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2014-06-19
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UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND

‘To cheat or not to cheat’: Male infidelity and the migrant imaginary among Zimbabwean migrants living in Midrand.

A research report submitted by

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Due Date 02 June 2014

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY IN THE FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE.

school of SOCIAL SCIENCES

Declaration

I _____ do hereby declare that this research report, that I am submitting, is my own original work and has not been submitted in part or in totality to any institution in for the purpose of satisfying a degree requirement.

Signature (Student) _____

Date _____

Signature (Supervisor) _____

Date _____

This research report is dedicated to my parents Mr. and Mrs. Matina

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It has been a long and challenging eighteen months and I would like to acknowledge all the people that have been immeasurably helpful in the building towards the eventual close of this chapter. I would like to start off by acknowledging my parents. Mom and dad you have always been my rock in ways I could not begin to explain. You have always been there for me during my trying times and it is you that had to suffer for my academic sacrifices and choices. Of equal importance are my siblings David and Vanessa. You guys were inspirational. The desire to set a good example for you guys has seen me push through a lot of hurdles. I could not have done it had it not been for you guys. David your text messages were always helpful, encouraging and motivating. They did offer a light in the darkness of the storm. How can I forget Alice and Mazvita. You guys are just special. Alice you urged me on when there seemed to hope in sight and Mazvita in her own special way seemed to provide the perfect distraction.

Next, and in no order of importance I would like to thank my brother Simba and Edmore for pushing me to lengths I did not know I could reach. I would also like to thank you for the pain you put me through in forcing me to work when I felt like giving up. You guys are stars. I would also like to thank Wellington, Johannes, and John for their humour which helped me in taking the steam off things.

The field is always a mystified place that is vast and filled with all sorts of anxieties. However due to my adoption by Kudzai and Rufaro, this is a feeling I am yet to experience. I would thus like to thank all my research partners as you made this final essay possible. Many thanks to all of the participants for allowing me into their homes and into their private lives.

I was nosey and I often gave you grief but you were longsuffering and patient with me. Thank you very much.

Last but not least, because *kukwira gomo hupoterera,* I would like to thank the man that made this research essay what it is, my supervisor Eric Worby. I would not wish the grief of supervising a person like me on any supervisor, but you were a patient man. From the first encounter I had ideas that never seemed to remain in one position long enough to be critically looked at but you held my hand and led me none the less. For that I am eternally grateful. Holding this document I would like to take this opportunity to say that its production was not a single handed initiative but it was a collaborative effort by brilliant minds and exceptional friends. In the end all the toiling builds up to one moment and all the months of gallivanting in clubs and sleepless nights typing, lead to one obvious, inevitable, sure conclusion: this document owes its existence to all that played a role in its making. Allow me therefore to ask you to take this journey with me again as we go from strength to strength and from level to level……. for those that can still take on the challenge.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

While doing fieldwork among young Zimbabwean migrant men in Midrand in 2011, I would often hear my informants complain that their partners felt they did not love them purely because they had been unfaithful. I was puzzled by their puzzlement at what they felt was their partners' unwarranted concern. It is this puzzling stance that my informants took that serves as a starting point for the research question that I would like to address. What kinds of moral arguments do these young men summon in support of the claim that their infidelity does not invalidate the assertion that they love their partners?

Infidelity, or "cheating"[1], in monogamous relationships is rampant and the reasons for this particular phenomenon are highly variable (Joseph and Black 2012, Milrod and Weitzer 2012, Anderson 2012, Cole and Thomas 2009, Rebhun 1999). While scholars have paid a great deal of attention to explaining *why* people cheat on one another in varied historical and cultural contexts, the question of *how* people cheat, and how infidelity affects relationships that are grounded in a premise of mutual love, is less often asked. Both of these lines of questions prove to produce a holistic understanding of the phenomena that is male infidelity. For instance, how is the notion of male infidelity impacting on the love marriage and the love relationship? How is it that with the continued progression towards a 'modernised society' in which marriages seem to be more and more fashioned after the popularised love marriage, we still have such tendencies as male infidelity undermining it?

[1] Here 'infidelity' describes the behaviour of one partner having sex outside of a relationship that both partners otherwise consider to be monogamous. I am also using 'cheating' to highlight the moral disapproval that some people apply to such a practice. This rests on the idea that cheating and infidelity are different.

In everyday discourse people take for granted that being unfaithful to a partner to whom you profess love is morally wrong, and because it gets marked as cheating, scholars have not stood back and asked how the actors themselves understand what they are doing in moral terms. I was immediately drawn to the arguments and debates by the men about how they saw love and infidelity and how this related to their aspirations to become certain kinds of people; successful, upwardly mobile, resolutely middleclass people. How was their understanding of what they wanted to become, related to the arguments they were making in terms of certain kinds of moral behaviour? How is this related to debates, arguments and expectations about marriage, reproduction and family?

When I began this research, in as much as I tried to be open minded and neutral, I was of the view that cheating does, or in some way should, translate to a lack of love in a monogamous relationship. By extension fidelity would be a sign of love and respect. It seemed to me that the popular way to imagine 'love' and 'cheating' was to treat them as binary opposites that were mutually exclusive. As binary opposites, it was easy to see how cheating could be understood to be evidence of a lack of love. However, the reality on the ground seemed to be the complete opposite. There seemed to be no tension between love and infidelity. My interlocutors seemed to look at both love and infidelity as independent variables that were mutually exclusive. It was for this very reason why infidelity could be an independent and free standing relationship status that my interlocutors did not see as saying anything negative about their primary relationship. It is important to note how within the Zimbabwean migrant community and indeed within the spheres of influence of the migrants that also extended to Zimbabwe, monogamy was glorified and cheating was viewed as a deplorable and debasing act that goes against all conceptions of love and

marital obligations and expectations of fidelity. Henceforth it became apparent that while the idea that love would be made evident through fidelity, there seemed to be situations in which this particular 'truth' was suspended.

Therefore the starting point of my argument is the suspension of the view that cheating and love are binary opposites. However this ultimately begs the question of how else to look at the relationship between love and cheating. Based on the forthcoming evidence I propose a look at love and cheating in a lateral non oppositional way, a view of monogamy and cheating not as antagonistic and dialectically related variables, but as providing valuable insight into the nature of modern day love relationships. This requires one to ask how it is that male infidelity can be understood not as antithetical to love but as complimentary to it.

The major reason why this line of thinking is difficult to follow and understand is because of the negative label that the term cheating carries. Therefore to come to a point at which cheating operates on the same side of love, there has to be a deconstruction of the power inherent in the negative label of cheating. Infidelity and cheating both carry negative connotations and already predispose the men to value judgments that produce a lopsided conception of what it is they do. This research report is not going to focus on the moral decadence of the men I intend to interact with. Going into the field with a conception that their behaviour is bad defeats the purpose of research. I wish to understand how it is that they understand this behaviour of having multiple sexual and or romantic partners.

An interesting point to note about the way in which my interlocutors refuse to call what they do cheating also hinges in part on the genealogy of cheating and monogamy. Scholarly investigation and analysis of love have always been linked to ideas of kinship and family in classical African anthropology. Such an approach which hints that love can only be

understood in terms of marriage became quite normative. This is clear in all the classical Anthropological texts such as those by Monica Hunter Wilson (1936), Isaac Schapera (1955), and Margaret Mead (1928), just to mention a few. Their concern with diagnosing the causes of marital breakdown (including migrant labour and infidelity) led them to believe that love could not be separated from a study of marriage. A close reading of Schmidt (1992), Thomas in Cole and Thomas (2009) and Schapera (1955) reveals the way in which anthropological inquiries started off on the premise that to study love meant to study family and kinship. Therefore policies that were put in place, at times as a direct result of the outcomes of these researches, ensured that there be no children born out of wed lock as this would call upon the state to intervene in taking care of these single-parent children. Therefore the genealogy of cheating and infidelity seems to have evolved around notions of maintaining productive family units that could take care of their young with minimal state intervention. A great place to see this is through the colonial state. According to Hambly (1937), Schmidt (1992), Burke (1996), Comaroff and Comaroff (1997), and Worby (2000) the colonial state machinery in conjunction with the Christian church, worked towards a change in the ways in which African social life was constituted. This affected more so the way in which marriage, family and kinship came to be understood.

Missionary education was targeting the young boys and girls for purposes of effecting a radical change in their ideas of adulthood and the gendered nature of their socially obligated roles. Schmidt (1992:122) maintains that “missionary education instilled in both boys and girls such values as hard work, discipline and obedience to authority”. Schmidt’s argument is that the church instilled the ideals of domesticity in the African woman insofar as it was commensurate with the requirements of the colonial capitalist state. Ideas of

marriage and monogamy worked well in favour of the tenets of the state capitalist machinery. Missionary mediated education targeted cleanliness of the body and of the soul. Their ideas about domesticity became internalised by the African population and more so for the women who began to see it as a means of upward mobility.

Schmidt (1992) also notes that the increased presence of African women in white homes as domestic servants in the 1930s in the then Rhodesia, led to feelings of uneasiness on the part of the white women. They did not feel comfortable with this presence and feared that their husbands would engage in sexual relations with the 'help'. To this end white women became strong proponents of the increased patriarchal control of the African women. The interesting dynamic to note here is the way in which an attempt to control the sexuality of their white husbands there was also the control, by extension, of the sexuality of the African women.

This appeal for an increased control of the African woman by patriarchy should not be seen as antithetical to the operations of the mission stations that were seen as forms of escape from domination in the household. The African women were using the mission stations as places of refuge from the hardships of polygamous and early marriages, (Schmidt 1992). In essence the movement to the mission station was merely a transfer from one form of patriarchal domination to another. With the primary goal being a subordination of women, both the mission stations and patriarchy in general managed to control the sexuality of African women. Suffice it to say that the social sanction levied to women was heavier than that against men for infidelity. Therefore gender, race, patriarchy and colonialism all had a bearing on the ways in which African men and African women were differentially treated in relation to cheating.

From this brief narration of the construction of cheating as an infringement of the moral apprehension of what it means to be married it should be noted that cheating and infidelity were part of a colonial discourse that had its roots firmly in a capitalist framework. Marital fidelity and the legality of marriage and the legitimacy of such a union were seen as key turning points towards a reduction of the state intervention in the social life of the family unit. If monogamous marriages could be maintained and unwanted pregnancies minimised then the state would not have to shoulder the burden of taking care of the illegitimate children. So the church and the state worked together to construct a concept of cheating and the moral obligations of legal unions that ward off illegitimate children. It should be borne in mind that all of these actions by the state and the church reveal one important fact; the 'problem' of infidelity was a result of state and religious construction. It is therefore on such a background that I wish to start of an analysis of the ways in which male infidelity is seen by those males as being compatible with contemporary conceptions of marriage and ideas of love and monogamy.

There are a number of ways to methodologically approach such a study of male infidelity among migrants. One would be to invoke cultural differences between the locals and the migrants. Prior to the works by Malinowski about function and form, the 'ethnographers' of the time dwelled on the differences that they saw between black people and white people. Boddy (2011:119) provides an account no different to that of Stoler (1991) in which the colonial experience was a corporeal affair and was a war waged on the bodylines of the colonised. Much like Stoler (1991), Boddy (2011) also talks about the representation of the black colonised body in contrast to the white coloniser body. What this essentially does is to reveal the way in which the colonial mentality of the white colonisers made conclusions

about black sexuality based on skewed cultural referral points, (Boddy 2011). Boddy (2011) goes on further to say:

> *"Recommended ways of living reflected colonizers' guiding assumptions about appropriate behaviour, as well as their convictions about the capacities of black and brown peoples whose physical and social differences from Europeans had been elaborated for several centuries in all manner of scholarly and popular publications, advertisements and pictorial art…"* (Boddy 2011:119).

