Exploring Experiences of Displacement and Cross-border Migration in South Africa: Implications for Social Work's Commitment to Social Justice

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DOCTOR OF SOCIAL WORK (BY PUBLICATION)

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They said, 'Sing us one of the songs of Zion'.
How shall we sing the Lord's songs in a foreign land?

Psalm 137:3-4

Acknowledgments

Declarations

Declaration of Originality

I, Dorothee Hölscher, declare that:

1.   The research reported in this thesis, except where otherwise indicated, is my original research.

2.   This thesis has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.

3.   This thesis does not contain other persons' data, pictures, graphs or other information, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other persons.

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     a.   Their words have been re-written but the general information attributed to them has been referenced

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5.   This thesis does not contain text, graphics or tables copied and pasted from the Internet, unless specifically acknowledged, and the source being detailed in the thesis and in the References sections.

Signed: on this _____ day of _____ 2016

_____
     Dorothee Hölscher (Candidate)

Declaration of Confidentiality

All names of people and places referred to in this thesis have been changed; as have – as far as possible in an ethnographic study – any other details which might lead to the identification of its participants.

Declaration Concerning Editing of Publications

All scholarly articles included in this thesis have been subjected to minimal editing with a view to improving clarity of expression. No substantive changes have been made to work published prior to the completion of this thesis.

Abstract

The phenomena of displacement and cross-border migration highlight pertinent injustices under conditions of globalisation and neoliberalism. Social work is entangled in these injustices. Against such background, this study was intended to explore the implications of displacement and cross-border migration in South Africa for social work's commitment to social justice. I conducted a multisite ethnographic study while practicing as a social worker in a refugee services organisation and participating in the responses of a local church to the mass displacement of foreign nationals during South Africa's first xenophobic pogroms. Data collection lasted from May 2008 to October 2009 and included a reflexive diary, life story interviews with cross-border migrants, and depth individual interviews with practitioners of care. The data was analysed using a combination of grounded theory and critical discourse analysis and was further explored with reference to a range of writings on social justice. While foregrounding feminist relational/ethics of care approaches, I also drew on the ideas of capabilities and agency, and considered anti-oppressive and structural traditions in social work.

Five empirical papers emanated from this study and were published as scholarly articles in peer-reviewed journals. Cross-border migrants participating in the study shared pervasive experiences of exclusion, exploitation, deprivation, powerlessness, violence, and *Othering*. Members of the church community and practitioners of care in both sites were witness to some of the injustices experienced by the migrants. In those situations that facilitated face-to-face encounters, the response was one of solidarity and care. However, I found a general disregard for the structural nature of the injustices experienced by the migrants. Practitioners and community members also disregarded their own implication in these injustices. In the absence of any sustained and political response, there was a tendency to reify the economic, political, social, and cultural conditions surrounding these encounters. When expectations towards successful interventions were not met, cross-border migrants tended to be blamed for their situation, apt to be framed as undeserving of help. Finally, members of all participant groups – cross-border migrants, practitioners of care and members of the church community – shared a range of negative emotions pertaining to their surrounding social injustices. Together, there was a tendency to re-enact historical scripts for relationships between

members of different races, classes, and nationalities in post-apartheid South Africa. These scripts were structured further by a well-established welfare discourse around service provider/service user relationships.

The thesis concludes with a number of recommendations. These concern, firstly, territorial borders and nation state membership as a specific source of injustice, and the need for targeted, yet multifaceted interventions in the field of social work with cross-border migrants. It is also recommended that efforts to mainstream feminist relational/ethics of care approaches continue, and that their compatibility with other ethical approaches be further explored. With regard to the formulation of aspirational statements such as the global definition of social work and its statement of ethical principles, I recommend greater recognition of the relational and process aspects of social justice, and that the language of the documents reflects notions of care and of social justice as a shared and forward-looking responsibility. Historical consciousness, contextual understanding, criticality and emotional reflexivity are highlighted as important ingredients in socially just interventions, as well as in teaching and learning and research practices. In this context, attention to emotion and affect should not be seen simply as an end in itself, but also be regarded as an important means to revitalise social work as a political practice. I suggest that the ideals of care, participatory parity and dialogical forms of engagement can usefully guide such endeavours. Finally, I recommend the formation of communities of practice to provide safe spaces for mutual support, debate, and to explore ways of responding to pertinent social injustices under difficult circumstances.

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List of Acronyms

Acronym	Complete Term/Explication
ANC	African National Congress
AU	African Union
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
CRAI	Citizenship Rights In Africa Initiative
DHA	Department of Home Affairs
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
ESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
GCIM	Global Commission on International Migration
GEAR	Growth, Employment and Redistribution Strategy
GT	Grounded Theory
HRW	Human Rights Watch
IASSW	International Association of Schools of Social Work
IFSW	International Federation of Social Workers
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
LHR	Lawyers for Human Rights
NGO	Non-government Organisation
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
RSA	Republic of South Africa
RSD	Refugee Status Determination
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SAMP	Southern African Migration Project
SAPS	South African Police Service
SASSA	South African Social Security Agency
TEBA	The Employment Bureau of Africa
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Chapter 1
Introduction & Overview of the Study

In 2015, towards the end of this PHD process, I held a couple of meetings with a colleague and friend of mine – I will call her Espérance. Our purpose was to capture her life story. Espérance is a refugee who has lived in South Africa for over 15 years. She obtained a social work degree not long ago and now works for a refugee services provider and implementing partner of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in South Africa (UNHCR). One day, Espérance arrived for our session in such a state of exasperation that she started talking without even giving me the time to record our session. She said that she didn't want to be a social worker anymore because she did not study to do what she found herself doing. And if she could not leave the profession, at least she wanted to leave her work and find another job. But with the recent tightening of labour market access for foreigners in South Africa, she felt it was pointless to even try.

One of the incidents that had so enraged Espérance is still vivid in my memory. She spoke of a young man, a rejected asylum seeker pending deportation. This man had had an operation in a public hospital. A couple of weeks later, he was still bleeding. He was weak, had lost a lot of weight, and could not work anymore. He did not have money for a cab to go back to the hospital and refused to use public transport because he stank. His friends would leave him in the mornings with a plate of maize meal porridge in their run-down inner city flat where he lay in the sweltering heat and waited for their return. Espérance was convinced that if he did not receive urgent medical attention, proper food and money to afford better hygiene, he might die. On the day of our meeting, Espérance said that she had proposed these interventions to her manager but was advised that as a rejected asylum seeker, he was no longer entitled to services from the organisation. In the heated exchange that ensued, Espérance asked what would happen if the man died. Her manager allegedly responded, the UNHCR would repatriate his body. Espérance asked that if the man's dead body was deserving of support, why couldn't he be helped while still alive. She said she and her manager parted on that day without being able to agree on a way to proceed.

In this thesis, I present the findings of the study, 'Exploring Experiences of Displacement and Cross-border Migration in South Africa: Implications for Social Work's Commitment to Social Justice'. I collected the data for this study in 2008 and 2009, that is, almost eight years ago. Yet, Espérance's story encapsulates my conviction that since then, the context surrounding social work with cross-border migrants in South Africa has remained as challenging, indeed might have become even more challenging, than it was then. As such, the issues that this thesis deals with are as relevant today as they were before.

This chapter comprises the thesis' introductory considerations. Sections 1.1 to 1.3 contain the study's background and rationale, followed in Section 1.4 by a presentation of the research problem. I state the research aim and objectives in Section 1.5. Thereafter in Section 1.6, I explicate my use of key terms and briefly discuss, in Section 1.7, the study's value. Section 1.8 concludes the chapter with an overview of the thesis as a whole. I hope that at the end of this chapter, readers will appreciate my particular research interests and motives for conducting the study, my framing of the research problem, aim and objectives, as well as my methodological choices.

1.1 Experiences of Race, Class, Gender, and Citizenship Dynamics: A Personal Motivation for the Study

Post-apartheid South Africa's welfare dispensation was characterised by an early, principled commitment to egalitarian social and political values. Yet from the late 1990s onwards, with the adoption of welfare financing models that were becoming *en vogue* all over the world, there was an entrenchment of the country's previous, residual approach to welfare service delivery, in which the radius for action of both welfare agencies and individual social workers remained greatly circumscribed, and social workers became implicated in renewed efforts to limit, and even deny services to people in need. Starting in 1994, I served as a child and family welfare worker in Durban's informal settlements, where I worked with people who were in many ways what I was not: poor, black, and with little prospect for employment or further education. In spite of sharing a gender perspective with the majority of my service users, I realised over time just how limited my ability was to understand their life circumstances, their

needs, capabilities, desires and possibilities. Yet as a social worker who was frequently called to remove children from their parental care, I had a lot of power over them. At the same time, practicing within a residual welfare dispensation, I felt that my options to use that power constructively were limited.

When, following the completion of my masters' degree, I became a social work lecturer, I began to meet students from other countries. Some were citizens of dictatorial states; others had escaped from civil wars and genocides. In these encounters, I realised that their image of the state, its institutions, the law, and non-government organisations operating on behalf of the state was very different from the one I had been brought up with. To them, the state was a tool of oppression in the hands of a privileged few, and citizenship often a matter of being beholden, rather than holding entitlements. And if there was any justice to be had, it was going to be in spite of and apart from the state, often to be acquired clandestinely, and sometimes violently. Through these encounters, I also learnt about the limitations of the state, its institutions and laws, and the ways in which its power is circumscribed, can be rejected, circumvented and undermined, by those whom it is intended to govern.

These and other experiences and developing perspectives stimulated my interest in the phenomenon of social justice. Through my exposure to people whose positioning was completely different to mine, I became increasingly aware of how intertwined any understanding of social justice is with the perspectives of those appealing to it. I also began to appreciate some of the complexities entailed in any efforts to communicate across society's multiple dividing lines, and in trying to discern and meet such responsibilities as might flow from apparent social injustices for differently placed individuals and groups, in different places, at different points in time. I became progressively aware of how race, class and gender dynamics can operate alongside those of citizenship, and compound one another in ways that tend to strengthen the privileges of some and disadvantage many others. In the process, I began to develop a sense, firstly, of the extent to which the unequal social positioning between people can shape their experiential horizons in ways that create deep divisions, and, secondly, of the ways in which the power differentials between people privilege some worldviews over others, thereby foreclosing many possibilities of dialoguing, and finding common ground, across these divides. Generally, I felt these imbalances long before I was able to grasp them in intellectual terms.

