." *Journal of Workplace Learning. Vol. 14 No. 7, 2002, pp. 278-285*. Web. 22 Mar. 2013.

Polanyi, Karl. *The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time*. Boston: Beacon, 1944 (2001). Print.

Ralph, Michael. "Killing Time." *Social Text* 26.4: 1-29, 2010. Print.

Ricoeur, Paul. *Oneself as Another (Soi-meme comme un autre),* trans. Kathleen Blamey. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992 (1990).

Robinson, Joan. *Economic Philosophy: An essay on the progress of economic thought.* Chicago: Aldine, 1962.

Ryan, Brendan. "The Gold Industry Can Afford Higher Wages." *Business Day*. 10 July 2013. Web. 11 July 2013.

Sahlins, Marshall. *Stone Age Economics.* New York: De Gruyter, 1972. Print.

Sasson, Saskia. “Neither global nor national: novel assemblages of territory, authority and rights.” *Ethics & Global Politics.* Vol. 1 No. 1-2, 2008: pp. 61-79. Web. 13 Feb. 2013.

Schama, Simon. *The Embarrassment of Riches: An Interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age*. New York: Knopf, 1987. Print.

Schwartz, Shalom H. "Cultural and Individual Value Correlates of Capitalism: A Comparative Analysis." *Psychological Inquiry* 18.1: 52-57, 2007. Print.

Scott, James C. *The Moral Economy of the Peasant: Rebellion and Subsistence in Southeast Asia*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976. Print.

Sennett, Richard, and Jonathan Cobb. *The Hidden Injuries of Class*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972. Print.

Sennett, Richard. *The Corrosion of Character*. New York: W. W. Norton, 1998. Print.

------. "The New Capitalism." *Social Research* 64.2: 161-80, 1997. Print.

------. "The New Political Economy and Its Culture." *The Hedgehog Review* 2.1: 55-71, 2000. Web. 16 Feb. 2013.

Sole, Sam. "The System Is Broken and Must Be Fixed." *Mail & Guardian* [Johannesburg] 21 Sept. 2012: 33. Print.

Sparks, Allister Haddon. *The Mind of South Africa*. New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 1990. Print.

Stewart, Paul Finley. "Labour Time in South African Gold Mines 1886-2006." Thesis. University of the Witwatersrand, 2012. Print copy from author.

Strathern, Marilyn. *Audit Cultures: Anthropological Studies in Accountability, Ethics, and the Academy*. London: Routledge, 2000. Print.

Strydom, C.F. “An evaluation of the self-directed work team concept as a means to improve overall performance on South African gold mines.” *The Journal of the South African Institute of Mining and Metallurgy.* March 2002, pp. 93-100. Web. 22 March 2013.

Sutton, Antony C. *The War on Gold*. Sandton, RSA: Valiant, 1977. Print.

Tabane, Rapule. "Khutsong Brutality Prevails When Hope Is Lost." *Mail & Guardian* [Johannesburg] 8 Nov. 2013. Print.

Thompson, E.P. The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century. *Past and Present,* No. 50. (Feb., 1971), pp. 76-136. Web. 15 Nov. 2012.

"Upgrading of South African AngloGold Ashanti Residences." *Information for Investors, Report 2008*. AngloGold Ashanti. Web. 07 Jan. 2013.

Van Den Berghe, Pierre L. *South Africa, a Study in Conflict*. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1961. Print.

Weber, Max. *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism: The Talcott Parsons Translation Interpretations*. Ed. Richard Swedberg. New York: W.W. Norton, 2009. Print.

Weiss, Brad. *Street Dreams and Hip Hop Barbershops: Global Fantasy in Urban Tanzania*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009. Print.

Willerslev, Rane. “Frazer strikes back from the armchair.” Malinowski Memorial Lecture. London School of Economics Department of Anthropology. London, UK. 13 May 2010. Print.

Wilson, Monica, and Leonard Monteath Thompson. *A History of South Africa to 1870*. Boulder, CO: Westview, 1982. Print.

WGC. “Gold Demand Trends.” World Gold Council. Web. 22 Jan. 2014.

WVS. World Values Survey Association. Aggregate File Producer: ASEP/JDS, Alcobendas, Spain. Web. 16 August 2013.

Young, Iris Marion. "Polity and Group Difference: A Critique of the Ideal of Universal Citizenship." *Ethics* 99.2: 250, 1989. Web. 18 March 2013.

Zigon, Jarrett. "Moral and Ethical Assemblages: A Response to Fassin and Stoczkowski." *Anthropological Theory* 10.1-2: 3-15, 2010. Web. 23 March 2013.

Žižek, Slavoj. *Living in the End times*. London: Verso, 2010. Print.

Bibliography

Auty, R.M. *Resource-Based Industrialization: Sowing the Oil in Eight Developing Countries*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990. Print.

Bayart, Jean-François. *The State in Africa: The Politics of the Belly*. London: Longman, 1993. Print.

Carrier, James G. *A Handbook of Economic Anthropology*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar, 2005. Print.

Comaroff, Jean, and John L. Comaroff. *Millennial Capitalism and the Culture of Neoliberalism*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001. Print.

Ekeh, Peter P. "Colonialism and the Two Publics in Africa: A Theoretical Statement." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 17.01: 91, 1975. Print.

Etzioni, Amitai. *A comparative analysis of complex organizations: on power, involvement, and their correlates.* New York: The Free Press, 1961. Print.

Ferguson, James. *Expectations of Modernity: Myths and Meanings of Urban Life on the Zambian Copperbelt*. Berkeley: University of California, 1999. Print.

Hobsbawm, E. J., and T. O. Ranger. *The Invention of Tradition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983. Print.

Mbembe, A., and J. Roitman. "Figures of the Subject in Times of Crisis." *Public Culture* 7.2: 323-52, 1995. Web. 12 Jan. 2013.

Otto, Ton, and Rane Willerslev. "Value as Theory; Comparison, Cultural Critique, and Guerrilla Ethnographic Theory." *Hau* 3.1: 1-20, 2013. Web. 25 June 2013.

Pierson, Christopher. *The Marx Reader*. Oxford: Polity, 1996. Print.

Riis, Jacob A. *How the Other Half Lives*. New York: Barnes & Noble, 2004. Print.

Sachs, Jeffrey D. and Andrew M Warner. “Natural resource abundance and economic growth.” National (US) Bureau of Economic Research. Cambridge, MA, 1995. Working Paper No. 5398. Web. 20 Nov. 2012.

Sahlins, Marshall. *Islands of History*. Chicago: University of Chicago, 1985. Print.

Sijuwade, Philip O. "Globalization and Cultural Conflict in Developing Countries: The South African Example." *Anthropologist* 8.2: 125-37, 2006. Print.

Terkel, Louis. *Working: People Talk about What They Do All Day and How They Feel about What They Do*. New York: Pantheon/Random House, 1974. Print.