Therefore having to talk about the variations in sexual appetites between Zimbabwean men and South African men would only seem to reinforce and mimic the improper way of understanding sex between people of two different cultural backgrounds. While I do recognise that culture has been used as an organising category in other researches that deal with migrants, (Marlowe 2011), in this research I wish to only refer to the cultural debate as offering context to the people that I am working with. As a functional reason for understanding the interactions between Zimbabwean men and South African women a reliance on cultural differences ceases to be adequate. As such I sought to explore the various social contexts that structure human behaviour in ways that reveal the distinctness and uniqueness of what the Zimbabwean male migrant population living in Midrand do. This includes more than just a broad generalisation of phenomena based on cultural relativism which at times fails to adequately account for variations of behaviour within the same cultural and sub cultural context. My approach, rather, is to remain cognizant of the specificities and contextual situatedness of human behaviour. While this approach may be criticised as downplaying the commonalities in human behaviour the manner in which people deal

with their specific circumstances varies greatly within the same cultural context. Here my underlying argument is that what structures the diversity of human behaviour is the mix between specificities of past experiences and the influences of present lived conditions.

Having given a basic outline of the somewhat theoretic and philosophical base of this research, my presentation shall be as follows. In the second chapter I will focus on the methodology section. Here I go into detail about why I chose Midrand as a field site as well as why I decided to focus on Zimbabweans. Midrand offers a safe haven for migrants as well as people that subscribe to the ideals of a middleclass working population. As such I go into great detail to describe how it is that there is a link between being middleclass and being a resident of Midrand. The reason why I have put so much emphasis on the theme of being middleclass is that it is crucial to understanding the behaviour of my research participants. For starters the love marriage is popular among the young and upwardly mobile middleclass (Hirsh and Wardlow 2005). This comes out very clearly in the third and fourth chapters where I establish a link between being middleclass and staying in Midrand. Due to the fact that Midrand as a fast growing outer city, (Bremner 2004), provides conditions for a fast growing and highly ambitious middleclass, it presents itself with the qualities that my interlocutors subscribe to. As such the kinds of life opportunities that Midrand is teeming with are the same kinds of opportunities that my interlocutors are also after. As such Midrand seems to become compatible with my research participants.

In chapter four I also point out the disjuncture between the imagined middleclass lifestyle and the inability on the part of my interlocutors to realise that kind of lifestyle. I go on to discuss in chapter five the ways in which moral justifications and motivations for cheating

are constructed. I use Berlant's (2006) idea of cruel optimism to show the link that exists between infidelity and the frustrations of a life in the middleclass in South Africa. The most important point to note in this chapter is how infidelity is separated from the equation of love for one's partner. In the eyes of my interlocutors what they do is no indication that there is anything wrong with their primary relationships and marriages. If anything there is a distinction between cheating and what they do. Since they do not consider what they do as cheating they are however against cheating. It is for this reason I also talk about 'paracheating' as a way of describing their non-cheating acts of infidelity. The last chapter is the conclusion in which I tie together all the ends of the research.

CHAPTER 2

Setting, Study Population and Methodology

The niche of anthropology is the application of the ethnographic method to social research. This often involves one staying in the field for prolonged periods of time and becoming more than just a fly on the walls of the people being studied. One becomes a participant and therefore assumes the role of an 'external insider', who, while participating in the day to day activities, has to maintain the hallmark of an observer. The good thing about this particular method is that one tends to get an insider's perspective. However, while in the field the researcher has to constantly move back and forth between being a researcher and being a participant without breaking character. Therefore being a participant observer is more than just participating and observing. The issue of positionality also comes as a hugely important aspect of every ethnographic enquiry.

This ethnography consisted of following around the lives of a group of eight male migrant Zimbabweans and their families. They would routinely socialise together and take part in family gatherings, some of which required travelling outside of Midrand and more often than not across the border in Zimbabwe. They were all middle class and had white collar jobs and most of them stayed within the same housing complex and this made it easier not only for them to congregate and socialise together and thus create a tightly knit community, it was also easier for me to better follow them as they went about their daily lives. Their ages ranged from 30 to 35 years. At the very core of the group is a family of three brothers. Timothy is the oldest, followed by Ben and lastly Tony. Tony, the youngest, is married to Mary. Timothy is currently unemployed and has been for years. Ben is an I.T. auditor at an auditing firm in Centurion, a job that he got through Timothy's girlfriend, Sylvia, who works

at the same company and is an internal auditor herself. Tony is in the actuarial department at an insurance company in Edenvale, east of Johannesburg. Mary is a quality controller at a water bottling plant in Doornfontein in the inner city Ben has his girlfriend who until the end of 2013 was staying in Bloemfontein, but has since moved back to Zimbabwe and they are planning on having their formal introductions held in February 2014. The closest couple to the three brothers is Steven and his wife Alice. Alice works in the marketing and sales department of an advertising agency in Midrand, while Steven now owns a tyre sales company he set up himself close to Midrand Business Park.

The outer core of the group is comprised of Matthew and Martha, Thomas and Alexis, and Caroline and Mack. Matthew is an audit manager at a Pretoria based company and his girlfriend Martha is a student at the University of Pretoria. She is following in her sister's and boyfriend's footsteps and is studying Auditing. Thomas is an entrepreneur who deals with electrical equipment since he is an electrician by trade. His wife is in sales at a fashion house in Centurion. Caroline and Mack are also in sales though Caroline works for an advertising agency and Mack works in the auto mechanic industry.

As part of my acceptance into the group of males, I had to prove to them that they could confide in me. The process of gaining trust and establishing rapport is a delicate and time consuming one. I came to be called Tsanoz because that was the title that Tony's father would use when referring to me. While people may easily just accept you as a relative of their friend, it is quite another thing being a researcher who wants to know about the intimate details of their lives. I managed to gain entry into the group by being always present at gatherings and functions. When quizzed about certain stories pertaining to other

people in the group I had to maintain a position of ignorance so as not to divulge sensitive information.

Once I had been accepted as if I were a close relative and one who could be trusted, it was easier for me to be accepted as a researcher. Indeed, on the basis of being a researcher, I occupied the glorified seat of group confidant. Because I had managed to display my ability to be discreet I ended up playing the role of counsellor by default. I may not have offered much input, but a listening ear was really all they wanted. My acceptance in the role of listener allowed me to empathize more deeply with all of them, and helped me to avoid making hasty judgments based upon the skewed perspective they seemed to be projecting.

During the entire eighteen months that I spent in the field I did not have a fixed field site. While my interlocutors stayed in Midrand, their interaction was not bound to that area. Almost every weekend we would go out to places other than those in Midrand. The breadth of our engagement with the field took us to places like Woodmead, Fourways and Sandton on the fringes of Johannesburg's northern suburbs, as well as to inner city neighbourhoods like Hillbrow and Ellis Park. We also travelled outside of Johannesburg to Vereeniging, Pretoria and even across the border to Zimbabwe. During the week I would stay with Tony and Mary and Ben. As a result I got to know them intimately and occasionally I would also interact with the other people if I visited their homes or if they came over to visit. Ultimately proper interaction with my other interlocutors was limited to weekends when people were less busy and more often than not the group just hung out together.

This lack of a defined field site did seem to broaden the scale and scope of the research and made it a bit challenging to keep track of what was happening most of the time. However it dawned on me that this was not a bad situation as it helped me to understand the reason

why Midrand was the place of choice for this group of Zimbabwean migrants. Midrand was attractive for them in two respects, first as a geographic space and second as a conceptual space. As a geographic space Midrand seemed to have been a place of choice in that it provided a relaxed space that was relatively quieter but balanced enough to cater for the needs of the migrants. It provided townhouse accommodation that supported the idea of a middle class family that was being sought after by the migrants. As a conceptual space, Midrand stood for separation from the bonds of the past systems of segregation. In this respect, the multi-ethnic and multiracial element that it possessed stood for progress that was at the heart of the migrant imaginary. These two themes became evident through the interaction of the inhabitants of Midrand and the outside world. This is what made Midrand as a place stand out not only for me as a researcher but my interlocutors as well. This helped me in answering questions that I had about the ways in which men cheat and how it is that they rationalise this kind of behaviour in moral terms. Midrand, in its dual sense of the physical space and the imaginary space, thus became the base upon which ideas of being middleclass, progressive and successful were constructed. As such, to understand the place that Midrand holds in this research was instrumental in building a profile of the kinds of men my interlocutors were, and more so how they constructed a moral community that produced certain kinds of moral judgments about their behaviour and that of others.

Reading about a place and actually being there are two completely different things. One can never know about the social life of a place by being engrossed in a firmament of literature. At best you get a feeling of the basic structure of the area. The interaction between human beings and the lived space around them takes on a new life depending on the nature of interaction that takes place. My initial investigations prior to getting into the area called

Midrand revealed that it was an area that was equidistant from Johannesburg and Pretoria. It was also described as a booming business hub that housed the Pan-African parliament. While this information may have been helpful in giving a glimpse of the area, it did not provide insight into its social life.

I would like to argue that the social life of a place is seen in the relationship that exists between the various spaces that make up the place, as well as the people that activate these spaces. This social life of the place is also seen in the way that place specific behaviour activates these spaces and how such behaviours intersect and form a web of activity that breathes life into the whole area.

As such, in the context of my research, the social life of my field site was seen in the relationship that existed between all the places that we went to. While separate events may have taken place at these areas, those events should be read as part of a broader mosaic of love and intimacy. The network of relations did not only incorporate the people in South Africa but it went back to Zimbabwe. The instances that I write about in this research include three other characters, namely Simon, Jane and Joseph. These are all friends of Tony and Steven as they went to college together and they lived in the same area back in Zimbabwe. I write about them because the instances when they are here in South Africa reveal in the most vivid of detail, how the notion of love may be viewed as being fluid and how the obligations and expectations thereof may be clearly visible.

Due to the sensitive nature of this research a lot of ethical considerations had to be put in place. Conducting research on the private and personal lives of a group of people always comes with challenges and if the research happens to be about how and why people cheat, this escalates the stakes. For starters I had to gain the utmost respect and trust from these

men and this process of establishing rapport had to start with me informing them of what it is that I was researching. It was made explicitly clear that I was a researcher and my research was on male infidelity and the love marriage. I had explained to them, more so because they were becoming interested in the title of the research and what it might entail, that the objective of this research was to find out from them how it is that they understood male infidelity. I also explained that this research was part of the requirements for my master's degree. I further informed them that I would be recording either with a note pad and a pen or a dictaphone. Participation in the research was thus voluntary and they could choose to opt out of the research at any time they felt uncomfortable with it. It was only after this information had been made clear to them did they agree to be part of my research and because I had come clean about what it is that I wanted from them did I start to get a buy in on their trust.

One notable methodological challenge that I encountered was with the wives' participation in the research. While they do feature in the body of the research that follows they were neither the primary participants nor the focus of the research. However their contributions seemed invaluable to the research process. As such I had to navigate a very fine line with them ethically. Informing them explicitly that I was conducting a study on their husbands' and partners' infidelity would have jeopardized the trust that I had established with the husbands. In this regard I only told the wives and girlfriends that I was conducting a research on love relationships and I would be looking at what they do and how they define love and act it out. I am well aware that this produces a challenge in terms of gaining informed consent and the way I dealt with the situation was far from perfect. However, I hope that through continuous engagement with such methodological and ethical

challenges, either I or other researchers may find a better way of navigating this methodological gray area.