My growing awareness of the fluidities and instabilities surrounding the notion of social justice was counterbalanced by what I experienced as rather consistent forms of injustice, which operated not just along lines of race, class and gender but, importantly, along nation state and citizenship lines as well. I also realised the importance of engaging critically with the institution of the state, its laws, and with welfare organisations acting on its behalf. How such institutions work to include and exclude, awarding entitlements and allocating privileges to some, while denying rights and fomenting disadvantages for others, is important. The state's limits are also relevant to the question of social justice because human life continues to unfold beyond, besides, in opposition to, and in spite of these limits. In the face of such complexities, how should social workers, who are expected by definition to further the ends of social justice (IFSW/IASSW 2004, 2014), work out exactly what it is they must further, and how they should go about furthering it in each and every instance? As I developed a focus for this study, I settled on exploring the concept of social justice in relation to cross-border migration, being mindful however of the phenomenon's interconnection with other dynamics, for example, societies' race, class, and gender configurations.

1.2 Justice Discourse, Social Work, and Abnormal Justice: A Theoretical Motivation for the Study

My initial reading of the social work literature on social justice left me with an impression of invigorating debates but considerable disagreement around the meaning of the term and its implications for practice. However, there did seem to be one common reference point in that writers on the topic frequently refer back to John Rawls' (1971) *Theory of Justice*. Rawls' work embodies the basic argument that, 'rationally acceptable moral principles are those which everyone could agree to as principles to govern their dealings with one another, and that if everyone could agree to them, then no one's interests are being sacrificed' (Norman, cited in Banks 2004:78-79). Particularly attractive for social workers has been Rawls' (1971) 'original position', that is the premise that 'individuals … would … minimise disparities in resource allocation in the event that they might [themselves] become a member of a disadvantaged group' (McGrath Morris 2002:367). This idea, often referred to as distributive justice (Fraser 2008a), provides a universal rationale for a 'just distribution of rights, opportunities and

resources' (Barry 2005:17). In the following paragraphs, I consider Rawls' ideas of distributive justice, universality, and the original position as debates that have greatly impacted my formulation of this study's research problem.

The scope of social justice, initially imagined by Rawls in distributive terms, has been expanded in the years following the publication of *Theory of Justice*. Martha Nussbaum (2000, 2006) and Amartya Sen's (1999, 2009) work on human capabilities has made a significant contribution in this regard. Retaining Rawls' idea of social justice as a universal principle, both Sen and Nussbaum focus their attention on those whose well-being, in the absence of social justice, is at stake: 'Justice cannot be indifferent to the lives that people can actually live' (Sen 2009:18). Certain disagreements between them notwithstanding, the notion of agency is central to both authors' thinking about justice in that both stress the intrinsic need for humans to experience themselves as agents in their own lives and in relation to the world. To this end, Nussbaum (2000:78-80) proposes a list of ten 'central capabilities' which she says anyone should be able to realise. Together, they provide a 'minimal account of social justice' (Nussbaum 2006:75) in that they spell out 'a basic social minimum' required for 'a life that is worthy of the dignity of the human being' (Nussbaum 2006:70).

The conceptualisation of social justice as distributive justice draws attention to the class divisions of societies. While these remain an important worry, arguments that are seen to reduce justice concerns to distributional matters have been criticised for their narrowness of focus. For example, Nancy Fraser (1989, 1997, 2000, 2003) has drawn attention to the question of how status inequalities, for example, along the lines of race and gender hinder people's ability to claim access to rights, opportunities and resources. And Iris Marion Young (1990) cautions those wishing to further social justice to be mindful of the 'social structures, processes, and practices that cause the mal-distribution in the first place' (cited in Mullaly 2002:33). In this way, the meaning of Rawls' (1971) notion of rights and opportunities is shifted in that now, 'rights refer to doing more than having', and 'opportunity … is a condition of enablement rather than possession' (Young, cited in Mullaly 2002:34). Informed by these kinds of debates, more recent conceptualisations of injustice in social work urge social workers to respect diversity and challenge negative discrimination, exclusion, and subjugation (cf. Dominelli 2002; Ife and Tessoriero 2006; Pease 2010; IFSW/IASSW 2004, 2014).

To the extent that social justice does signify distributional concerns, attention is drawn to the reality that ultimately, distributable resources in any society are finite, which in turn raises questions concerning the boundaries within which claims for access can be made (cf. Pogge 2002; Benhabib 2004). Flowing from this is the idea that there should be some form of membership in some kind of collective held together by some notion of solidarity as the legitimate base for justice claims. Nussbaum (2006:2) contends in this regard that 'all … major … theories of social justice begin from the nation state as their basic unit'. Rawls (1999) for example defines social justice as a system of distribution within – but not across – nation states, which he conceptualises as relatively closed systems with clearly demarcated territorial boundaries, and the members of which are their respective citizens.

Questions of membership belong within a complex which Fraser (2008a:19) calls 'frame-setting', that is, decisions regarding admission to a particular collective, or society, which exclude non-members from even being considered as subjects of social justice. Framing decisions, says Fraser (2008a), can give rise to grave social injustices of their own. Until recently, mainstream social work discourse has appeared somewhat unsuspicious of the idea that social justice should be applied only within national boundaries, and that justice claims should be founded upon formal citizenship rights. For example, the potential for injustice that lies within the reality of territorial states, national boundaries and differential citizenship is yet to be acknowledged in social work's global definition of social work and statement of ethical principles (IFSW/IASSW 2004, 2014). Increasingly however, the exclusionary functions of national boundaries and formal citizenship have attracted moral outrage from writers in the field of social work with cross-border migrants (see for example, Hayes and Humphries 2004; Zorn 2007; Cemlyn 2008; Briskman, Zion and Loff 2012; Jönsson 2014). Conceptualising social justice as a universal principle, these authors converge on the argument that social work should be non-discriminatory and that welfare provision should be equally accessible to all persons residing within the boundaries of a particular state.

Yet, the arguments above suggest that assumptions regarding the universality of social justice are far from shared. Such absence of consensus signifies what Fraser (2008a:49-50) calls a condition of 'abnormal justice', that is, a situation in which 'public debates about justice proliferate … [but] increasingly lack the structure of normal discourse … [displaying instead] a freewheeling character. Absent the ordering force of shared presuppositions … contests over

basic premises proliferate [and] deviation becomes … the rule' (Fraser 2008a:49-50). Fraser (2005, 2008a, 2008b) points out that economic, political, social, cultural, and ideological developments from the 1970s onwards, in many ways prompted by the global spread of neoliberalism, have given rise to such abnormal conditions. The developments include contemporary, large-scale and turbulent migratory movements (compare Papastergiadis 2000; Bauman 2004; Global Commission on International Migration 2005), as well as the social injustices sometimes experienced by cross-border migrants at their respective transit and destination points (see Hayes and Humphries 2004; Zorn 2007; Cemlyn 2008; Briskman, Zion and Loff 2012; Jönsson 2014), both of which lie at the heart of this study.

Sarah Banks (2004:78-79) contends that principles in social work ethics tend to be regarded as 'middle-level' principles, that is, as derived from dialogue and agreement around which values should underpin professional practice. However, there is a tension between Banks' (2004) optimistic assumptions concerning the possibilities of shared understandings and Fraser's (2005, 2008a) claims regarding current conditions of abnormal justice. As debates around the meaning and implications of social work's principled commitment to social justice await resolution, concerns around discourse become more central, for it matters greatly who gets to speak to whom about what, who is spoken about, who gets to be heard by whom, and whose voices carry more, or less authority. Rawls who was a white, male, educated, well established and well-earning citizen of the country in which he lived, developed his theory of justice upon the 'original position', a hypothetical situation designed to resemble 'a fair and impartial point of view that is to be adopted in our reasoning about fundamental principles of justice' (Freeman 2008:2). The participants, too, were invented: impartial, that is, 'deprived of all knowledge of their personal characteristics and … circumstances' (Freeman 2008:1), and in this regard, they were equal. As such, the original position enabled and required its fictitious participants to imagine what they would think, feel, do or need if they were not equal participants among peers, that is, if they were members of a disadvantaged group (McGrath Morris 2002). Rawls (1971) assumed that under these conditions, his followers would agree to certain, socially just, principles that should henceforth govern their society.

Rawls' idea that his imaginers were equals and that it was necessary and desirable for them to imagine themselves as what they were not, that is unequal, in order to reach agreement on issues of social justice has been criticised. For example, Joan Tronto (1993:70) and Iris

Marion Young (1997:341) argue with Seyla Benhabib (2004) that this mind game is based upon the notion of a 'generalised *Other*', that is, the notion of the disadvantaged, oppressed or poor person 'as such'. Besides rendering members of certain groups alike and setting them apart from others, the notion of *Otherness* and the images it invokes serve to legitimise conditions that enable members of privileged groups to investigate, sort, classify, evaluate and then choose to either disregard or intervene in the lives of others. This is because those who occupy more highly regarded social positions enjoy a vaster scope for activity and greater measures of control than do those subject positions that render their occupants inferior and passive (compare Tronto 1993; Howe 1994; Plumwood 1993, 2002; Leonard 1997; Dominelli 2002; Mulally 2002, 2010; Pease 2010; Bozalek 2014). In the process, those who are constituted as *Other* and therefore 'excluded from dominant discourse' have 'their voices silenced' (Leonard 1997:18). In this way, the injustices that have created the *Other* in the first place are continuously recreated and reinforced. To the extent that non-citizens are perceived to be located outside the realm of social justice, this dynamic is likely to be exacerbated. In so far as social work discourse retains a universal conceptualisation of social justice, it also relies on an imagery of the disadvantaged, oppressed or poor person 'as such'. The result is an injustice that is inherent in the relationships between social workers and their service users, and in the ways these relationships are theorised. Consequently, a study concerned with social work's commitment to social justice should subject these relationships themselves to critical inquiry.

In short, an initial reading of social justice literature provides three reasons for seeking to explore and help re-ground social work's commitment to social justice. Firstly, since the publication of John Rawls' *Theory of Justice* in 1971, conceptualisations of what constitutes social injustice have widened considerably, and accordingly, the term now denotes facets and processes of social life not initially envisaged. Secondly, global economic, political, social, cultural, and ideological processes have contributed to large numbers of people crossing borders and residing in states where they do not hold citizenship-based rights. The latter developments have highlighted the notion that traditionally, debates around social justice rested upon unspoken presuppositions that state boundaries were necessary and citizenship-based forms of exclusion unavoidable. Overall then, the idea of social justice as a universal concept, and consensus around its meanings and requirements, have diminished. Thirdly, in

the process of these debates, attention has been drawn to questions of the social positioning of both debaters and those whose plights are being debated, the nature of the relationships between them, and the ways in which the perspectives of some come to be privileged while the perspectives of others become marginalised. A study intended to problematize social work's commitment to social justice needed to be informed by, and be able to contribute to, these debates.