However, real life research is never this clear cut. It is for this reason that I had to make certain concessions. Due to the position that I had been given within the group I was accorded a certain amount of respect by the families involved. Whenever the men had done anything that the wives were not pleased with the blame was placed on me and because of that respect the wives would sort of understand and let it go. In the beginning this did prove to be quite unsettling however I began to feel more and more part of the group rather than an outsider who was trying to force their way into a tightly knit group. It is through these kinds of actions that sealed my part in this group and as a way of protecting the identity of my interlocutors pseudonyms have been used.

CHAPTER 3

Midrand: A middleclass city

Nadia Lovell (1998) in the introduction to the book '*Locality and Belonging'* paints a picture of how belonging is achieved through loyalty to place. What is important to tease out of this characterisation is the way in which belonging is said to mimic collective memory. Crucial to the understanding of why Midrand is important in this research is the realisation that Midrand stands at the centre of a relationship that exists between the migrants and other places outside of Midrand which include Zimbabwe as well as places within the vicinity. It is this interaction between the migrant residents of Midrand and the areas outside of Midrand that offers insight into how the migrants actually interact with Midrand as a space. In this regard Midrand can be taken both as a geographic space and as an object of reflective discourse that embodies the feelings and desires that its inhabitants have about themselves (Thornton 1988). It is for this reason that this chapter and its rendering of Midrand will try to create a better picture of the centrality of context to research on morality. It is only through an examination of the area and what it stands for that one can begin to appreciate the ways in which Midrand presents a unique context for analysis, and by extension, informs the analysis itself.

The title of Bremner's (2004) book, '*Johannesburg: One city colliding worlds',* provides key learning points of understanding Midrand. Mbembe and Nuttall (2004) maintain that Johannesburg as a metropolis was also a confluence of ideas, people and business. This echoes the same sentiments aired by Bremner (2004). Midrand therefore is a space that allows for the collision of various life worlds. Bremner (2004) also goes on to say that people who are in Midrand maintain ties with people who are outside of the city and are in the

townships. Midrand also offers a space for the interaction of people from all walks of life. In the recent upsurge of migration from other African countries Midrand has seen an influx of people from all over the continent, among them Zimbabweans. Midrand had tended to attract Zimbabweans from all walks of life. It did not discriminate according to status or economic position. Midrand has a place for everyone who wishes to stay there.

I was first introduced to Midrand by my cousins in 2011 and what I found out was that Midrand was a small but growing space that provided the best environment for foreigners. Due to the fact that it is a small but growing business and residential hub, it was relatively easier for the Zimbabwean migrants I was working with to incorporate themselves into its way of life. Its small size was important for those that wanted to lead a relatively quiet life and yet not too small as not to provide employment opportunities for those that required it. During my usual Gautrain rides to Midrand from Johannesburg I would make it a point to talk to people on the train to find out about their perceptions of Midrand. More often than not Midrand was described as a close knit space that was not as friendly in that people keep to themselves and basically mind their own business. It is this attitude that tended to make it possible for my interlocutors to infiltrate this space and manage to lie low and remain inconspicuous due to their status as foreigners. What also makes this easier is the fact that there is already a growing population of foreigners such as Nigerians and Pakistanis and Indians. Blending in thus would not be as hard as new comers would tend to automatically join in with their fellow 'country men'. Because people just go about their daily business and do not bother themselves with what the other person is up to Midrand seems more tolerant to foreigners as it has become more diverse. As such Midrand provided a safe haven through providing for the needs of most of the migrant population.

It is thus no wonder that the cluster of friends that then became my research participants also formed a fluid 'family' unit. Midrand's relatively small size made it easy for them to become integrated into a small unit. Although some live in other parts of Midrand such as Halfway House and Vorna Valley, they all form a single unit that is united through solidarity in the same beliefs of development and upward mobility. David Parkin in the foreword of the 1998 book, '*Locality and Belonging*', posits that, "groups each with their own spheres of overlapping activities set up collective memories of themselves against a view of what is happening elsewhere in the world", (Lovel 1998, ix). While having a conversation about Midrands' history, Steven pointed out that for him Midrand was a young space in that it was mostly occupied by a generation of young professionals that had more or less the same basic understanding of what it meant to be 'progressive'. This made it a vibrant place and also made it easy to access a lot of the activities such as parties and other social events while social cohesion was maintained through the aim of being individuals that were distinct in their purpose of becoming something in their social and professional spheres.

Collective Memory and Belonging

The connection between Zimbabwe and South Africa forms a theme that is critical to the comprehension of what it means to be living in South Africa. According to my research participants Zimbabwe and South Africa stand in opposition to one another and at opposite ends of a socioeconomic continuum. Moses pointed out that there were better employment and remuneration prospects in South Africa than there were in Zimbabwe. Due to this relationship my interlocutors had structured their lives based on the concept of moving from Zimbabwe to South Africa, and not just physically but ideologically as well. In this regard securing functional knowledge of the relationship between the two countries acts as

a step towards understanding how memories of the past help in creating a collective belonging to a future ideal. The concept of belonging is imperative to understanding how collective memory may be understood as being central in forming a community of Zimbabwean migrants in Midrand. As such belonging features in four basic forms: belonging to Zimbabwe, belonging to Midrand, belonging to the community of Zimbabwean migrants, belonging to the ideas of progress and social mobility through social reproduction. Following through on this, it becomes clear that belonging is found both in terms of physical geographical space as well as ideas. One can belong to a group through belonging to the country of origin of the group members or through living in the same area as other group members. One can also belong to the group through subscribing to the same ideological inclinations as the other members of the group.

Lovell (1998) states that the concept of belonging should be understood in the context of identity politics. As such one identifies with a group because they belong to that group. The sense of belonging that is fostered through a subscription to the same ideals usually starts off from the shared beliefs that a group may share. For this to be possible the members of the group need to have gone through similar experiences in the past that bring them together, united under the same cause. For the group that I was working with this was not too difficult to pin point. The unifying fact was the economic decline that forced all of them to leave Zimbabwe and to come to South Africa to look for greener pastures. It is having endured the pain of living in Zimbabwe during the period from 2007 to 2009 that brings them together. The situation that existed in Zimbabwe could not allow for one to talk about social mobility and progress during that period Therefore while reference to this period is

not talked about as often as one would imagine, it is understood as an unsaid truth that is taken as a given and that therefore directs people's actions here in South Africa.

In this regard, the group of migrants forms a micro community of people who underwent similar experiences. These shared experiences become imbedded in the group as collective memory that binds them together. Halbwachs (1950) translated by Coser in 1992, defines collective memory as a socially constructed 'thing'. In other words, collective memory operates through the remembering done by individuals as members of a collective group. Individuals draw on the collective to remember and to recreate the past – they need the memories of those with the same shared experiences in order to recollect the past. They also need the experiences of others to reinforce and consolidate their belief in the paths they choose to take as a group. Not only do they recreate the past but the past lives on in what they do on a daily basis through the basic interactions that they go through every day.[2]

Ivor Chipkin points out that the emerging young middle class in South Africa is much more inclined towards living in spaces that reflect the kind of progressive qualities that reflect their independence from the past and their extended families. Such a kind of counsel is found in town houses and gated communities. Chipkin (2013) describes these kinds of dwellings as spaces that offer freedom from divisive past of apartheid in which separation was the hallmark. The gated communities provide a controlled environment that enables inclusion and integration among youth of different races as well as seclusion and controlled exclusion. Each residential unit is seen as an autonomous unit that is secluded from the rest

[2] This phenomenon resonates with the idea that Price (2002) described through the story telling of the Saramaka. He said that history became embedded into the day to day lives of the Saramaka to the point that it was inseparable. Here collective memory is seen as a social construct that is built within the context of interaction and on a societal basis. This ultimately means that collective memory insures continuity and social cohesion. An important point to note here is the role of memory and more so the kinds of memories that people have and how these memories ensure that group solidarity is maintained.

and is an autonomous domain in which there is easy control of who to associate with and who to exclude. This signifies belonging to a space whose conceptual understanding by its residents resonates with the kinds of ideas that the residents have concerning the kind of lifestyle that they want to be associated with.

Due to this fact it is no wonder that the group of men that I was working with made Midrand their home. Midrand provides them with the best characteristics of such a progressive and middle class life style. Bremner (2004) posits that staying in Midrand makes it possible to move between different life worlds. The tradition of maintaining ties with the outside world, in terms of relations between city and township, have been long practiced. The resident Zimbabweans have also adopted Midrand as a gateway to keep ties with Zimbabwe alive. This speaks to the theme of home that was articulated by Bremner (2004). She maintains that for the most part people have made Midrand their home. However the notion of maintaining channels of communication between the city and the townships (and in this case, with Zimbabwe) may be construed as a reaction to the precariousness of making Midrand home.

This common phenomenon where by people keep ties with people in Zimbabwe has opened up a layer of complexity with which to comprehend the ways in which the migrants operate. Bremner (2004) and Chipkin (2013) maintain that, consistent with the belief in and desire for independence and freedom, is also a field of complex relations that people have with their extended kin, some of whom may be in the townships or in the home country. Bremner (2004) states that with some of the middle class occupants of Midrand, the place offers a window through which we can understand the values that the middle class possess concerning that link. One requires freedom from family to be their own person and this

brings with it a sense of autonomy and self-definition. At the same time this separation needs to be balanced out with connections and links. This is why for most of the town dwellers going to the *'kasi*' to be with friends and family may be considered an essential part of the middle class life that is part of being modern and progressive.

Most of this movement results in two distinct outcomes. First there is always a sense of pride when someone comes home from the big city. They have a certain way that they are received and behave. Secondly this also helps regenerate and reinforce the values that people grew up with or it may actually place them in the forefront of a war with ones' new beliefs. Either way the second way in which movement occurs is through either strengthening or weakening people's beliefs. The first instance is similar to the "bright lights theorem" which states that during the colonial era in most countries rural dwellers were drawn to the cities by bright lights. The migration of people to cities was also necessitated by individuals that would have come from the city and talk about their experiences. Much of this kind of work has been done by David Coplan (1994) with his work among Sotho migrant mine workers and by James Ferguson (1999) with Zambian copper-belt mine workers during the height of colonialism.

When people come home to Zimbabwe from South Africa they play the role of spreading a kind of gospel about life in South Africa. It is this characterisation of life in South Africa by returning or visiting migrant Zimbabweans that I will talk about in the following chapter. However it is important to note that this movement between South Africa and Zimbabwe is not only focusing on migrants that stay in South Africa who come to Zimbabwe, it also includes remittances and visitors that move from Zimbabwe to South Africa to visit their relatives but eventually return to Zimbabwe and talk about their experiences. This kind of

belonging to the group of migrants that I am working with is through belonging to Zimbabwe the home country.

In the summer of 2012 there was a graduation party for the granddaughter of the Mpofu's family friend which was held on their farm in Vereeniging. I tagged along with Ben, Tony and Timothy. We got to the farm and we were immediately blown away by the size and extent of development at the farm. There were stretching fields of irrigated maize and potatoes as well as a herd of around 60 cattle. The way the farm was structured was no different from the way the owner's father's farm was like in Masvingo. As such people congregated in more or less the same fashion as if they would have in Masvingo. Aunts and uncles of the graduand had flown in from Kenya and the grandparents had come in from Zimbabwe.

When we got there the Mpofu family took up their positions and Mary went to the kitchen to help with the food and the boys sat with the other men on the garden chairs overlooking the rolling fields of green maize. This was with the exception of Ben who was instructed to be the mc and director of ceremonies. As such he was running around preparing the sitting arrangements while I worked to make sure the sound system was up and running. When all of the formal proceedings were over and it was now time for people to relax and chat, Sekuru Chihowa called everyone to order so that he could address us. While he was delighted about his granddaughter graduating he was even more pleased with the way the Chihowa family and the Mpofu family had strong ties despite the fact that both families knew each other from Zimbabwe and this event was being held

in South Africa. This brought him great joy at the unity displayed by these two families.

These events are not uncommon and they perform both a latent and manifest function. The manifest function is indeed fostering and maintaining relations between individuals who create for themselves family units that form part of their new extended family unit. This is important among migrants as these units offer security and act as safety nets that serve the same function that the extended family plays back in Zimbabwe. The other more latent function that is played by these events is reinforcing identities. When this event occurred it was exclusively attended by Zimbabweans except for a Zambian uncle who had married the grandaunt's aunt. Most of the family members who were there were resident in South Africa.

While talking about collective memory, Coser (1992) quotes Halbwachs who states that in the social life of any group there are times in which the group comes together to celebrate and remember events that are important to the social life of the group. He called this phenomenon collective effervescence. Adopted from the work done by Durkheim on the development of scholasticism[3], collective effervescence was a way of addressing how it is that people continue to remember not only who they are but how they got to be where they are and how they are connected to the wider context of the collective. Therefore people would meet up as a collective on selected days of the year that were set aside for commemorative purposes. Through the celebration and mingling that would take place members of the collective would once more reconnect to their past and strengthen group

[3] In Durkheim's, "The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life" the concept was crucial in establishing how it is that people experience the transcendent moral authority of society as 'sacred' through the routine nature of ritual.

solidarity through collective remembering. This kind of event is characterised by creation and renovation. This means that ideas of belonging are reinforced and the reasons why people are where they are now can be revisited and talked about in ways that further strengthen the resolve of the migrants. It is for this reason that Sekuru Chihowa was happy that the families were close.

Be that as it may, situations of collective effervescence can not only be found in this kind of event in which visitors come from Zimbabwe and mingle with their families in South Africa. Popular holidays such as Christmas and Easter see a lot of migrants going back home to Zimbabwe to be with their families. One such event is describes below.

> *People were waiting for the Mpofu boys and their friends to come home for their father's memorial. This event took place in Masvingo at the beginning of January of 2013. The squadron of friends that I was working with had established relations so strong with each other that even in Zimbabwe the families were now close as well. This created further unity between the various families. On the day of the memorial there was a convoy of South African cars that streamed to the graveyard on the opposite end on the outskirts of town. As they snaked their way in town going back to Morningside, the area where the boys all came from, onlookers were astonished and amazed at the number of cars that had foreign licence plates. For those that knew the Mpofu family and saw the boys driving their cars en route to Morningside, they followed and got there just in time for lunch.*
>
> *The number of people that had been anticipated was exceeded due to the number of people who had just joined in the convoy. However despite this fact*

there was more than enough food for all the people that were present. The Mpofu daughters-in-law as well as other relatives had prepared a great meal of exotic taste. On the menu was Jamaican rice and Indian Biryani with chapatti and fried chicken and stewed beef. All this was served in disposable paper plates and proved to be a new and dignifying experience not only for the Mpofu family but to the rest of the congregants, and it inspired them to emulate a job well done. This was not the ordinary everyday meal, let alone for such a huge event. It was a significant break from the usual pap with boiled cabbage and poorly stewed beef that people usually had at such events. This surprised the people who were gathered for the memorial ceremony.

What is important here is the way in which the projected reality on the part of the boys in foreign cars serves to confirm the idea that life in South Africa is as good as imagined. It is no small feat to organise the memorial service the way they had. The display of material clout trumps up the actual lived experiences of the boys when they are in South Africa. However this does not seem to matter because the real function that this display of affluence is supposed to serve has been met. As I was mingling with the young men that had attended the service, only one thing was on their lips. That was how South Africa produced opportunities for people to live out their dreams as evidenced by this display. While this may provide motivation for those that may wish to go to South Africa, it also helps reinforce the resolve in the people who are already there to keep doing what they are doing.

The moment that a person who once lived in South Africa and lived through the disappointment of trying to get ahead in their endeavours, is present at such gatherings, this produces a unique situation. They tend to try and reveal the truth about how life in

South Africa really is. This often tends to contradict with the production of a 'reality' that is palatable with the onlookers who envy the South African life style. This tends to reveal the cracks that exist within the ritual event that the visiting migrants will be participating in. Such a situation often produces tensions and the result of which is mostly a deconstruction of the view that life in South Africa is glamorous. This incredulity towards the imagined South African lifestyle is constructed in much the same way as the credibility is created in the first place. Trouillot (1995) posits that history, like social reality is always in a state of active transformation. The more we query what we know about the present or the past, the more we produce new and inclusive realities about both. One guy who was present, who I shall call Daniel, challenged the picture that was being painted by the conclusions made by most of the people present. He said that he had been to South Africa and he had lived there with his brother as he was looking for work. He recalled how his brother barely had any savings to send home to their parents. At this moment it ceased to be a discussion between him and the Mpofu boys but it was now between him and the crowd he was addressing. They started to question him about his brother's job and qualifications and whether he had proper documentation. This attack on his brother created in the group a sense of solidarity with the evidence of prosperity that was before their eyes. They were collectively 'policing' the boundaries of acceptable discourse around 'life in South Africa', ensuring consensus by shouting down a dissenter. Another way of doing this is to prevent communication with people back home in Zimbabwe, (Worby 2010).

Now in the examples that I have just talked about one thing is clear. These kinds of movement between South Africa and Zimbabwe work ultimately for the same goal albeit in different ways depending on the direction of movement. Movement of visitors to South

Africa and congregations by Zimbabweans in South Africa serve two purposes. One is to strengthen group solidarity and the second is to strengthen the resolve of the migrant. Movement to Zimbabwe also has two purposes. One is to create in others the desire to come to South Africa and also the creation of a certain kind of fantasy of life across the border. The second purpose, much like in the movement to South Africa is to also to reinforce the drive that the migrant has about working in South Africa. Staying in Zimbabwe does not gain him much popularity or fame. Hence visiting Zimbabwe reminds them of the reason why they moved to South Africa in the first place.

Taking a look at space and belonging in this way automatically presents methodological challenges of how to delimit the extent of the research. This is why I had to reconsider putting rigid boundaries and focusing solely on the events taking place in Midrand. Clearly as seen above Midrand is the centre stage in which the behaviour that forms the crux of this research takes place. However in order to understand this behaviour in context one has to understand how Midrand sits at the heart of a complex relationship between other places and ideas of what it means to be middleclass. This also speaks to the core of what this chapter has been about. This is showing that Midrand should be seen in two lights. One is Midrand, the place, along with all the relationships that it shares with other geographic spaces. The other light is Midrand, the concept. Here Midrand embodies a certain kind of ideal that is aspired to by not only my research participants but by all other young, ambitious, middleclass families and individuals that call Midrand home. In trying to grasp the contours of ethical reflection on infidelity, it is so crucial to keep these two dimensions of 'Midrand' in mind as they provide a base for the paradox of infidelity. Midrand offers

characteristics of a middleclass that is aspired to yet the very same characteristics are elusive and thus feed the drive towards attaining them.

CHAPTER 4

Misty promises and the reality of South African life

The existential form of male infidelity among Zimbabwean migrants in Midrand is complex. It hinges on a lot of factors. However the pivot about which it turns is not always romance, love or intimacy, or rather the lack of these in a relationship, as may generally be held to be the case. There has been a tendency by my interlocutors to frame what they do in a context of an imagined South African subjectivity.

The disjuncture between an inability for Zimbabwean migrants living in South Africa to live up to a certain standard of life, and the availability of opportunities that are imagined as being able to provide migrants with that particular kind of lifestyle becomes a key point in understanding the frustrations that the migrants face. This very reality if brought into being by a series of factors, some of which are lodged into the minds of the migrant. However, much of this frustration centres on the way in which life in South Africa is imagined by the migrants as they cross the border.

> *On a chilly Saturday evening the Mpofu family got a visit from their cousin Francis, who was coming from Zimbabwe. It was decided that he be taken to Busy Corner, a chisa nyama (a bar which revolves around barbeque) in Ivory Park. He marvelled at the paradox between its simple architectural form and the sophistication of the crowd it attracted. We sat outside in full view of the beautiful cars that were parked as well as the people that got in. To this whole spectacle he had one remark; "ndokuti murikurarama muJoni uku" (this is real living in Johannesburg). This apt description is at the heart of the imagination of*

what life in South Africa could or should be like. This view is held by most Zimbabweans in Zimbabwe although this presents a very different reality for those that are actually staying in South Africa.

What spoke to Francis the most was the attire that almost all of the female patrons had on. They wore short hip hugging shorts and miniskirts that exposed their legs to more than just the elements. Their tight tops and push up bras completed their party apparel, but shocked Francis as he was not accustomed to such a dress code in Zimbabwe. He admitted that should he come to work in South Africa he would need to bring his wife to help him out with such temptations as he was seeing. While the desire to engage with the women that he saw was not the primary motivation for his desire to come and work in South Africa, they had surely become a strong factor. Ben indicated that should Francis come to work in South Africa, apart from having a good job that opened opportunities to a good car and decent accommodation, women would literally through themselves at a working man.

In this short account about the expectations from the life of a middleclass working man, the picture that is painted of life in South Africa is one that includes a good job, a descent house, a nice car and lots of disposable income both for development of a retirement home back in Zimbabwe as well as for parties and unrestricted access to beautiful local women. It is also imagined that life in South Africa will be relatively more comfortable. This inclusion of women as part and parcel of the perks to be enjoyed in a life in South Africa automatically reveals the desire to have sexual relations with people other than their partners and wives. The way in which women are included as part of the total package that the men are

supposed to enjoy reveals that male infidelity in this case does not stem from an inadequacy of their wives or dissatisfaction with their marriage. Rather it is an attempt to lead particular kind of life that I held to some esteem.

Mbembe (2001) and Worby (1998) talk about a politics of excess in the post colony and the ways in which a display of opulence on the part of the state reveals the immense power that it wields. At any rate, displays of excess and opulence in post-apartheid South Africa, especially among the up and coming young black and, in some cases, BEE fed middleclass, revolve around fast cars, big houses, extravagant parties and most importantly women. As accessories of the rich and powerful, the allure of having a beautiful woman on one's arm adds that sparkle to the glitz and glamour that inscribes success. With numerous stories of scandals involving power and sex in South Africa surfacing ever more frequently than is understood by the wards of those in power, one is prompted to ask critical questions about the relationship between power and sex.

What about power and success requires one to have a bevy of women at one's disposal? How, why and for whom does a display of such excess typify success? What does this objectification and materialisation of women say about the ways in which the post-apartheid South African society understands success and development? Many questions have been asked about the sincerity of public officials amassing vast amounts of wealth at the expense of the people they lead. These phenomena cut across national politics to religion and the critique of Pentecostalism. This excess of wealth and the extravagant display of easily disposable income has a dual nature. Firstly it offers credibility and is the evidence of success. Secondly it lures the ordinary man into a lifestyle that speaks of the success of making it big.