There were several implications of these initial theoretical reflections for my approach to this study. Given the salience of cross-border migration for understanding the limitations and boundaries of social justice as a concept, it seemed appropriate to place the phenomenon at the centre of the investigation. This meant exploring how practitioners and service users in the field of social work with cross-border migrants, experienced social injustice, perceived the requirements of justice, and engaged around these. In the process, I needed to attend to the unequal social positioning of social workers and their service users, to the ways in which contextual conditions impacted them differently, to their resultant differences in perspective, and to the possibilities of a systematic silencing of service users' voices. If, finally, the idea was not to judge the views and practices of others, that is, not to use the researcher's voice to usurp those of the researched, then the study needed to be designed so as to criss-cross the apparent dividing lines between doing social work and seeking to understand it, between practicing and critiquing, between researching and being researched.

1.3   Situating the Study: Cross-border Migration, Social Services, and Xenophobic Violence in South Africa

At the point of planning this study, South Africa had become an important transit and destination point for sub-Saharan migrants (Crush and Williams 2010; Crush 2011). By and large, South Africa's post-apartheid regime of cross-border migration governance resembles global trends. These include the opening of the country's borders to global investment and international trade (Republic of South Africa 1996a); promoting the importation of scarce skills (Republic of South Africa 2002); the policing of its border to prevent unauthorised entry (Republic of South Africa 2002); and the alignment of its 'forced migration' governance with the United Nation's (UN) and the Organisation of African Unity's (OAU) Refugee Conventions

(Republic of South Africa 1998). Internally, South Africa has been pursuing a policy of self-settlement for cross-border migrants (Landau 2006; Makhema 2009). The majority of migrants are now living in the country's main urban centres (Landau, Segatti, and Misago 2011; UNHCR 2015), where they rely largely on their own initiatives and networks to survive (Amisi and Ballard 2006; Landau 2006, 2007; Crush 2011).

Neither the Refugees Act nor the Immigration Act seems to envisage any specific responsibility of the South African state for the welfare of cross-border migrants (Republic of South Africa 1998, 2002; Handmaker 2001; Landau 2006). Specialised services in the field of cross-border migration are thus dominated by those funded through the UNHCR and implemented by a small group of non-government organisations (NGOs) in South Africa's main urban centres and refugee reception points (UNHCR 2011a). Because these NGOs provide the main source of employment for social workers in the field, my initial plan was to spend a few months collecting data as a participant observer with a refugee services provider. The anticipated starting date was 4 August 2008. In addition, I was planning to collect life stories from differently positioned cross-border migrants, with the first interview being scheduled for 31 May 2008.

Post-apartheid South Africa has been characterised by widely shared xenophobic attitudes and tensions that have frequently flared up into violence (Crush, McDonald, Williams, Lefko-Everett, Dorey, Taylor and la Sablonniere 2008). On 11 May 2008, this situation erupted into nationwide pogroms which lasted three weeks and caused large-scale displacements of foreign nationals. As the South African government was unprepared for the disaster, civil society organisations stepped in to provide emergency relief and shelter for the displaced (Misago, Monson, Polzer and Landau 2010), one of them being the local church I attend. In the week of 26 May 2008, the church received a total of 48 adults and children, a group which continued living on its premises for several months thereafter. At the beginning of June 2008, the church leadership approached me with the request to assist with a response. I agreed, but also negotiated permission to collect data for this study along the way. By August 2008, when I joined the refugee services provider to commence my participant observation, the effects of the pogroms were still palpable. Some of the organisation's service users were still living in makeshift shelters, and many of those who had remained in, or returned to, their ordinary homes found their livelihoods severely disrupted. The number of refugees seeking

assistance had been catapulted upwards, and colleagues in the organisation felt overwhelmed.

These events significantly affected the course and content of the study. The range of people I was able to interview expanded, and the types of relationship that connected me with prospective participants diversified. My initial plan had been to collect life stories from cross-border migrants I knew from chance encounters and as a colleague, and from prospective service users of the refugee services provider. Now, I was also able to approach people to whom I related as a congregant in the church where they were staying, that is, as a comparatively privileged member of the community which they had just joined. Compared with the often short-term, sometimes fleeting relationships between social workers and their service users at the refugee services provider, the relationships at church were far more intense in that they involved living and worshipping in extremely close proximity over a prolonged period of time. And while my original intention had been to base this study's arguments upon my exploration of social worker/service user relationships, my sample now also included other practitioners of care, that is the pastoral staff at the church, and a receiving community, that is the congregants at the church.

Finally, the May 2008 events impacted the issues that the study's participants wanted to raise, and also how they raised them. For example, the cross-border migrants had the tendency to link their experiences of uprooting, migration and settlement in South Africa with those of interpersonal violence during the pogroms. Conversely, the practitioners of care and members of the receiving community showed a preference for speaking about the aftermath of the pogroms without making connections with the events preceding, and the structural causes beneath the violence. With hindsight, this may be interpreted as an early indication of how the participants' membership in different social groups and their positioning in relation to one another affected their outlook, perceptions, and priorities in relation to the topic at hand. In this way, the violence surrounding this study was important, yet the incidents, conversations, and reflections included in the following chapters have significance beyond that. The pogroms provided a stark illustration of the ways in which economic, political, social, and cultural upheavals and ideological renderings of the world can at once signify and lie at the root of both structural injustices and particular hardships, prefiguring and revealing at once how individuals are entangled therein. They pointed to the possibility that to be *just*,

social work's ethical outlook needs to reflect these complexities, and that therefore, the profession may need to re-articulate some of the ways in which it responds to contemporary forms of injustice. In this way, the pogroms simply moved the implication of displacement and cross-border migration for social work's commitment to social justice into sharper focus.

Image 1.1: A Person Crossing the South African Border (Visser, Médecins Sans Frontières)

1.4   Statement of the Research Problem

A preliminary consideration of the study's theoretical and practice contexts and of my own positioning in relation to its subject matter indicates that social work's commitment to social justice requires practitioners to respond to an intricate web of economic, political, social, cultural, and ideological structures, processes and dynamics in which they are implicated. The border-crossing of large numbers of people appears to be linked to broader processes that also have unsettled established notions of social justice. The lack of formal citizenship enjoyed by cross-border migrants in the places they live adds further layers of complexity to social

work's concern with social justice in that the nature, legitimacy and rightful addressees of migrants' justice claims all are in question. The complexities faced by social workers, other practitioners of care and members of receiving communities who are engaged with cross-border migrants in South Africa emanate from the global, regional and local levels and can be traced in: South Africa's role as a destination and transit point for sub-Saharan migrants; the South African state's approach to governing cross-border migration and managing the welfare of cross-border migrants; the ways in which citizenship-based forms of exclusion interact with other structures, processes and dynamics relevant to the concept of social justice; the ways in which cross-border migrants experience the economic, political, social, cultural, and ideological contexts in which they live and try to access to rights, opportunities and resources; and the ways in which social workers, other practitioners of care and members of receiving communities perceive and respond to cross-border migrants and their concerns.

How people perceive themselves, one another, and the world around them are important factors in how they will understand the notion of social justice. This understanding is reflected in: their ideas of what constitutes social injustice; their beliefs as to what they and others are entitled to and where their respective claims should be directed; the expectations they have of one another; the kinds of relationships they form with one another; and the responsibilities that they see as flowing from what they regard as socially unjust. Emanating from the fact that the structures, processes and dynamics surrounding the concept of social justice impact and position members of different social groups differently, flows a lack in shared understandings around both meaning and implications of the concept. To re-ground the notion of social justice both in terms of its meanings and implications for social work, a useful starting point is thus the particular situation in which the complex webs of experiences, perspectives, perceptions, and relationships connecting differently positioned people with one another, interface with the broader structures, processes and dynamics within which they are embedded.

It is for the above reasons that in this thesis, I explore the nature of contemporary forms of social injustice in South Africa by considering the perspectives of cross-border migrants, social workers, other practitioners of care and members of a receiving community. Specifically, I am concerned with how economic, political, social, cultural, and ideological structures, processes and dynamics impacted and positioned them differently, shaped their experiences, and

shaded their perceptions, thereby pre-conditioning their relationships and interactions with one another. In what ways were these structures, processes and dynamics reproduced, undermined or resisted? What openings towards *just* practice emerged? And what does this mean for social work – a profession that defines itself, among other things, through its principled commitment to social justice?

1.5   Statement of the Research Aim and Objectives

Against the background, rationale and research problem delineated above, the study was guided by the following aim:

> To explore experiences of displacement and cross-border migration in South Africa with a view to better understanding their implications for social work's commitment to social justice.

This aim was achieved by allowing the voices of the study's participants – cross-border migrants, members of a receiving community, social workers and other practitioners of care – to intersect and direct the study. In the process, the following research objectives were attained:

1. Concerning the particular perspectives articulated by members of the different participant groups –

    1.1 To explore how *cross-border migrants* experienced the economic, political, social, cultural, and ideological contexts in which they lived;

    1.2 To explore how *members of the receiving community, social workers* and *other practitioners of care* perceived both the cross-border migrants they encountered and the economic, political, social, cultural, and ideological contexts in which these encounters were situated;

2. Concerning the subject positions and unfolding relationships between members of the three participant groups –

    2.1 To explore how *cross-border migrants* positioned themselves in relation to social workers, other practitioners of care and members of the receiving community as they sought to access rights, opportunities and resources;

2.2 To explore how *social workers*, *other practitioner of care* and *members of the receiving community* positioned themselves in response to the cross-border migrants' quest for access to rights, opportunities and resources;

3. Concerning the impact of broader structures, processes and dynamics on the perspectives, social positioning and unfolding relationships between members of the different participant groups –

3.1 To explore how broader *structures, processes and dynamics circumscribed and conditioned encounters* between cross-border migrants on the one hand and social workers, other practitioners of care and members of the receiving community on the other;

3.2 To explore how broader *structures, processes and dynamics were enacted, re-enforced or subverted* in the encounters between cross-border migrants on the one hand and social workers, other practitioners of care and members of the receiving community on the other;

4. Concerning the conceptual and ethical implications of the empirical findings –

4.1 To explore the ways in which the *responses* that social workers, other practitioners of care and members of the receiving community offered to cross-border migrants might be considered socially just or unjust;

4.2 To articulate aspects of social work's *responsibility* for justice as they emerge from the above explorations.

Four of the five empirical papers included in Part 2 of this thesis (Chapters 6 to 9) focus on one research question each, although the inherent connectedness between the four groups of objectives implies that each paper touches on more than the one prioritised for publication purposes. The fifth and final publication (Chapter 10), rather than making a particular objective their primary foci, attend to a particular perspective, that is, that of the social workers at the refugee services provider. It is from the vantage point of this perspective that the chapter explores to the interaction and dialectic relationship between all four sets of objectives. The focus of each publication is explicated in Section 1.5 and illustrated in Table 1.5.1. The concluding chapter (Chapter 11) returns to the research aim and objectives to provide summative responses, conclusions and recommendations.