When most of my interlocutors left Zimbabwe they left in search for better jobs that could give them better prospects in life. This involved living a particular kind of lifestyle that reflected their level of education and therefore their self-worth as men, (Ngwane 2004). Life in South Africa has seemed to be overly glamorised and overly simplified. During the years of economic decline in Zimbabwe, which is also the same time that most of my interlocutors left Zimbabwe, there was a general belief that anywhere was better than Zimbabwe. Due to its proximity to Zimbabwe and the amplified reputation of a glorious life in "*Egoli*", most saw South Africa as a land of milk and honey. Adding to the mix are stories by those who had previously travelled[4] to South Africa about various kinds of indulgences such as alcohol, parties and women, and how money was easy to come by. Most of these people were low level blue collar workers but nonetheless painted a picture of lavish life styles that they led in South Africa. Their new wardrobes and the large quantities of groceries and income that they brought with them to show off their new found riches also worked towards the authentication of their stories.

> *Steven told me that the moment he finished his first degree in Zimbabwe in 2004 he came straight to South Africa. He had been told of all the wonderful stories about work being easy to find and the money being good. This is what motivated him to come to South Africa alone and with only a small hand held bag full of hope, aspirations of the future and his clothes. He recounted how he toiled the streets of downtown Johannesburg looking for employment he never found. It was only after two weeks that he found a job as a driver and he had no more money to take a taxi to work and he would walk from Hillbrow to Kenilworth (a*

[4] This phenomenon is akin to the 18th century labour migrations in which returning migrants spoke of the wonders they had seen in the towns, Murray (1981), Ferguson (1990), Coplan (1994), Raftopoulos and Phimister (1997) and Raftopoulos and Yoshikuni (1999).

distance of about 7,3km according to google maps) on foot just to get to his place of employment. Such harsh conditions are the realities that only a migrant living in South Africa could see for themselves.

However, the most interesting thing is how, despite such harsh challenges, when Steven went back home he never told anyone of his toils but presented a situation in which life in South Africa was fun but for the strong hearted. He also told his friends in Zimbabwe of the beautiful South African women that were in abundance. However he confessed to me that stories of the women were only just stories because despite how much he would have wanted to be with them he didn't have the money or the time to do so because he was busy looking for money. Therefore the rift between the actual and the perceived became continually self-perpetuating. It is this self-replicating nature that creates within the imagination of the prospective migrants, a distorted image of how life in South Africa actually is.

While having casual drinks at the party of his niece's first birthday, I met Moyo, who with Daniel told me of the disappointment that they had faced working in South Africa. Moyo was a low level accountant at a consulting firm in Sandton. He had lived and worked in Johannesburg for over five years and yet he had resigned and gone back to the country from which he had fled citing a lack of opportunities. Moyo had left South Africa in 2010 and had vowed to never return. He told me of how he was living a good life in South Africa. He had a good job and drove a nice car and managed to put his then two- year-old-daughter in a great day-care centre as both he and his wife were employed full time.

However, this was not enough for him. Moyo made reference to how he could never have any savings. His major complaint was that despite the great house and the good car he drove, it did not seem as if he was making any progress insofar as his life back home in Zimbabwe was concerned. He conceptualised real development and upward mobility as not only having a comfortable life here in South Africa, but showing off your material clout through tangible developments back in Zimbabwe. In the entire five years he had been in South Africa since 2005 he had not managed to build a house let alone buy one.[5] *The ability to buy or build a house in Zimbabwe while working in South Africa was something only those in higher positions such as managers could afford to do. "My take home (net salary) was not enough for me to make any serious investments back home", Moyo lamented. "The only way that I could even begin to afford a huge undertaking back home was if I could get a promotion, but you know how it is with these South Africans. There is too much nepotism and while I do most of the work my immediate boss was a young boy who didn't know anything and would often put his name on my work after I submitted it to him."*

Life in South Africa is seen as just a temporary stop along the way towards achieving the ultimate goal of ensuring a safe and secure future back home. Visits from Walter and Matika usually amplify this fact. Walter is an I.T specialist at a Zimbabwean telecoms company. For him, South Africa is a playground where he

[5] Similarities are evident in James Ferguson's description of what he termed the 'Bovine Mystique'. Ferguson (1990) notes that Sotho migrant workers invested in cattle long before they retired as a way of protecting their savings from the claims of kin. They would buy the cattle with their pensions on arrival in Lesotho from working in the mines in Johannesburg and Kimberly. As such cattle were seen as an investment that would provide sustenance long after they have retired. Therefore the conviction with which Sotho migrant labourers strove towards setting up a pension system of sorts based on cattle is the same one which my interlocutors also possessed.

comes to spend his money with his friends. On one occasion Walter came for a workshop in Sandton and we all went to see him. On the final day of the workshop we went out for drinks and Water spent close to R900 on alcohol for six people. When it came to paying, Tony and Steven were embarrassed by the fact that they could not afford to help settle the bill. Walter on the other hand didn't seem bothered by this because he said that he had invited us so he is the one who would pay for the drinks. On the way home Tony lamented that he felt less of a man for not being able to help with the bill. He also said that he was supposed to be able to take out his friends if they visit him in South Africa and the reverse was also true should he visit them in Zimbabwe. Though in part attributing it to the declining Rand-Dollar conversion rate, he also noted that people in Zimbabwe seem to have more disposable income than he and his friends here in South Africa. For Ben the reason why they had come to South Africa was so that they could prepare for a better present and a better future.

South Africa is seen as a place that provides a means to an end, rather than as a place that is an end in itself. The precariousness of being a foreigner in a foreign land added to the anxieties that acted as motivation to create a solid foundation for a future back in Zimbabwe. Therefore, what one might describe as progress had little to do with the joys of a comfortable life in South Africa, but rather the creation of a comfortable life in Zimbabwe. This would come about as a result of either building or buying a house in Zimbabwe, being able to fully furnish it, having enough savings to make life back in Zimbabwe comfortable. Therefore, according to Moyo, South Africa was one huge illusion in which the hopes of having a better life are as real and equally, as intangible "as mist in the morning air."

Therefore the inability to fulfil his objective of securing a stable future in Zimbabwe was seen as a necessary reason to move from South Africa back to Zimbabwe where, although opportunities were not as many and the money not as good, he could avoid the debt trap. He could also avoid the illusion of owning things that were not completely his such as the rented house, the car on credit as well as the clothes. For him Zimbabwe was a better place in the sense that you could own all your possessions debt free and therefore be able to have considerable savings.

> *This predicament was not unique as Daniel also narrated a similar ordeal. Daniel was in Cape Town for a period of nine months in 2010. He had left Zimbabwe soon after completing his finance degree in search for better prospects in South Africa. In Cape Town he was staying with his mother and had gotten an internship which only seemed to pay him enough to be able to go to work each morning. He told me that he had grown dissatisfied with an inability to move out of his mother's house and into his own apartment or save up enough money to pay lobola for his girlfriend. For Daniel South Africa had given false hope of a future that never came. Therefore his imaginings of a better future seemed lost and therefore for him the only logical option was to go back to Zimbabwe where he stayed jobless for two years until he managed to become the finance manager of one of the many micro-credit lending companies that continue to mushroom all over in Zimbabwe.*

These two cases provide a glimpse into the frustrations that a lot of migrants face when they come to South Africa. They soon found out that the promises were, as described by Moyo, as real and as intangible as the morning mist. The perks of driving a nice car and

living in a fancy house, eating good food and wearing classy clothes was all a disappointing mirage that added to the city's ability to swallow migrants who tend to follow and chase after fools' gold for years without ever getting any. The Daniels and Moyos are the lucky individuals that tend to extricate themselves from the vicious debt trap cycle. However the same cannot be said for the many that fall prey to the promises of a better life.

The contradiction that exists between the imagined subjectivity and the lived reality creates a problem space that Hunter (2010) frames in terms of contested masculinities. For Hunter (2010) there is a direct relationship between life course, work and respect. For the young men in KwaZulu Natal that he talks about, the inability to marry and have a family calls their masculinity into question as they are unable to get a job that may offer them enough to start a family. It is this discrepancy between reality and the imagined subjectivity that reorients the ways in which marital relations have been structured. This is not to say that male infidelity had not been in existence before.

While this may seem to be the case it is rather inadequate to assert that the prevailing situation is a modernisation of the classical case of male infidelity. A strong case can be made for the idea that the general socio-political and economic landscape has seen a modification of infidelity that does little more than re-inscribe the same old patriarchal system of oppression, albeit in new ways. Be that as it may, my argument here is that this line of thinking does not seem to take into account the ways in which aspirations of a certain kind of subjectivity create a base upon which to study class and its influences on the lives of the migrants.

The form that it is taking among these Zimbabwean migrants in Midrand exemplifies the fresh contact that Cole (2004) talks about. Here Cole (2004) notes that when a younger

generation comes into contact for the first time with a new cultural phenomenon they tend to change it to suit their present realities. In this instance the men have good jobs; however they have been exposed to the reality of their inability to live off their dreams. As their hopes and aspirations for a better life whither, they try to hold on to the last bits of their imagined dreams through engaging in poly-amorous activities. This kind of behaviour is just a mirage and a façade. Its purpose is to keep up appearances and sustain the lie of living the kind of life that had been imagined. However this also speaks to the sexual relations between these married men and local women, on the one hand, and the imagined life in South Africa on the other.

These kinds of behaviour only seem to retain efficacy if performed to the right audience. This audience is mostly other men within the same social sphere and visiting Zimbabwean men. In a sense this is a microcosm of the macrocosm. The same way that flashy clothes and fast cars, good houses and great food acts as a smoke screen to the migrants and prevents them from asking broader questions about their inability to leave behind a legacy, the strip club and places like 'Busy Corner' also help in hiding from the eye of the visitor the amount of unfulfilled dreams. Like a vicious cycle, these places of leisure crystallise the skewed representation of South African life and thus perpetuate the fallacy of a South African dream.

Middleclass lifestyle

Chipkin (2013) points out that the deracialisation of the labor market at the end of the apartheid era saw the emergence of a racially mixed middleclass. In Midrand this does seem to be pretty much the case. There is the emergence of a racially mixed middle class. What does seem to be a trend is that while not so much interracial interaction seems to be at play

within the complexes, it does seem to be happening on the sporting fields. People who may be staying in different areas based on differences in income find themselves together for soccer and all its variations as well as cricket and all its variations. All my participants play one or the other or both sports except Matthew and Tinashe. Sports are an integral part of what it means to be middleclass. They embody the ideals of health and fitness and can be used to indicate belonging to an elite depending upon where they are played and who participates. They are also provide a space for multiracial mingling to occur.

Alice, Steven 's wife, once said that it is only the rich that care about their health and the rest of the poor people do not bother themselves with eating healthy as they are busy trying to eat at all. Within the community of my interlocutors this statement did prove to have relevance. Health issues were issues that everyone collectively began to obsess about. Even before Matthew had been admitted in hospital for having a weak heart and almost being on the brink of having a heart attack due to his weight, people had already started talking about keeping fit and eating healthy. Matthew had been informed by doctors that his blood stream was being clogged by fat that was in his blood. After a week in hospital he was discharged and ordered to change his diet and to start exercising. This incident at the beginning of 2014 further strengthened the resolve of the other people in his network to also become health conscious.

Taken at face value this does not seem to be particularly middleclass behavior; however it is only upon closer examination of what this group of Zimbabweans considered to be middleclass does one begin to understand how through pursuing better health one would become increasingly middleclass. This speaks to the theme of the connection between Zimbabwe and South Africa that runs throughout this work. Alice's statement therefore has

to be read within a context in which matters of health were not considered high on the priority list in Zimbabwe during the time that most of my interlocutors decided to move to South Africa. Few people were concerned about their health as they were in survival mode. For this reason a true indicator of the shift within their socioeconomic conditions would have to be in terms of health. Apart from going to the gym which seemed to be more popular with the wives than the husbands, the husbands played sport. Monday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings were dedicated to indoor cricket for Steven. The rest of the people would go to play 5-a-side, a form of indoor mini soccer, on Wednesday and regular soccer on Friday night and the whole of Saturday. Therefore sport was seen as a way for one to get into shape and lose excess body fat. As such, recreational sport was seen also as an escape from the pressures of their nine to five jobs. To be able to release this kind of pressure through sport was seen as the ultimate marker of how middleclass and progressive they had become. Therefore health through sport seemed to be an open declaration of success.

However it was not only the fact that sport was seen as a way to keep fit, but who could be included and where they played that also added to the imagined subjectivity of a middleclass individual. Indoor soccer and 5-a-side was played at a sports club in Sandton. The location on its own is located in the flashy neighborhood of Sandton and therefore the rights of admission were exclusively reserved. It is entry by invitation only and it is this very fact that speaks to the migrants as having been accepted into the league of an elitist middleclass that has its manifestation through sports. It is here that corporate companies create their own football leagues and play in a mixed race environment which allows directors of companies to play with the office clerks and as such increases the feeling of belonging which these companies are after. However this, on the part of the migrants that

participate, affirms their middleclass status and is seen as confirmation of the success that they strive to seek.

> *Apart from the frequent sporting events that my interlocutors were accustomed to, they had also taken up jogging. Like clockwork, from 7:20pm to 8:00pm they would go on a 4km jog and some exercises. This run was ritualistic in that it was only for the men and no matter how much the wives tried to join the men were adamant. What is important to note here is both the fact that they loved to jog and also why they jogged and what jogging did for them. The very first day that the jog began almost all of the guys were sceptical, with the exception of Tony and Ben who played soccer every Thursday night and every Saturday. Tinashe and Timothy thought that it was eccentric behaviour and the sole preserve of the white and the rich. However despite this reluctance people eventually got the hang of it, all except Matthew who apart from being the biggest of us all, always provided an excuse not to join in the run.*

The jog created a space in which the guys could talk about their aspirations, and Tony and Steven were always the first to talk about what they would do if they could just get their hands on a million rand. What these kinds of conversations revealed was their need for social mobility. While the intensity of their desire to get a hold of a million rand may have been somewhat low, it is the conviction with which they spoke about being able to provide better lives and opportunities for their young families that made these conversations powerful. Their desires cannot be separated from those of the wider middle class that also had dreams of buying expensive cars and homes all as an outward revelation of their material clout. Therefore the jog worked towards social cohesion in the group and their

conversations about wanting to succeed in life only seemed to act like the glue that bonded the group together. This is the kind of imagined community that not only Anderson (1982) talks about. Lovell (1998), Tiryakian (2011), Powers (2011) and Fine and van den Scott (2011) all point towards the fact that there is also a creation of micro-communities based on the same principles of the imagined community as described by Anderson (1982), although these micro-communities may be induced by a commonality of ideas and the rootedness in the same intellectual precepts.

In this chapter I have tried to draw attention to the strong desire for an imagined middleclass lifestyle and how migrants see themselves as entitled to these kinds of lifestyles. On the other hand we see how there is so much frustration in terms of accessing this ideal standard of life. This dialogue between desire and frustration is therefore a crucial framework for understanding the analysis of sexual practices that will come in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 5

Sex actually

The purpose of this chapter is to look at the actual activities that are carried out by my interlocutors. In this chapter I also try to address some of the major questions I had about the ways in which justifications were being rendered concerning cheating.

One Friday back in February of 2013 as I was making my way to Midrand from Johannesburg I met up with Timothy, Moses, Samuel and Ted at HomeBoys. This was a bar in Midrand that seemed to have only been just a level above a shebeen. Awkwardly placed between a taxi rank, Midrand Hyper and a chain of Nigerian owned salons, Homeboys was just a dodgy looking place that seemed to oddly entertain a lot of Zimbabweans and a lot of Nigerians. I found the group congregated around their drinks and standing in the open space close to what can best be described as an eating booth. In it was a light guy of a heavy build eating pap and roasted steak with a lady who seemed slightly overdressed for the establishment she was hanging in.

It is here that I found Ted talking about the politics of prostitutes and the ways they differ from place to place. The conversation started with a debate over the place with the highest HIV prevalence. Ted was saying that it was KwaZulu Natal had by far the highest prevalence of HIV and AIDS in South Africa. He said that the women that came from the area where he worked were all party lovers and for them sex wasn't anything sacred. They took it as helping each other out. A girl that you may have a one night stand with would wake up the next day and forget

they had even met you. Ted lamented that it was a futile endeavour to fall in love with her because she would basically treat you as a stranger, and she would move on to the next person. It was a sort of unwritten code that sex was easily accessible and the number one rule was that it was not personal. The sexual marketplace was one with its own rules of engagement and a set of moral precepts that went with it. Ted described a situation in which sex was rarely exchanged for material benefits. This led him to believe that the girls were very easy and they were cheap. According to Ted due to the impoverished state of the people of New Castle sex became inexpensive. More often than not the girls would ask him to buy them a kotha (this is a quarter loaf of bread with fresh potato chips and stewed meat stuffed in the middle).

Ted further explained that while these women were not expensive, they also had a very peculiar fear of money. They thought that if you had too much money and you could afford to provide for their every need then you were to be treated with the utmost caution and suspicion. Making reference to himself he said that if he spent the weekend with a girl she would only request transport money to go back home and to come again the following weekend. As such he would give the girl R50 and she would be overjoyed. Transport to her home is R10 and so a return trip only costs R20 and the remaining R30 would be her thank you present. In some instances most of his friends would only give the girl R30 and it was still considered generous.

Just after this elaborate discussion there came a girl to where we were and she asked for a R1 coin. As she did so her eyes were darting from one guy to the next

and scanning us quickly from top to bottom. Samuel who was the only one seated on a metal bar stool to my immediate left reached into his pocket and took out a R2 rand coin and handed it to her. She made her way to the bar where she bought a wad of toilet paper and disappeared into the toilet. She hadn't been gone for 5 minutes then she came back and went straight to Samuel with the R1 change in the left hand and the same unused wad of tissue in the right. She just came and hugged him and started wiping his face with the tissue he had bought for her. We all started to laugh as Samuel was trying to wrestle the girl away from him. I pretended as if nothing was happening and then she greeted me and I reciprocated and turned away to my original position.

As she turned to walk away the guys were now laughing uncontrollably. Timothy was now saying that the girl was marking her territory on Samuel's face with a tissue paper dabbed in her urine like a lioness marking her territory. This sparked yet another round of similar stories by Ted. For him, men only knew how to make money and we didn't know a thing about having fun. These women were way ahead of us in terms of knowing how to play at men who were unsuspecting. Just as this girl had done, they were said to target men based on the nature of their conversation, the type of drink they had, how fast they drank it and how they appeared. A very beautiful girl would thus walk up to a target and give him a French kiss as a way of not only making her intentions known to the unsuspecting man, but as a way of telling the rest of the women in the bar that this man is taken.

It is such conversations that reveal the way in which sex can be seen as existing outside of the context of infidelity.

While I was still trying to wrap my mind around this interesting conversation Timothy asked Samuel if he would have had the same reaction if the girl was beautiful, well-built and well dressed. This question was laughed off in a manner that just told volumes. I then asked why the first situation was seen as revolting and why the hypothetical one was ok when both instances were clearly boiling down to the same thing, cheating. At this point I was now the centre of attraction as I seemed to have opened up Pandora's proverbial box. This question had been a long time coming and the answer long overdue. All the while doing fieldwork among this group of Zimbabwean migrants, I would often hear them complain that their partners feel they do not love them purely because they had been unfaithful. It was at this moment that I sought to understand how it is that these young men argue about and debate what constitutes a morally justifiable position from which love and infidelity are seen, to them, as compatible.

Timothy was the first to jump on the opportunity to 'set me straight'. He pointed out that there was a difference between cheating and what they did. What Ted was explaining is that what they did could not be counted as cheating solely because they were not emotionally invested to the women that they were involved with. To qualify as 'cheating' there would have to be emotional investment in the relationship. This is what set apart cheating and what they considered to be just casual sex. However it seemed to me that casual sex on its own did already constitute cheating since the idea of fidelity and monogamy had

been subverted. I was not satisfied by their response and thus I could not stop questioning how it is that cheating or not cheating only rested on the technicality that there was no emotional investment because they all out rightly showed a disapproval of the same behaviour from their wives, whether or not their wives were 'emotionally involved' with their extramarital partners. How then was it that it was ok for the men to engage in this kind of behaviour and not their wives?

What became apparent was the fact that male infidelity had a lot to do with what it meant to be a man and what this kind of masculinity did and meant for group identity. Further conversations seemed to point towards the aspect of male infidelity being buttressed by ideas of what it means to be suburban middleclass professionals in which these ideas are differently salient, and in which their lives are saturated by arguments and debates about their own behaviour and others in this respect. Because I had failed to understand the logic of their argument, we continued the conversation with Matthew the following weekend when he hosted a dinner for the whole group. It was a bring-and-share event that had been initiated by Steven since we were all drinking and no one wanted to have to break up the party. So the drinking session turned into a dinner that was held at Matthew's place.

As the women sat inside preparing the salads and marinating the meat, the men sat on the balcony and started a fire for the braai. It is here that I boldly asked Matthew for his view on why men cheat and whether he also subscribed to the notion that cheating is a matter of emotional involvement. He took the whole

issue in a totally different direction. He also did not consider it to be cheating but something that by virtue of being a man you would just find yourself doing. Matthew maintained that the one big difference between men and women was that men had the ability to just let things slide and not be emotionally attached. It is for this reason that what they were doing could not be counted as cheating. However it was said to be different for women. When women have sex with someone it is difficult for them not to feel an emotional connection. As Matthew was explaining this he received nods of approval from the rest of the people that were present. At this point Tinashe interjected and said that if a woman has sex with a man, she will think of the experience and replay it again and again in her mind; and if the experience was better than what she usually receives at home, it is possible that friction may occur. Therefore this kind of friction is what made it impossible for the woman to have a non-cheating sexual encounter with another man apart from her husband. For him the whole structure of male infidelity was constructed upon this kind of logic.

After 10pm the women went to sleep and we remained there talking. I asked the guys how long they lasted in bed with a 'side piece'. That was a pretty nice conversation starter as the guys started telling me about their experiences. Steven told me that when he first got together with his wife when they were still dating and staying together, he could have more than 18 rounds of sexual intercourse in one weekend. However as time went on things changed and he would go for three rounds a day then down to one round a day till he was saying if he could manage one round a week then he would have really worked because

he could now go as much as two weeks without sex. Edwin told us how he could sleep the whole night with a hard horn and wake his wife up for sex at odd hours of the night and how they could have a variety of positions but now he just does it for the high he gets from ejaculating. That is when Matthew told me that if it's a new 'pussy' then I would not be able to last more than two minutes. According to him the man increases the length of a session with time, as in the first round may be two minutes long then the second may be five minutes and the third may be seven minutes long. However for women the reverse is true. The intervals in between their climaxes reduce with time. "The secret with man", he proceeded in a hushed tone, "is that the best sex one could ever have is when you have a 'no ball[6]'". "Now you have to understand that your wife will not enjoy this and neither will your fling, but who cares coz the fling can rent and vent but she is not the important one so who cares". Steven interjected and said that the only way for him to feel rejuvenated is by having 'new pussy'. With much indifference he bluntly stated that I can't face my wife and attempt to shoot pool with a rope. The only way I can fix this is through 'new pussy'. It is such logic that forms the fundamental basis upon which much of their justifications of infidelity rest.