1.6 Explication of Key Terms

The discussion so far would have revealed some of my preferences with regard to the use of certain terminologies. In some instances, I deviate from their mainstream uses; in others, there are competing uses in relation to which I have adopted particular positions. In this section, I briefly explicate my terminological choices; however, more comprehensive empirical and theoretical justifications are contained in Chapters 2 to 10. The terms concerned are: displacement, fleeing, migrating and crossing borders; justice, social and other forms of justice; injustice and oppression; social work and other practices of care; as well as ethics and morality.

1.6.1 Displacement: Migrating, Fleeing, and Crossing Borders

In this thesis, I treat all cross-border migrants as having been displaced. In this understanding, displaced people have been uprooted, will seek to re-root, and for that reason, some may migrate. Some migrants will cross borders. Depending on how their reasons for displacement are assessed by those who receive them, they will be classified. Some will be categorised 'labour', 'voluntary', or simply 'migrants'; others will apply for asylum. If the latter are found to be 'forced migrants' in the sense of having fled, for example, persecution or war, they may be granted formal refugee status. In their new countries of residence, refugees and other cross-border migrants may be displaced further, as was, on account of xenophobic violence, the case in this study. Thus, I use the term 'cross-border migration' to denote a variety of practices that involve people crossing borders; 'cross-border migrant' to denote people who have crossed borders for a variety of reasons and in a variety of ways; the term 'displacement' to denote a loss of place that can occur at different points in a person's life; and 'displacees' or 'the displaced' to denote people who are currently uprooted, or out of place. For a detailed discussion and referencing of these terms, refer to Chapters 2.3 to 2.4, 7.3.1, 8.3, and 10.4.1.

1.6.2 Social and other Forms of Justice

In this thesis, I use the terms 'justice' and 'social justice' interchangeably, and understand the term 'social justice' inclusively to denote economic, political, social, cultural, and ideological dimensions of social life (see Fraser 2008a). As socially just structures, processes, dynamics, and relationships require different experiences of injustice and competing conceptions of social justice to be articulated, heard, and considered, social justice is not merely an ethical but an inherently political concern. Phenomena of social justice, and injustice, are explored in the chapters that follow, with each drawing on different theorists to emphasise different dimensions, and to explore the different ways in which they were interconnected and interacted. For an explication and justification of these choices, refer to Chapter 5.4.3 and Table 5.3.

1.6.3 Injustice and Oppression: Othering, Exclusion, Powerlessness, Exploitation, and Violence

Drawing on Iris Marion Young (1990), I understand 'social injustice' as made up of a range of structures, processes, dynamics, relationships, and the experiences to which they lead. These different aspects of social injustice have been theorised in conjunction by some writers and independently of one another by others. Social injustices are constituted through, but are not limited to, discourses and practices of *Othering*; social, economic and political forms of exclusion; the systematic rendering as powerless of certain groups and individuals; exploitation; as well as structural and interpersonal forms of violence. These facets of injustice are interlinked and co-dependent on one another and are subsumed in the overall idea of 'oppression'. If the aim is to engage in *just* practice and to promote *just* social arrangements, then all the aspects of oppression require attention.

1.6.4 Social Work and Other Practices of Care

In this study, there were a range of participants, who responded to cross-border migrants, including those who were displaced by xenophobic violence. Some of them were paid for

what they did, others volunteered. Of those who responded in their role of paid professionals, some were social workers, but there were also community development workers, theologians and other pastoral staff. Those research participants who responded as volunteers, also cared and provided care. This is therefore the meaning of 'care', 'practices of care', or 'caring practices' as I use the terms in this thesis: they are the responses of social workers, other practitioners of care and members of a receiving community who cared about the issues of cross-border migration and displacement, and cared about cross-border migrants and the displaced. Thus, they took care of things on behalf of the cross-border migrants' and the displacees', provided care for them, and received feedback in the course of relationships that varied in duration, and were characterised by varying degrees of trust (Tronto 1993, 2013). As providers, rather than recipients of care, they had to be able to do what they did, and in this regard, they were more privileged than those about whom they cared, for whom they provided care, and on behalf of whom they took care of things. See Chapter 4.2 for a detailed consideration of the relationship between justice and care.

1.6.5 Ethics and Morality

The complex relationship between ethics and morality is explored throughout this thesis. Even though in my understanding, there is an overlap, I follow Zygmunt Bauman (1993) in my usage of terms. Thus, I speak of 'ethics' and 'ethical' to denote a more formalised notion of morality (as, for example, in 'ethical practice', or 'the ethics of social work'), while using the terms 'morality' and 'moral' when referring to the preferences, choices, and actions of individuals or groups of individuals as they tried to work out in particular instances what was 'just', or 'the right thing to do' (as, for instance, in 'moral humility', 'moral judgement', 'moral impulse' or 'moral action'). Whether I refer to 'ethics' or 'morality', I use 'challenge' to denote something difficult, and 'dilemma' when a preferred choice or action required the individual or the group of individuals concerned to do something as a result, that they did not consider 'just' or 'the right thing to do' (cf. Banks 2006).

1.7 Value of the Study

This thesis is concerned with an ethical conundrum that social work has only recently begun exploring in earnest: the cross-border migration of large numbers of people – many of whom are poor and black – who lack formal citizenship rights in their new countries of residence, and who often find it exceedingly difficult to acquire social and economic positions that would enable them to lead productive and socially recognised lives that they themselves find valuable. In exploring these challenges, I engage with social justice literature, some of which has thus far received only limited attention from social workers. My engagement is grounded in people's particular experiences, encounters, interactions and relationships. This means that rather than starting with the abstract and then drawing on real life experiences in the form of case studies, examples and illustrations, the arguments contained in this thesis begin with the exploration of people's narrations, encounters, interactions and relationships, with the more abstract arguments unfolding from there.

As the empirical findings of this study will highlight, prevalent structures, processes and dynamics of injustice have a tendency to implicate practitioners, rendering it almost inevitable for moral dilemmas to remain unresolved in the course of their work. This can discourage social workers from actively seeking social justice. Against the background of these findings, I hope that this thesis might contribute to an unfolding ethical discourse that is less prescriptive and more tentative, embraces moral uncertainty and the possibility of moral failings in the face of good intentions, and espouses a form of criticality that refuses to be judgmental. This kind of moral humility and critical generosity is what I believe the ethicists I am drawing on in the following chapters, have in common. I feel convinced that such an approach holds the greatest promise yet for encouraging social workers to keep interrogating the changing meanings of social justice, to continue striving to practice justly, and to carry on pursuing ideals of just societies under conditions that can feel discouraging indeed.

1.8   Overview of Contents

The remainder of Part 1 (Chapters 2 to 5) of this thesis serves to contextualise the study and assist in drawing its empirical findings, contained in Part 2 of this thesis, to the relevant ethical conclusions. In Chapter 2, I review the literature pertaining to cross-border migration and South Africa's changing regimes of migration governance. I begin with the implications of globalisation for nation states as political entities and for traditional notions of state boundaries and citizenship. This is followed by a discussion of the historic development of sub-Saharan Africa's migratory systems, including South Africa's changing roles and functions within these systems. Thereafter, I analyse the phenomenon of xenophobia, which I consider to be one of the key challenges facing cross-border migrants in contemporary South Africa. I conclude that within the context of complex global and historical processes which at once cause social injustices and limit states' capacities to respond to them, practitioners in the field of cross-border migration cannot but receive contradictory and unattainable mandates and for these reasons, can expect to face considerable ethical challenges in their work.

Chapter 3 reviews the literature pertaining to the ethics of social work with cross-border migrants. I begin by locating social work with cross-border migrants within the larger field of international social work, before engaging with the kinds of tasks, roles and challenges that appear to be specific to the field. I interrogate how the question of social justice is framed in the reviewed literature, which, I find, successfully explicates the ways in which social workers fall short of meeting the profession's aspirations of countering social injustice and promoting social justice. Because many texts take recourse to social work's global definition and statement of ethical principles to make their points, I consider these two documents thereafter. However, in spite of being an important reference point for debate, the global definition, statement of principles, and the debates they inform do not seem to provide sufficient guidance for practitioners wishing to promote social justice in complex economic, political, social, cultural, and ideological terrains. I conclude that if the aim is to support practitioners in responding justly to service users under difficult conditions – as is the case in the field of social work with cross-border migrants – ethical discourse needs to attend carefully to the depth of practitioner's entanglement in broader structures, processes and dynamics of social injustice.

I consider this issue of entanglement in Chapter 4, which contains the study's paradigmatic considerations. I begin with a discussion of how structural processes of injustice (Young 1990, 2007, 2011) can affect the daily practices of social workers and other practitioners of care. Thereafter, I consider how a political ethics of care (Tronto 1993, 2011, 2013, 2014; Robinson 2010) might contribute to performing the leap from a critical analysis to facilitating ethical responses in particular situations of injustice. Because these approaches require practitioners to critically reflect on their own implication in regimes of injustice, I engage with two sets of concerns articulated in this regard, namely, that such focus on the 'self' risks narcissistic pre-occupation (Clifford 2014) and renders practitioners vulnerable to manipulation in the interest of unjust institutional regimes (Zembylas 2014). In response, I explore the role of emotions (Hugman 2005), attention to *affective dissonance* (Hemmings 2012), and *critical emotional reflexivity* (Zembylas 2014) in countering both types of risk and in promoting social justice. Chapter 5 concludes Part 1 with a justification of my methodological choices and a discussion of the research process, including among other things, the study's ethnographic/auto-ethnographic design; my use of a reflexive diary, life story and depth individual interviews as data collection tools; and my use of critical discourse analysis and constructivist grounded theory for the data analysis.

Part 2 (Chapters 6 to 10) of the thesis consists of five publications, which contain the study's empirical findings. Chapter 6: *Dreams* (Hölscher, Sathiparsad and Mujawamariya 2012) and Chapter 7: *Subjectivities of Survival* (Hölscher 2016) foreground the perspectives of cross-border migrants on the changing contexts of their lives. *Dreams* draws on the life stories of two refugee women, as well as diary entries on my encounters with them, to narrate their struggle for safety, survival and a dignified life in South Africa. Using Martha Nussbaum's (2000, 2006) *central capabilities* as a benchmark to establish the extent to which social justice constituted a lived reality for the two women concerned, we find that at the intersection of cross-border migration and gender inequality, both women asserted their humanity and agency, displaying resilience and resistance to the social injustices in their lives. Yet, both were unable to enjoy many of those capabilities that Nussbaum (2000, 2006) considers essential to human flourishing and thus, to social justice. *Subjectivities of Survival* is based on my analysis of five life stories and explores the implications of Amartya Sen's (1999, 2009) notion of agency for a conceptualisation of *just* social services and social work responses to

displacement, migration and structural violence in urban South Africa. I consider the participants' experiences from a point of uprooting, through their efforts to establish themselves in South Africa, to the obstacles encountered along the way and find a diminishing sense of agency, dignity and hope among all five of them. This I interpret as related to the differential ways in which structural violence affects South Africa's urban poor and which, to be just, require equally differentiated responses.