Interestingly this still was not counted as cheating. *Kungoisa chete munotyire zvakawanda?* "It's just sex so what's there to fear?" This was their popular phrase they used to rationalise their behaviour. Engaging in this kind of behaviour could not be counted as cheating because no feelings were involved and all the rules of engagement were met. These included who you could be with and ensuring that there was no money exchanged

[6] This is a term they use to describe a sexual encounter that is very quick and very intense so as to last less than a minute.

afterwards. Having to pay for sex was seen as highly unethical and the worst thing you could do to your partner because you would have degraded yourself to the level of having to pay for sex. It was just plain demeaning. So provided all these rules were kept, this behaviour could not be counted as cheating and was still seen as not going against the moral values that the group had set up for themselves.

Speaking with reference to the discussion that Ted was having at HomeBoys, Tony and Steven said they were disgusted. For them, the rules of engagement clearly stipulated that you don't go for junkies and money should never be the motivating factor within the sexual exchange. One should not have to buy sex for money but it should just be a mutual understanding that rests more on two people consenting to having fun and not one party being driven by poverty to sell their bodies for a plate of food or R30. It ultimately came down to where Ted worked and the kind of crowd he kept. His behaviour was considered disgraceful and unbefitting the kind of men that Tony and Steven envisioned themselves to be. When Tinashe and Ben heard about the claims that Ted had made they were equally repulsed. Ben pointed out that it was not Ted's fault as he worked and stayed in the heart of KZN and as a result lacked the air of sophistication that came from bedding a white collar professional woman.

> *Once, when Mary had gone to Zimbabwe for a weekend, Tony decided that we should go out and invite his former sexual acquaintance, Catherine. Catherine was a 24 year old Sotho woman who was working at one of the major banks. Their paths crossed as they had been staying in the same area. Tony was in it for the sex and Catherine was in it for the rewards. These rewards tended to manifest themselves in the form of drinks, dinner and partying, but most*

surprisingly for companionship as well. What Catherine was after was a typical 'boyfriend experience', (Milrod and Weitzer 2012), although she recognised that she could never have Tony as a boyfriend. Tony had just gotten married a few months prior to this encounter.

They had broken off the relationship because Catherine was beginning to have feelings for him and had started to make indications that Tony should stop going through with roora (lobola) negotiations for Mary and instead make a commitment to her. This had proved not to be palatable with Tony and he broke off the relationship. They were still on good terms despite having terminated their relationship the year before. Tony had since gotten married and Catherine had gotten herself a Zimbabwean boyfriend. On this particular occasion Tony had notified Catherine that we were coming to see her and take her out to Club Cubana for supper. Cubana was a posh restaurant where the up and coming in white collar corporate industry were spending some of their leisure time.

Speaking to Tony and Steven one lazy weekend, I was told that you don't just go for the 'junkies', a term that I quickly understood to mean women that are not well groomed. The whole point of even having a little something on the side was to make sure that you go for women that are accomplished and successful and most importantly not Zimbabwean. However, as Steven interjected, we are not gold diggers that are after these women's money or influence, it is these kinds of women that are able to be discrete and are not clingy. We understand that most of these women are lonely as most men may tend to be intimidated by their accomplishments. In this regard it was clear that there was a well-defined

criterion of how to choose a woman to have sexual relations with. These tight regulations came from careful planning based on experience. Almost all of the guys had their own stories to tell about when they had gotten caught. However, interesting enough, getting caught was not a major deterrent.

Timothy and Ben reiterated that it is mostly Zimbabwean women that are too clingy and once they have had sex with you they try to trap you so that you marry them. The underlying logic here was that these sexual encounters were supposed to be casual and not taken seriously. This is why South African women were preferred, because they did not seem to become attached. They were fully aware that the existing arrangement for their sexual encounters was that there are no strings attached and should anyone break that rule the relationship had to be called off. Zimbabweans however were not known for this kind of discretion. While they may start out the relationship being fully aware of this arrangement should they see that these men are accomplished and they may be able to be taken good care of, they shift goalposts and try to get rid of the wife or girlfriend.

In their 2012 article, Joseph and Black talked about the profile of sex work clients in America. They basically came up with two categories which are “fragile masculinities” and “consumer masculinities”. Those that fell into the bracket of fragile masculinities are men that were said to be uncomfortable around women and were “rejected by women in the sexual marketplace” and therefore lacked “non-commercial sexual alternatives”, (486-487). On the other hand, men that fell into the consumer masculinities group were characterised by “seeking a variety of partners and did not want the responsibilities of a relationship”, (Joseph and Black 2012; 486). Suffice it to say that Ted fell into the category of fragile masculinities. From the conversations that I continued to have with my interlocutors it was

made clear that to be considered a real man one should not be seen with what they considered to be inferior women. These inferior women included strippers, or those who were considered to be uneducated, unaccomplished “junkies”. The measure of a real man rested on one’s ability to access affluent beautiful independent South African professional women.

During the thirty months that I spent with my research participants, they did not purchase the services of sex workers. Their infidelity was restricted to co-workers and close associates, the likes of Catherine. However they do fit part of the profile of the consumer masculinity in that they sought after sexual release without emotional attachment (Joseph and Black 2012). They had no need for emotional attachment since they already had emotional attachment to their wives and girlfriends. Joseph and Black (2012) go on further to state that consumer masculinities tend to objectify and be violent towards women. However the objectification that they talk about is far from how participants in my research acted. What emerges from my findings is closer to what Rebhun (1999) talks about in relation to her study in Northeast Brazil: like her, I found that my friends were men who are just after a new experience, men who use the excitement of the covert relationship as a basis for sexual entertainment. The migrant men did not exhibit any traces of an objectification of women that surpassed the level of talking about their sexual exploits or that suggested violent tendencies either toward the women they would cheat with or their wives and girlfriends.

One aspect that stands out from the work of Joseph and Black (2012) is the aspect of non-commercial sexual alternatives. The peculiarity of this notion begs the question whether there is a real difference between paid and unpaid sexual alternatives. The type of women

that were favoured by my research participants were categorised by them as women of refined taste, who were independent and had their own jobs. They had enough financial resources not to require the monetary exchange akin to the purchase of sexual services. It was, rather, an issue of the nature of the exchange that existed and what was exchanged. There was a symbiotic relationship that existed. The men wanted a new sexual experience and the women wanted to be taken out and given what seemed to them to be a boyfriend experience, as indicated by what Catherine desired from the relationship with Tony, described above.

Desire and morality

According to Berlant's (2006) 'cruel optimism', there is a strong relationship between the object of desire and what it stands for and what we can potentially learn about the nature of attachment between the individual and the set of desires that he longs for. The object of desire is framed as a cluster of promises and obligations that one associates the object with. Therefore there is some form of nostalgic association that is tied up with the object. That is to say that the impetus towards acquiring the object of desire is a longing either for a certain kind of ideal or fantasised subjectivity, which seems to be the case with my interlocutors, or just to have the thrill of experiencing that object. This object ceases to exist solely in the dimension in which it has a singular meaning to its singular existence. The object becomes desired on the basis of the kinds of feelings, obligations, and promises that it stands for in the mind of the one who desires it. Therefore being close to the object of desire is seen as being closer to the cluster of promises associated with the object of desire.

Having an extra marital affair with a local woman therefore becomes the object of desire. This object embodies all of the things that comprise the imagined South African standard of

life and expectations and promises. To have that kind of relationship would mean that one has achieved what they were supposed to achieve. Therefore the optimism exists in the sense that having such a relationship draws one closer to the total package of expectations. This is the reason why Steven was saying that it doesn't matter what conditions I may be living under. As long as one can say, "I am having this person come over for sex," or "I am having sex with that other person," then that creates an image of fulfilling the ideal notion of a successful life by what is presumed to be the South African standard. The cruelty of this optimism, however, exists in the sense that the feelings of attachment to the cluster of promises may be as close to the reality of actually living them as the individual may ever get. Just because you wish hard enough and reside within such close proximity to the cluster of promises does not mean that you are necessarily enjoying them. Therefore this reveals the cruelty of optimism. Regardless of how self-destructive the object of desire may be, the fascination and optimism with the promises compels the individual to continue in their path of continued desire.[7]

In his seminal book "*The Division of Labour in Society*', Durkheim (1893) defined anomie as a situation in which cultural norms break down because of rapid change. It is only one of the two causes of anomie that I find worthwhile to talk about in this section. Durkheim (1893) states that anomie may be caused when there is such an economic boom such that there is no limit to people's goals. This creates a situation in which people do not know how to limit their goals or desires nor be satisfied with their achievements. In a sense this produces the

[7] Berlant's concept of cruel optimism stems from her research on the US media, politics and advertising and its associations with 'intimate publics'. It therefore remains to be seen whether the this concept, in the manner in which I apply it in this research, can also be applicable to Local South African unemployed men in trying to understand their frustrations and motivations for infidelity. The same can also be said of civil servants in Zimbabwe. Ultimately this leaves the debate open as to the extent to which cross border migration accounts for the concept of 'cruel optimism'.

same kind of feelings as that of my interlocutors where their pursuit of the objects they desire fails to produce a feeling of fulfilment. Durkheim points out that the more that people in this situation try to achieve their desired goals, the more they have a feeling of dissatisfaction with their present achievements. This is a result of a lack of limits to their desires. The moment they reach a certain level they may have set for themselves in the hope that this level is the highest that can be attained, they soon realise that there is yet another one above that and another one beyond that. As a result if happiness is premised on the attainment of the highest goals possible they could never be happy for there is no limit to the goals that they seek.

It is for this very reason that Berlant (2006) cautions that when looking at objects of desire, we should not see this desire as a, "confirmation of our irrationality, but as an explanation for our sense of *our endurance in the object*, insofar as proximity to the object means proximity to the cluster of things that the object promises…" (2006:20). What starts out as a desire for proximity to the cluster of promises soon becomes an aspiration that yields bravado and camaraderie among the men. It creates a bond among the men that hinges on an aspiration towards group identity and a sense of belonging. This kind of belonging, as shall be discussed in later chapters, is to an ideal that best describes and exemplifies the ideal kind of manhood that my migrant interlocutors try to live up to. Therefore all their actions are directed towards achieving the goal of becoming certain kinds of men that are progressive, middleclass, suburban and successful.

Such kinds of attachments are similar in conceptual scope as Boym's (2001) definition of nostalgia. She defines it as a longing for a home that no longer exists or has never existed. This she tries to explain through the example of a German couple who went to the ruins of a

Prussian city. The feeling of nostalgia they had was not based on their own experiences, but rather on the stories that their parents told them. Therefore nostalgia is also a romance with one's own fantasy, (Boym 2001; xiii). Nostalgia is also said to best survive as a long distance relationship between binary opposites. These opposites include home and abroad, past and present, dream and real life. It is this very phenomenon that comes as a way of reconciling the contradictory affective dimensions of cruel optimism. The existence of cruel optimism in the form described above is therefore not seen to be as cruel if approached in the manner that Boym (2001) explains the relationship between the binary opposites of nostalgia.

Nostalgia exists as a longing for either a place or a time. It is this longing that automatically signifies the existence of a proximal distance between two reference points, i.e. past and present, ideal and reality. The object of desire also signifies the same distance. It is only through the existence of this distance that we can begin to understand the optimism involved. This optimism is the same longing that one has for the hoped for and the longed for object. Whether this desired object has been experienced before or not becomes inconsequential. What becomes important is the presence of continued improvement and advancements towards the realisation of the desired promises. As such the desired promises, through the optimism of realisation, become the impetus for the continued struggle for the realisation of the desires, whether or not they may eventually be realised. This may probably account for the persistence with which my interlocutors pursue these extra marital relations as well as better paying jobs.

Boym (2001) states that nostalgia is ambiguous and its desires are elusive. She states that no nostalgic can accurately pin point what they really want, whether it is a place or a time. It

is this elusive nature that resonates well with Moyo's description of the reality of life in South Africa. He says that it is as "visible and as intangible as the morning mist". It is all around you yet the closer you move towards it the more it seems to move away. You can feel its cold temperature on your skin and yet you can never hold it. The more that you immerse yourself and apply yourself to the pursuit of such desires the more that you see that it is a futile endeavour, albeit one that is rewarding. However Boym (2001) notes that for the nostalgic, the frame of the past and the present, or the desired and the ideal should never be forced in a single image. Therefore the inability to reconcile the binary oppositions may not always translate into the cruelty of optimism. A better job and a good house and the ability to maintain security for the future back in Zimbabwe will not cure the intrinsic desire for more. Partly created by a desire for contentment and partly fuelled by capitalist characteristics of mass consumption, this situation enables you to have a broader understanding of the ways in which the imagined and the real are connected in the present subjectivities of migrant Zimbabweans.

If one is to follow through with this line of argument then this also breeds a new set of questions. What happens when the object of desire becomes separated from the context in which it stands for a cluster of promises and obligations and how can this separation be rationalised?

> *Mary had opted to take us out for supper Tony and myself. She had kept complaining that she was in no position to cook and so we made our way to Nandos. On our way back she asked Tony why exactly it is that men can be so ruthless. She narrated the ordeal that her friend was suffering at the hands of her husband. Both the husband and the wife were working at Nestlé in Kenya. It is*

said that the husband started to drift away from the wife for no apparent reason up until the point that he made sure that he had gotten caught with messages on his phone from other women. Mary reported numerous occasions where the husband did not come home and he made it a point that the wife would see receipts of the presents that he would buy for other women. However Tony and I were not able to quite give a clear comment due to a lack of knowledge of the whole story and we could not speculate because Mary was in part asking so that she could know what to tell her friend to counsel her. Be that as it may in the most general terms Tony told Mary that no man just does that for no reason and therefore the friend had to have done something to be given such treatment. Even as he said this I could feel the hesitation in his voice, a clear indication that he was holding back and not fully expressing himself.

It was not until the next day that the story was broken to Tinashe and Timothy by Tony and that it was blown right open. Tinashe maintained that a man will only ignore his wife if there was an issue that was driving him to do so. Timothy quickly interjected and said the guy is cheating plain and simple. At that very moment Tony said "I knew it but I couldn't say it yesterday because Mary would have been on my case as to why 'men' were that cruel and I would have also suffered from the backlash." That's when I recalled the hesitation. "He is a cheat, nothing else", Timothy continued to bark as he continued to stuff his face on a left over cheese sandwich. His tone coupled with the knitted eyebrow displayed disgust. He continued to tell us about his friend who once did the same thing but went on to sleep with their maid the exact time he knew the wife would be

coming home from work. Timothy seemed furious because he had become close to the wife and he didn't know that the couple was having any difficulties in their marriage. And their divorce came as a shock to him. What worried him the most was that after the divorce the friend married the maid and stopped communicating with him. As a story that he often told, most of the people in his network of friends knew about it. The wives would often say that they would not mind if the husband had slept with a woman who was more beautiful than her because at least she would understand that she would possess a quality that she did not have. For this reason they would often joke and say if you cheat on me with Jessica Alba I will forgive you and give you a second chance. However if you cheat on me with a woman who is inferior to me, that degrades me because I am better than the maid.

What is important to tease out of this story is the way in which moral judgements are formulated and how the creation of an 'othering' based on a difference in motive for the same act serves as a base for the creation of a moral community. Timothy was the same person who kept on saying that "just because I have a little something on the side does not mean I don't love my wife," but now he is the same individual that seems most disgusted by the acts of the two men who cheated on their wives. Even more interesting was the context in which he was voicing his disgust. It was just a group of four men but still he was not happy with the blatant disregard for the wives of the two cheating husbands. I asked him to explain how this kind of cheating was markedly different from what he and his other friends do. He said that when they did it they had the highest regard for their wives and loved them to an extent that they would not hurt them by allowing them to find out. From the nods of

approval that urged him to continue I gathered that there was a clean moral break between the kind of cheating to make the spouse suffer and the cheating that they did that seemed to be for sport. It was thus clear that the moment that the desire had been separated from the set of obligations to which it was attached it became something that was seen as morally wrong. Even though this never happened with any of my research participants during my stay with them, it was experiences and discussions like these that really crystalized the way in which the object of desire and its obligations was revered among my interlocutors. From discussions that I have had above about desire and obligations, it has been quite clear that the object has been sexual relations with local women. The set of obligations and expectations have thus been the attainment of a middleclass standard of living. It is for this very reason that strict rules of engagement are put in place so as to ensure that one does not bring disrepute to the group and their desire to outwardly portray themselves as being respectable members of the middleclass. In situations where there is now a break between the object of desire and the set of obligations that are associated with it, this creates a morally objectionable affair.

As the discussion continued I became more interested in trying to map moral categories among these young men and how they reflected upon them and how their significations changed in their context of use. Timothy's reaction to the cheating men provides one such window into understanding how it is that moral justification can be made. The fact that he did not pretend to be outraged in the presence of women or speak boldly in favour of the behaviour of the two cheating men in the absence of the women reveals that cheating was something that was generally looked upon with moral disdain.

I was interested in how these categories were reflected upon in contexts of storytelling about particular incidents, and in how they were expressed through commentary and critique about themselves or others. In this regard it became imperative for me to get from the male perspective what it meant to cheat. However, at one point or the other I had to ask myself whether through this kind of work I was trying to rationalise the irrational actions of a group of men with debased morals or whether I was simply trying to understand how it is that a moral justification can exist for such kinds of behaviour. Either way this speaks to the tautological nature of a 'moral anthropology'.

Fassin (2013) states moral anthropology deals with how moral questions are posed and addressed or, symmetrically how non moral questions are rephrased as moral. It explores the moral categories via which we apprehend the world and identifies the moral communities we construe, examines the moral signification of action and the moral labour of agents, analyses moral issues and moral debates at an individual or collective level. It concerns the creation of moral vocabularies, the circulation of moral values, the production of moral subjects and the regulation of society through moral injunctions. This description of moral anthropology resonates well with the kinds of actions that are depicted in the ethnographic vignette above. To come to an understanding of how moral anthropology may be deployed to an analysis of the moral justifications given by my interlocutors, requires recognition of the specific social, cultural and historical context from which the actors emerge. That is why discussions about Midrand as a reflective discourse, middleclassing and a resolve born out of the Zimbabwean economic down turn have been emphasised. This helps in understanding the moral position of my interlocutors without 'moralizing' about what they do from an observer's point of view.

Despite going through the motions of dispelling what they were doing as cheating they did not provide a term for it or offer another to describe what they do. There is no vocabulary, in terms of descriptive words that are used to describe their non-cheating actions of infidelity. In light of the absence of a vernacular set of categories that may encode a set of moral distinctions, I decided to talk about what a non-cheating extramarital relationship could entail. The term that I offer as a better descriptive word for this is 'paracheating'; here, the 'para' refers to a similarity or resemblance as in the case of paratyphoid fever. Therefore paracheating would entail a behaviour similar to but different from cheating in the sense that there is a physical congress, but different from cheating in that there is no emotional attachment. Therefore this reconciles the ideas about infidelity that my informants have and the imprecise wordings that exist and are used to describe what it is they do. As such, this interplay of words provides recourse for the nonexistence of a proper descriptive word that captures what exactly it is the migrant men say they do.

CHAPTER 6

Conclusion

When I started off this research I led with a question: What kinds of moral arguments do these young men summon in support of the claim that their infidelity does not invalidate the assertion that they love their partners? As I went through the motions of trying to answer this particular question several facts emerged. The only way to answer this question was to come to the realisation that in order to understand the moral arguments of any social grouping you had to understand the context from which that group emerged. According to Karl Marx's thesis on the central location of ideas, in order to understand any idea it should not be separated from the class from which it emerged. This led me through a rigorous discussion of how the group of men that I was working with constituted a micro community fashioned after the ideas by Anderson in his concept of imagined communities.

My interlocutors were resolutely middleclass and saw themselves as having to live up to those particular ideals. This strong desire to portray an upwardly mobile, progressive and sophisticated middleclass family emerged out of the economic collapse in Zimbabwe since the year 2000. The impetus to migrate to South Africa came at the behest of an unforgiving economic collapse that seemed to dry up and hedge off any idea of becoming an independent and self-sustaining individual. Coming to South Africa was thus seen as the only way to be the kinds of people that these young adults had imagined themselves to become. In this light becoming middleclass individuals who could sustain their families and guarantee a future for their families both in the short run while staying in South Africa and in the long run as they saw themselves as one day returning to Zimbabwe to settle once more.

It is these aspirations that united the group of migrants that I was working with. Through their interaction on various levels and with various people in different places, including Zimbabwe, they strengthened their resolve to attain the kinds of living standards that they imagined owed to them. This also acted like the glue that bonded the group together. Looking at the men more specifically, they had their own set of ideas of what it meant to be middleclass and there was a whole package of attributes that one was supposed to enjoy if they are part of that middleclass. This package consisted of having enough disposable income to be able to live comfortably, having enough savings to be able to buy or build a house in Zimbabwe. Part of this package included having flashy cars and unrestricted access to local South African women who were also middleclass and above.

It is interesting to note that the creative power behind the imagination of such a lifestyle draws from the recesses of history to the 18th century labour migrations to mines in South Africa. Suffice it to say that this allure to the glamorous life in *Wenera,* Joni, Egoli, Jozi, Jo'burg or Mzansi, as it has been variously known through time and space, has not ceased to capture the imagination of not only people further afield in the rest of Africa, but people in surrounding areas in South Africa as well. However, what becomes noteworthy is the vigour with which the Zimbabwean migrants approach this imagined lifestyle. They take it more as an entitlement and a right that they should not be denied at any cost.

This brings me to the most important part of this research. Using Berlant's (2006) idea of cruel optimism I have tried to explore what happens when the Zimbabwean migrants are frustrated by the system and are unable to achieve their desired goals. The concept of cruel optimism states that there is a strong relationship between the object of desire and what it stands for. The object of desire is framed as a cluster of promises and obligations that one

associates the object with. In my analysis I have stated that the desired situation is to be middleclass and the indicator of that success was the casual sexual encounters. For this reason sexual access to local South African women becomes the object that is desired because it acts as a signifier of having achieved the life goals that the migrants have. The situation becomes tense when the material conditions that has been structured by my interlocutors as a sign of making the middleclass lifestyle does not materialise. Here they are now faced with a situation in which they still want to keep up appearances of having made it. What then results is a situation in which the migrants want to live in close proximity to the cluster of characteristics that signify that they have made it. They do this through engaging in these non-cheating acts of infidelity. These non-cheating relationships act as a sign that you have made it while you actually haven't, and thus revealing the idea of cruel optimism.

Keeping in line with the agenda of the moral justifications, it becomes evident that the love marriage, that is part and parcel of the middleclass lifestyle, is, at least in the minds of my interlocutors, unaffected by their non-cheating behaviour. Through their creation of moral codes that do not see it as cheating if they engage in emotionally detached sexual relations with rich and beautiful South African women, they justify how it is that love and the love marriage can exist intact even though they are not being faithful.

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