Chapter 8: *Encountering the Other* (Hölscher and Bozalek 2012), and Chapter 9: *Reflections on Misframing* (Hölscher 2014) highlight the impact of broader structures, processes and dynamics on the perspectives, social positioning and unfolding relationships between cross-border migrants who were displaced during the May 2008 xenophobic violence and members of the church who provided them with emergency support and shelter. Both chapters draw on my diary records, four life stories and interviews with a practitioner of care but explore the topic from two different angles. In *Encountering the Other*, we explore how the relationships between members of the two groups unfolded over a period of 18 months, trying to better understand the processes through which they changed over time. In *Reflections on Misframing*, I begin by mapping the social injustices experienced by the cross-border migrants along the dimensions of *misframing*, *misrepresentation*, *misrecognition* and *maldistribution* (Fraser 2008a). I then interrogate how structural processes circumscribed and conditioned their encounters with members of the church. These two chapters demonstrate the extent to which structural forms of injustice pervaded the perspectives, social positioning and relationships of study participants – including my own. I find that in the absence of a shared political analysis and sufficiently critically-reflexive engagement with our entanglement in structural forms of injustice, the *just* practices that had emerged in the beginning of the study were ultimately unsustainable.

The theme of the entanglement within unjust contextual conditions is taken up once more in Chapter 10: *Assuming Responsibility for Justice* (Hölscher, Bozalek and Zembylas 2014). In this chapter, which ends Part 2 of the thesis, we apply Young's (2006, 2007, 2011) 'Social Connection Model of Responsibility for Justice' with a view to better understanding the nature of relationships formed, services provided, and outcomes attained within the context of the refugee services organisation. Foregrounding the practitioners' perspectives, we find that overall, the organisational context was unconducive for relationships and practices of

solidarity and care. We conclude thus that a good starting point for developing *just* practices in the field of social work with cross-border migrants would be to attend to the disjunctions, hierarchies and dependencies that often provide the context for institutionalised welfare services.

Part 3 (Chapter 11) draws together the arguments contained Part 2 of the thesis, using the insights developed in Part 1. In this chapter, I summarise the study's empirical findings in relation to Objectives 1, 2 and 3, followed by a discussion of their implications for social work's conceptualisation of *just* practice, and of what the profession's responsibility for justice might entail (Objective 4). The thesis concludes with a set of recommendations regarding the use of theory and ethical approaches, the formulation of aspirational statements, social work practice, teaching and learning, and research. Table 1.1 provides an overview of the five publications in relation to the research objectives, and Appendix 3.6 contains a list of contributors and their respective contributions to the publications.

Chapter	Publication	Focus
Chapter 6: Dreams	*Social Work Researcher/Practitioner* Accepted for publication: December 2011	*Primary focus on –* Objective 1: The particular perspectives of cross-border migrants *Implicit attention paid to –* Objective 2: Subject positions and relationships Objective 3: Impact of structures, processes and dynamics Objective 4: Conceptualising *just* practice and social work's responsibility for justice
Chapter 7: Subjectivities of Survival	*Social Work/Maatskaplike Werk* Accepted for publication: November 2015	*Primary focus on –* Objective 1: The particular perspectives of cross-border migrants *Implicit attention paid to –* Objective 2: Subject positions and relationships Objective 3: Impact of structures, processes and dynamics Objective 4: Conceptualising *just* practice and social work's responsibility for justice
Chapter 8: Encountering the *Other*	*British Journal of Social Work* Accepted for publication: January 2012	*Primary focus on –* Objective 2: The subject positions and relationships between cross-border migrants and members of the receiving community *Implicit attention paid to –* Objective 1: Particular perspectives Objective 3: Impact of structures, processes and dynamics Objective 4: Conceptualising *just* practice and social work's responsibility for justice
Chapter 9: Reflections on *Misframing*	*Ethics and Social Welfare* Accepted for publication: October 2012	*Primary focus on –* Objective 3: The impact of structures, processes and dynamics on the perspectives, subject positions and relationships of cross-border migrants and members of the receiving community *Implicit attention paid to –* Objective 1: Particular perspectives Objective 2: Subject positions and relationships Objective 4: Conceptualising *just* practice and social work's responsibility for justice
Chapter 10: Assuming *Responsibility for Justice*	*Ethics and Social Welfare* Accepted for publication: December 2013	*Primary perspective –* Practitioners of care *Focus on the dialectics between –* - Particular perspectives (Objective 1) - Subject positions and relationships (Objective 2) - Structures, processes and dynamics (Objective 3) - Conceptions of *just* practice and social work's responsibility for justice (Objective 4)

Table 1.1: Overview of Articles Included in the Study

Chapter 2

Cross-border Migration and South Africa's Changing Regimes of Migration Governance[1]

The purpose of this chapter is to situate the study within its broader global, regional and national contexts, centring on issues of cross-border migration and migration governance in South Africa. In Section 2.1, I consider the implications of globalisation for nation states as political entities, including the impact on traditional notions of state boundaries and citizenship. Against this background, I provide, in Sections 2.2 and 2.3, a historic overview of sub-Saharan Africa's migratory systems, which I discuss in relation to South Africa's evolution from colony to apartheid state to a constitutional democracy, and the concomitant developments in the country's regimes of migration governance. Thereafter, I reflect on xenophobic discourses, practices and violence, which I regard as one of the key challenges faced by cross-border migrants in contemporary South Africa.

The core argument of this chapter is that South Africa transitioned from successive autocratic regimes to a modern nation state and constitutional democracy under conditions of economic globalisation. These conditions are reflected both in the dynamics of sub-Saharan migratory systems and South Africa's changing approaches to managing migration. The latter can be characterised as a switch from a tightly controlled system of labour migration aimed especially at meeting the needs of the country's mining industries to the current, more turbulent and diverse forms of in-migration in which there is a great deal of surplus labour and far less control by the state. Both South Africa's colonial and apartheid history and the present state's difficulties in managing in-migration effectively and responding to the day-to-day challenges experienced by South Africans and cross-border migrants alike, are linked directly to the continued spread of xenophobic sentiments, discourses, practices, and the

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[1] This chapter contains substantial parts of my chapter 'Social Justice', published in Healy, L.M. & Link, R.L. (2012) (eds.) *Handbook of International Social Work: Human Rights, Development & the Global Profession*, Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, pp.44-51.

sustained threat of violence. I conclude that in such a context, practitioners in the field of social work with cross-border can expect to face considerable ethical challenges.

2.1   Globalisation and the Changing Nature of the Nation State

The Global Commission on International Migration (GCIM) (2005) asserts that contemporary cross-border movements of people must be understood within processes commonly referred to as *globalisation*. Many authors have drawn attention to dramatic changes unfolding globally over the past four decades in the economic, political, social, and cultural spheres of life (cf. Bauman 1998, 2004; Papastergiadis 2000; Cox 2002; Sewpaul and Hölscher 2004; Terreblanche 2012). These changes have led to tremendous increases in the interdependencies, complexities and internal contradictions within and between contemporary societies, which in turn have impacted the functioning of modern nation states – as well as propelling the large-scale cross-border migrations we are witnessing in the current context. This chapter uses the term globalisation in a limited sense to denote a complex of ideological, economic and political phenomena resulting from, *inter alia*, two inter-related sets of events. Firstly, from the early 1970s onwards, a series of economic policy decisions were taken in a number of core industrialised countries of the Global North that served to open up national economies to international investment, and disinvestment, beyond levels previously known. Secondly, following on the rapidly growing indebtedness of many former colonies, global financial institutions imposed austere structural adjustment programmes on countries of the Global South (Altvater 1991).

Economic globalisation has been driven by a neoliberal political ideology. Constituting both a discourse and a range of practices, *neoliberalism* refers to a dramatic shift in 'societal power balances … in favour of corporate capital, which has been exerting pressure on governments to implement policies that seemed in favour of their capital accumulation strategies' (Sewpaul and Hölscher 2004:3). Both in industrialised countries and the former colonies, domestic policy decisions have become increasingly subordinated 'to the perceived exigencies of the global economy', accompanied by 'growing disparity between rich and poor' (Cox 2002:81). States have become 'more effectively accountable to forces inherent in the global economy',

and tended to 'mystify this accountability in the eyes and ears of their own public through the new vocabulary of globalisation, interdependence and competitiveness' (Cox 2002:81). With nation states surrendering the power to regulate economic activities within their territory to global financial institutions, to their respective economic elites, and to a limited number of transnational corporations, both the global and national economies have become more volatile (Strange 1996; Bauman 1998; Papastergiadis 2000; Cox 2002; Terreblanche 2012). This has led to significant shifts in economic power relations and to deepening inequalities both between and within countries. Yet, faced with a growing inability to serve as regulative, ameliorative and redistributive agencies, most states have curtailed their public spending budgets – particularly in the fields of education, health, and welfare (Bauman 1998; Sewpaul and Hölscher 2004; Terreblanche 2012). Worldwide, previously autonomous and self-sufficient ways of life have given way to one that would fit into a global, market-mediated mode of production and consumption (Bauman 2004). And as pre-existing social, political and cultural economies are disrupted, many people are uprooted and mobilised in search of new livelihoods and survival, especially in regions of the Global South (see Section 2.3 below).

At the point of commencing this study in 2008, the global economy was experiencing yet another major recession (Terreblanche 2012; Calland 2013). In its wake, certain global and local policy changes have prompted some authors to engage with the idea of *post-neoliberal possibilities* (Ballard 2013). However, there is no indication that the overall trajectory of the neoliberal agenda has changed. Elmar Altvater (1991), Ankie Hoogvelt (2001), John Perkins (2005) and Sampie Terreblanche (2012) are among the myriad of authors who offer detailed descriptions of how contemporary financial institutions and global trade relations have evolved historically and have systematically imposed economic and social policy decisions on nations of the Global South with a view to preserving and increasing the wealth and economic dominance of former colonial and current neo-colonial powers. The price paid by many erstwhile colonies has been corruption and the cementing of power by oppressive and exploitative elites, stunting growth of fledgling economies. As a result, the majority of the world's population have been retained in situations of protracted political and economic subjugation (Altvater 1991; Hoogvelt 2001; Pogge 2002; Perkins 2005; Meredith 2011; Terreblanche 2012). This is why Jim Ife (2001:17), though acknowledging that the neoliberal version of globalisation has created new patterns of inequality and new depths of poverty

and oppression, contends that the current politico-economic dispensation is nonetheless a 'logical extension' of pre-existing systems of 'capitalism, patriarchy and colonial exploitation'. Still, Nikos Papastergiadis (2000:6) observes, along with others, that globalisation 'has exposed the limits of the nation state … [and] undermined [its] legitimacy and putative … autonomy'.

Historically, nation states are a relatively recent phenomenon (Fraser 2005, 2008a), and the mapping of the world along interlocking state borders was completed only in 1884 with the partitioning of Africa (Reader 1998). Characteristic of nation states are their claims to *sovereignty*, that is, 'the power and undisputed right of the state to make and enforce law and policy within its territory', and to *autonomy*, that is, 'the state's actual capacity to achieve goals and policies once set' (Lister 1997:55). From the onset, states' efforts to create and maintain their claims to sovereignty and autonomy have been characterised by a 'struggle to attain a sense of unity and coherence', both against perceived external threats and internal divisions (Papastergiadis 2000:82). Defending their sovereignty and autonomy *externally*, nation states have always attempted to ward off unsolicited immigration: invariably, 'policies have … been formulated according to the principle that the national community needs protection' (Papastergiadis 2000:53). To deepen an *internal* sense of sovereignty and autonomy, nation states have sought to develop and instil a spirit of national identity amongst the peoples living within their respective territories. Mechanisms to this end have included the use of overt force, but also ideological strategies such as the mythical creation of common origins, campaigns to emphasise shared values and de-emphasise difference, and efforts to instil a belief in a common destiny (Heckmann 1992). In addition, most nation states have tried to ensure at least minimal levels of socio-economic protection, with the offer of an 'insurance policy against individual mischance and calamity' serving to legitimise people's 'submission to state power' (Bauman 2004:51). All of these processes have been supported by an insistence on 'exclusive citizenship' (Papastergiadis 2000:82).

The arguments thus far imply that that the dynamics of globalisation have eroded the ability of states to exercise their autonomy over economic and social policy, yet it does not follow that they have lost ground on sovereignty as well. In fact, Ruth Lister (1997:55) suggests that especially 'as regulators of access to territory, jobs and welfare, the power of nation states … could be said to be enhanced'. Lister's (1997) claim has been contested by some, however,

there appears to be greater consensus that nation states have become increasingly pre-occupied with policing access to rights, opportunities and resources within their respective spheres of sovereignty seeking to 'maintain at least the illusion of control' (Morrison 2001:71). Similarly, Zygmunt Bauman (2004:52) asserts that 'present-day nation states … still claim the foundational, constitutional prerogative of sovereignty: Their right of exemption'. Within the South African context, a former Director General in the Department of Home Affairs expresses these sentiments as follows:

> Control over the transnational movement of people is, similar to protecting the territorial integrity of the state, a fundamental element of statehood and sovereignty … South Africa's stated policy to maintain an open door to foreign investment should not be equated with the … absence of migration control (Masetlha 2001:56-58).

According to Papastergiadis (2000:2), the 'haunting paradox … at the centre of all claims to national autonomy' and sovereignty is that as global interconnections and interdependencies proliferate, national boundaries are fortified: 'every nation state is at once seeking to maximise the opportunities from transnational corporations, and yet closing its doors to the forms of migration that these economic shifts stimulate' (Papastergiadis 2000:3). In other words, while undermining states' autonomy, globalisation also increases states' tendency to assert their sovereignty claims – in particular against those large-scale and multifaceted forms of migration, which, too, it has caused.

In this context, distinctions made between different types of migration – for example, in the terms 'labour', 'forced', or 'irregular migration' (UNHCR *n.d.*; IOM 2011) – also signify underlying assumptions concerning the utility of particular migrant groups for the political economies of receiving countries. Such assumptions have shaped discourses and practices around human mobility across the world. All nation states use legislative, administrative and law enforcement methods to try and govern non-citizens within their territories. These stretch from entry to departure (including deportation) of foreigners and pertain to a myriad of issues including the allocation (or the denial) of entitlements, such as for example political rights, or the right to free movement, work, or access to public provisions for education, health and so on (see for example, Lister 1997; Brysk and Shafir 2004; Hayes and Humphries 2004). Indeed, Friedrich Heckmann (1992), Ruth Lister (1997), and Nancy Fraser (2005, 2008a) assert that the very concept of a sovereign nation state contains institutional forms of inclusion and exclusion as symbiotic, constitutive processes. Operating through modes both

formal (i.e. the legal status of membership) and substantive (i.e. the ability to enjoy those rights and duties that accompany this membership), citizenship draws two sets of boundaries around the nation state: one regarding admission to its territory and another pertaining to the depth and degree of people's membership. Accordingly, 'refugees, asylum seekers, would-be immigrants and migrant workers face a common set of 'gates', albeit differently constructed' (Lister 1997:46). South Africa, too, has developed differential mechanisms that provide for layered levels of   inclusion and exclusion of non-citizens. Sections 2.2 and 2.3 explore the dynamic relationships between global economic and political processes, changing forms of migratory movements and evolving systems of migration governance in relation to sub-Saharan migratory systems and in relation to South Africa as a traditional destination point for the region's migrants.

2.2   State, Borders, Displacement and South Africa's Evolving Regimes of Migration Governance: From Colonial Conquest to the End of Apartheid

The area that makes up present-day South Africa was inhabited from about 500 BC by the San and Khoikhoi, and from about 500AD also by Bantu-speaking peoples (Byrnes 1996). Following a prolonged period of relative stability, European explorers arrived in Southern Africa at the turn of the 15th and 16th centuries (Reader 1998). The first permanent European settlement was founded in 1652 by the Dutch East India Company in the vicinity of today's Cape Town. This laid the foundation for the Cape Colony, which over the following 120 years was expanded eastwards. European migrants arrived in the Cape for a range of reasons, including escape from poverty, persecution, but also in response to advertising and financial incentives by the colony's changing Dutch and British authorities. Slaves captured in other parts of the Global South were imported from 1658 onwards; followed, after the abolition of slavery, by the importation of indentured labourers. Meanwhile, Portuguese slavers operated from today's Maputo in Mozambique, with the first recorded export of Southern African captives dated 1709. As a result of the twin pressures emanating from both the east and west of Southern Africa, the region experienced several decades of large-scale violence, disruptions of livelihoods, and refugee movements that reached as far north as Africa's Great

Lakes region – commonly referred to as *Mfecane*, 'the Scattering' (Reader 1998; Terreblanche 2002; Crampton 2006).

In 1814, following alternating periods of British and Dutch colonial rule, the region was entered formally into the British Empire as the Cape Colony. When in 1834, Britain abolished slavery, several thousand farmers and slave owners of predominantly Dutch origin (known as *Boers* and later, as *Afrikaners*) left the Cape Colony for Southern Africa's interior and eastern regions where they fought several wars with the resident population and displaced entire peoples in the process. Between 1839 and 1854, the *Boers* founded three independent republics, which, between 1843 and 1903, were all annexed by Britain (Reader 1998; Giliomee 2003). In 1910, what were by then known as the Cape Colony, Natal, the Orange Free State and the Transvaal were formally united into the Union of South Africa and integrated into the British Commonwealth as a nominally independent territory. The Union was granted full sovereignty in 1931 (Meredith 2011). Following the 1948 election victory of the National Party, South Africa began to institutionalise the doctrine of *apartheid*, an increasingly expansive and elaborate system of race-based discrimination, exclusion and exploitation, as well as working towards gaining complete political independence from Britain. In 1961, a referendum held among South Africa's white citizens led to the country becoming an independent republic. In 1986, after years of political resistance internally and increasing pressure from abroad, negotiations began in earnest about how to end apartheid. These negotiations, initially between South African business leaders and the African National Congress (ANC), later also included American and British pressure groups and the South African state (Terreblanche 2012). The adoption of an interim constitution in 1993 (Republic of South Africa 1993) cleared the way for the country's first general elections in 1994. Finally, with the promulgation of its current constitution in 1996, the Republic of South Africa became a constitutional democracy (Republic of South Africa 1996b).

Even though slaves were formally emancipated in 1834, race-based discrimination and segregation remained common practice under British colonial rule, and the displacement and deportation of black Africans into designated 'locations' or 'reserves' became firmly established practices from about 1876. These practices continued, were further refined and entrenched by the Union of South Africa, and later by the apartheid state (Reader 1998; Terreblanche 2002). From 1951 until 1970, South Africa created ten nominally independent

homelands, *Bantustans*, into which it deported some 3.5 million black South Africans who, in the process, lost their South African citizenship. The latter were allowed to re-enter South Africa only as cross-border migrants and to remain only if in possession of a valid work permit, a condition which greatly served, and was taken advantage of by, South Africa's mining industry. However, with the end of apartheid, the Bantustans and their citizens were reintegrated into South Africa (Egerö 1991; Republic of South Africa 1993).

Britain's annexation of the *Boer* republics in the Orange Free State and the Transvaal was motivated by the discovery of diamonds in 1867 and gold in 1885. In its wake, South Africa's economy became dominated by the extraction of its mineral resources (Reader 1998). What began in the late 1860s as a spontaneous and somewhat egalitarian effort of many to extract South Africa's mineral wealth, became over period of less than 40 years a well-coordinated extractive economy that was concentrated in the hands of a small, politically powerful elite, funded by foreign capital. This created a huge demand for labour and was one of the key drivers of the successive expansion of colonial boundaries in the 19th century, including the dispossession of Southern Africa's indigenous people and their forceful relocation to small, often unproductive 'locations': if indigenous people could be rendered indigent, they would need to sell their labour to survive (Reader 1998; Terreblanche 2002, 2012; Mbeki 2009). This move enabled the colonial government and mining companies to better control the movements of the colonised without having to attend much to their human needs.

In spite of these and a myriad of other coercive measures, the recruitment and retention of cheap and compliant labour remained a key challenge for South Africa's mining industry. In this context, Reader (1998:500) makes the startling observation that the largest number of mine workers were those who had travelled the furthest, noting 'a direct correlation between the distance travelled to the mine and length of stay: only those who had travelled from afar would tolerate the unrelenting demands of mine labour for any length of time'. Desiring therefore a centralised and co-ordinated approach to the problem, South Africa's Chamber of Mines formed in 1896 what became later known as 'the Employment Bureau of Africa' (TEBA). TEBA set up recruitment stations across Southern Africa (Latsky 2008). By 1936, just under 400 000 men between the ages of 15 and 50 (the majority of whom were migrants) were working in the country's mines. The number of jobs in the mining industry peaked around 1948, but in 1986, South Africa's gold mines still employed more than 477 000

workers. Of these, almost 45% were cross-border migrants (Crush and James 1995:22), mainly from Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Malawi and Swaziland but also including workers from Angola, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe (Crush, Peberdy and Williams 2006:4). Following on from the location system, both the Bantustans and the co-ordinated recruitment of foreign labour can be regarded as a continuation of the colonial regime's attempts to keep a workforce outside their sphere of responsibility while continuing to be able to exploit their labour. John Reader (1998:512-513) concludes:

> The influence of the mines' employment regime on African society in Southern Africa has been pernicious – and profound ... It was never *employment* in the sense of a [mutually beneficial] relationship … but always the *exploitation* of an indispensable resource ... Farms, factories, government agencies and even employers of domestic labour perpetuated the system, in South Africa and throughout the continent (highlights in original).

Yet by 1992, the number of people selling labour to South Africa's gold mines had dropped by over 32% (Crush and James 1995:22), and in 2006, the total number of employees in South Africa's mining industry fell below 268 000, while the percentage of foreign workers had been reduced to 38% (Crush and Williams 2010:11). The background to this contraction was a severe accumulation crisis that has beset South Africa's mining and energy sector since 1970s. Some of the contributing factors to this crisis were directly linked to the economic globalisation processes discussed above. Jonathan Crush and Vincent Williams (2010:9) describe the contraction as the cumulative result of 'declining ore reserves, rising cost and a stagnant gold price', which caused the South African mining industry to enter 'a long period of restructuring and downsizing'. From the 1970s onwards, the tendency therefore has been towards mine closures, capital rather than labour intensive investment, outsourcing, and a growing automation of mining processes (Crush and Williams 2010). The result has been 'a dramatic decline in employment opportunities … in the mining industry' (Crush 2011:3), severely affecting both South African and cross-border migrants. These structural changes are a major contributor to the overall rise in South Africa's unemployment rate from 20% in 1970 to 36% in 1995 (Terrblanche 2012:56), a level at which it remains[2] (Statistics South Africa 2014:xii). Over a period of a hundred years, border crossers who were accustomed to South

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[2] In this thesis, I use the so-called expanded definition of unemployment. This figure includes both active, registered job seekers, those who no longer look and those who never have looked for paid employment in South Africa's formal economy.

Africa's ongoing need for foreign labour, found increasingly that they were, in fact, surplus to South Africa's economic needs.

There were also political reasons for the accumulation crisis of the mining sector in that by 1986, global mobilisation against apartheid had led to a sharp increase in net capital flight, triggering 'a dramatic decline in the international exchange of the South African currency' and convincing 'the corporate sector … that the apartheid regime could not survive and ought to be abolished' (Terreblanche 2012:12; cf. Mbeki 2009). As noted above, negotiations with the ANC around political change began in earnest in 1986 and were central in determining the future of South Africa's economic developments. Citing Sam Ashman, Ben Fine and Susan Newman, Terreblanche (2012:64-65) writes:

> The strongest foreign pressure on the ANC, in all probability, came from American pressure groups … The attitude was overwhelmingly that … every country in the world … [should adapt] as quickly as possible and as completely as possible to the American model of anti-statism, deregulation, privatisation, fiscal austerity, market fundamentalism and free trade … The role of [these] pressure groups … included … [making] exaggerated promises … [and exerting] subtle threats that the US had the ability (and the inclination) to disrupt the South African economy if the ANC should be recalcitrant ... The ANC's acceptance of the … neoliberal model reached a zenith when GEAR [Growth, Employment and Redistribution Strategy] was adopted in June 1996 … 'The irony is that while the rationale for these policies was to attract direct foreign investment, their actual effect was to increase the outflow of domestic capital' (cf. Perkins 2004).

In the wake of South Africa's embrace of this neoliberal policy set, Terreblanche (2012:73) concludes that, 'the African poor and the unemployed [were] seemingly permanently and systematically excluded from participation in the global economy'. Importantly, South Africa entered this period of transition with an economic history that over 350 years, had been founded upon unfree black labour – generated through conquest, capture, displacement and coercion of local people, the importation of slaves and later, of indentured labourers. During this long period, migratory patterns in Southern Africa became firmly entrenched, prefiguring contemporary migratory movements and South Africa's efforts to govern cross-border migration in the post-1994 period – the mining industry's changing needs and drastically transformed contextual conditions notwithstanding. This is the subject of the following section.

2.3 Globalisation, Turbulent Migration in Southern Africa and Migration Governance in the Post-apartheid Period

Contemporary forms of displacement and cross-border migration in sub-Saharan Africa have multiple causes and have led to a range of, sometimes contradictory, efforts on the part of receiving countries to manage in-migration. I discuss this complex in the following section, starting with a broader focus on the Southern African region as a whole, followed by more detailed attention to post-apartheid South Africa.

2.3.1 Contemporary Forms of Displacement and Cross-border Migrants in Southern Africa

In Southern Africa, the impact of globalisation processes and the effects of structural adjustment programmes discussed above became tangible in the 1980s. While structural adjustment programmes enforced large scale public spending cuts and the formal retreat of states from efforts to intervene in macro-economic processes, this generally did not lead to outcomes envisioned by neoliberal proponents of economic globalisation: transnational companies seemed reluctant to invest in countries where there was a perceived lack of existing, export-oriented and import-substituting industries, and where there was a perceived lack of labour discipline. Across the region, these two factors contributed significantly to massive job losses, growing urban and rural poverty, and consequently, poverty-related forms of migration (Findley 2001; Mbeki 2009; Terreblanche 2012). In addition, the onset of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, environmental disasters including droughts, and large-scale development projects such as dam constructions forced hundreds of thousands of people to leave their homes in search of livelihoods and survival (Findley 2001; Crush, Grant and Frayne 2007).

Apart from economic, health, and environmental challenges, sub-Saharan Africans in the 1990s were faced with an outburst of political conflicts and armed disputes in a variety of regions, including Angola, Katanga in the Southern Democratic Republic of Congo, the Great Lakes region, the Horn of Africa and Zimbabwe (see for example, Crisp 2003; Pan 2003; Wrong 2005; Hartnack 2009; Meredith 2011; Spitzer and Twikirize 2014). Ranging from cross-border

warfare to civil strife and communal violence, these conflicts have tended to be characterised by mass displacement of civilian populations, both as a means and a consequence of aggression. By the mid-90s, the tragic result was that in some countries, the number of persons suddenly uprooted by violence was more than double those who might have been more gradually displaced through unemployment, poverty, environmental degradation, and other afflictions (Findley 2001). Notwithstanding the complexity and local specificity of causes, Sally Findley (2001:279) asserts that, 'countries with dismal and deteriorating economic situations, rising unemployment, rampant inflation, and declining living standards are particularly at risk for political chaos, complex emergencies and forced migrations'. Responding to the common distinction between forced-versus-voluntary, and economic-versus-violence-induced migration (see below), Findley (2001:279) goes on to describe the often intricate weaving of structural and interpersonal violence that gives rise to mobility:

> Many forced migrants … have faced economic stress for long periods prior to their departure, so that actual flight can be seen as the culmination of an extended period of economic duress in the face of insurmountable conflict … In contrast, some voluntary migrants move precipitously in the face of a crop failure or localised crisis, their move having some of the compulsion elements of forced migration.

Caroline Kihato (2004:5-6), too, alludes to the complexity of forces in response to which people choose to migrate:

> Households in Africa are increasingly turning to cross-border migration as a … survival strategy. The decision to send a … family [member] to another country is often deliberated [jointly] … Even among forced migrants, not all members of the household emigrate … Households will often choose the members who are most likely to find work and support their family back home … Barring a war completely ravaging a particular community, a base is always retained in the country of origin. This way … households are able to spread their risk and optimise the resources available to them.

In spite of the apparent interweaving of causes that can push people to migrate across borders, the responses of most receiving countries are split between those that focus on economic factors and those that focus on 'forced migration'. Regarding the former, an illuminating example is the Southern African Development Community (SADC), which encompasses all African countries from the Democratic Republic of Congo and Tanzania to the South. The organisation was formed in 1992 with a view to advancing economic integration of its 15 member states (Black, Crush and Peberdy 2006; Segatti 2011). To this end, the 1992 SADC Treaty was intended not just to facilitate the cross-border movement of

capital and goods but also to ease restrictions on the 'free movement' among SADC's citizens seeking economic opportunities across borders (SADC *n.d.*). Indeed two decades on, Aurelia Segatti (2011:24) contends that 'the regional skills market is characterized by emigration' of professionals from Botswana, Namibia and South Africa 'toward countries in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development', who are then replaced with 'skilled nationals from the rest of the continent'. Still, Segatti (2011:22-23) contends that the SADC's 'initial consensus about free movement as a goal of regional integration [has] seemed to vanish' (Segatti 2011:22-23). In fact, there is a shared view that to date, SADC's member states are at best neutral, but generally hostile to human mobility, especially with regard to poverty-induced forms of migration (Black, Crush and Peberdy 2006; Crush, Grant and Frayne 2007; Segatti 2011).

This hostility is best understood in relation to the immediate postcolonial period when the governments of Africa's newly independent states took on the task of forming nations out of territories that comprised a multitude of ethnic and linguistic groups (Reader 1998; Achebe 2012). Richard Black, Jonathan Crush and Sally Peberdy (2006:102) note that at the time, 'the imperatives of new nation-building and Africanisation did not encourage the idea of immigration … Outsiders were generally viewed as a threat'. Decades later, many African countries have retained migration policies devised during the early years of independence (Black, Crush and Peberdy 2006). By 2014, only three SADC member states (Lesotho, Mozambique and the Seychelles) had ratified the United Nations Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families (UN 2003), even though the Convention was adopted in 1990 and has been in force since 2003. It appears thus that the spirit of national exclusivity of the early years of independence has survived into a historical context that in fact prompts cross-border mobility (see Section 2.1).

Most Southern African countries are signatories to the 1951 UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol (UNHCR 1996), and to the then Organisation of African Unity's Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa (OAU 1969). The two conventions reflect the binary conception of forced-versus-voluntary migration. According to the UN 1951 Convention and 1967 Protocol, individual persecution, or a well-founded fear of persecution on ethnic, religious or political grounds must be proven as a basis for the granting of asylum, which in turn affords refugees comprehensive protection

and some entitlements to legal, social and economic integration. The OAU Convention of 1969 expands this definition to include refugees from war or civil war where individual persecution cannot be proven – often the case in African contexts – but affords refugees, once accepted, the same rights as those enshrined in the UN Convention. Still, Black, Crush and Peberdy (2006:103) point out that in the entire region, 'support for refugees and asylum seekers is limited' and express concern that 'the overriding focus of most [national policies and] legal instruments is enforcement, control and exclusion' (Black, Crush and Peberdy 2006:102), while the predominant practice is to accommodate refugees in UN-administered camps (Landau 2006; Makhema 2009).

In short, the causes of contemporary migration in Southern Africa are multiple and intertwined, yet responses of receiving countries can be divided into those that focus on what is presumed to be voluntary – i.e. economic – migration, and those that focus on what is understood to be forced migration – i.e. induced by violence. In both regards, responses at the level of treaty, legislation and policy formulation can be distinguished from those at the level of discourse and practice. These two levels are not necessarily in sync, at times even working at cross-purposes. In the ensuing dynamics, it appears that economic and ideological considerations are important factors in receiving countries' governance of cross-border migration.

2.3.2 Cross-border Migrants and Migration Governance in Post-apartheid South Africa

Following previously entrenched migration patterns (see Section 2.2), post-apartheid South Africa has remained an important destination for Southern Africa's migratory movements. Indeed, by the end of the 20th century, migration into South Africa was considered to be 'more voluminous, dynamic and complex than it [had] ever been' (Crush and Williams 2010:4). Nonetheless, following on a century of tightly controlled labour migration, both the forms and types of migration, and the state's approach to managing these, have undergone profound changes. Black, Crush and Peberdy (2006:83) contend, 'South Africa's reconnection with the global economy' exposed the country to the more turbulent and diverse 'forms of migration commonly associated with globalisation'. On the professional and highly skilled end

of the spectrum, there is what is often referred to as 'brain drain' (Crush and Williams 2010; Segatti 2011) – generally a legalised form of migration which may, but need not necessarily, result in permanent residence arrangements. On the other end of the spectrum are those who are often subsumed under the categories, 'irregular migration' and 'undocumented migrants' (Crush and Williams 2010:19). While unskilled and poorly educated migrants are most likely to be found in this group, it does not follow that all or even most undocumented migrants are unskilled or poorly educated. Between the two poles is a diverse group of people who hold a range of temporary permits for specified purposes such as tourism, work or study, and who may or may not be in possession of needed skills. After expiry of their visas, they may or may not return to their countries of origin, renew their permits or overstay, at which point their sojourn, too, becomes irregular (Crush and Williams 2010; Crush 2011). Meanwhile, those seeking asylum in terms of the above-named refugee conventions include people ranging from the well-educated to the semi- and unskilled.

The actual number of cross-border migrants in South Africa is difficult to establish, mainly on account of 'inadequate data collection systems' (Crush 2011:3). However, Crush and Williams (2010:6-7) contend that legal entries counted at border posts give some sense of the magnitude of in-migration, stating that, 'the total number of legal entrants ... from the rest of Africa rose from less than a million in 1990 to 3.8 million in 1996 and 7.4 million in 2008'. With regard to undocumented migrants who obviously elude port of entry counts, researchers rely on deportation statistics to gain some sense of the number of undocumented migrants living in South Africa. Crush (2011) estimates that between 1990 and 2010 over 3 million people have been deported. The most accurate migration figures available are those published by the United Nations High Commissioner on Refugees (UNHCR) who reports that between 2006 and 2011, South Africa received the world's highest number of individual asylum applications per annum, a number that peaked in 2009 with a total of 222,300 claims (UNHCR 2013a). Thereafter, the number of new applications declined significantly (UNHCR 2013a), and South Africa now hosts a total of about 315 000 registered asylum seekers and refugees (UNHCR 2015) – down from just under half a million in previous years (UNHCR 2013b). The UNHCR (2013b) explains the phenomenon as follows:

> The asylum and immigration system … is currently undergoing reforms. This has made access to asylum challenging, particularly for individuals from non-neighbouring countries … Tighter border controls … have also played a role in lessening the number of applications.

In other words, the decline in numbers need not be equated with a declining interest in, or even a *de facto* reduction of people migrating to, South Africa. Figure 2.1 visualises the development of asylum applications in South Africa between 2002 and 2012.
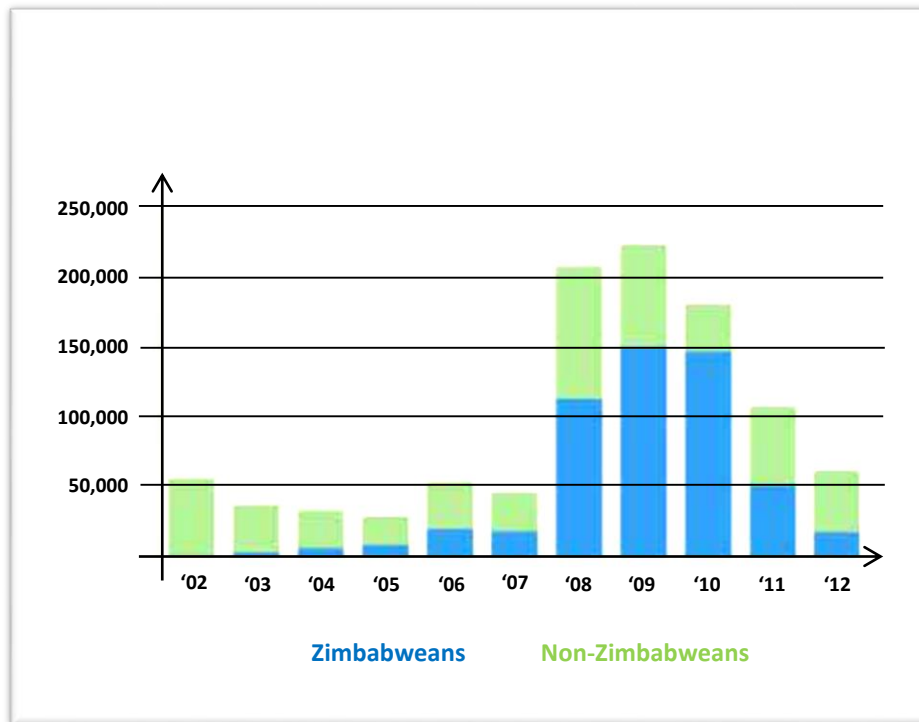
Figure 2.1: Asylum claims in South Africa 2002-2012 (UNHCR 2013a:26)

With work in the mines no longer a readily available option, the majority of migrants at the lower end of the economic spectrum, including most asylum seekers and refugees, settle in South Africa's urban centres, particularly in the cities of Cape Town, Durban, Johannesburg and Port Elizabeth, where they are often absorbed into the cities' informal economies (Crush and Williams 2010; UNHCR 2011a, 2012, 2013b). Since 1994, unemployment in South Africa has remained well above 30%, the country continues to be rated as one of the most unequal societies in the world, and poverty is said by some to have increased since the end of apartheid (Hoogeveen & Özler 2005; Terreblanche 2012). In addition, the end of apartheid-era influx controls has led to unprecedented levels of domestic, rural-urban migration. All these factors have contributed to the growth of those cities in which cross-border migrants tend to settle (Landau, Segatti and Misago 2011). As a result, South Africa's urban environments are characterised *inter alia* by escalating levels of poverty and degradation at

the same time as local authorities try to meet their governance mandates within considerable budgetary constraints (Beall, Crankshaw and Parnell 2000; Simone 2004; Landau, Segatti and Misago 2011). Access to affordable housing is extremely limited in overcrowded inner city areas (UNHCR 2012, 2013b). Previous research also suggests that fair access to health and education is far from assured (Landau 2006). So while South Africa's inner city residents may be diverse in terms of origin and mobility, many share the important commonality of leading precarious lives.

How is the South African state responding to the complex challenges emanating from the diversity of migrants seeking to enter and often to remain in the country, and to these entrants' diverse abilities to negotiate, integrate, and survive in South Africa's evolving urban environments? Crush and Williams (2010:15) note that initially, the post-apartheid government, 'under political pressure to address South Africa's chronic unemployment problem', tightened application requirements for, and drastically reduced renewals of, temporary work permits. The adoption of the Immigration Act No. 13 of 2002 signified that thereafter, 'the import of skills' had become 'a priority' (Crush and Williams 2010:18). In other words, post-apartheid management of labour migrants has focused on those who were already employed or for whom there was an expressed need in South Africa's formal economy, and favoured the highly qualified. In this respect, South Africa's approach to migration governance resembles that of other migrant-receiving countries. Yet, South Africa still has to ratify the UN's 1990 Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families (UNESCO 2005; OHCHR *n.d.*). As the Convention is actually in concordance with the country's Constitution and legislation, this omission might be linked less to a disagreement with its contents than to a lack of urgency and possibly, a measure of political expediency on the part of the South African state (Williams, Crush and Nicholson 2006; Crush and Ramachandran 2009). I return to this observation in Section 2.4.

Regarding the management of people claiming refugee status, South Africa ratified the UN and the OAU Refugee Conventions as early as 1995 (Vigneswaran 2008), that is, only one year into the country's post-apartheid dispensation. The Refugees Act No. 130 of 1998 is closely aligned with these conventions. Departing from predominant practices in sub-Saharan Africa, the country pursues a policy of urban self-settlement (Landau 2006; Makhema 2009), of processing asylum claims itself rather than delegating this responsibility to the UNHCR, and

of adjudicating these claims on an individual rather than on a group basis (Vigneswaran 2008). The department tasked with the responsibility of administering refugee claims and status determination is the Department of Home Affairs (DHA). Darshan Vigneswaran (2008:3) describes the system as 'Global North-style … albeit located in the Global South'.

Generally, South Africa's Refugees Act has been lauded for creating the necessary *legal* environment for effective refugee protection, including basic human rights, minimal protection and, more recently, the right to work for both refugees and asylum seekers (Landau 2006; Vigneswaran 2008; Makhema 2009; Segatti 2011). From the onset however, implementing the Act's provisions has proved difficult. On the one hand, corruption is widespread at the country's border posts, detention centres, police stations and DHA offices (Crush and Peberdy 2003; Human Rights Watch 2005; Landau 2006; Black, Crush and Peberdy 2006; Crush, Grant and Frayne 2007; Vigneswaran 2008, 2011; Landau, Segatti and Misago 2011; Segatti 2011). On the other hand, there is emerging evidence of civil servants actively and intentionally working to undermine the provisions of the Act, which is regarded as giving migrants 'an easy ride' into the country (Vigneswaran 2008, 2011:114). Drawing on his ethnographic research, Vigneswaran (2011:112) describes how –

> Many officials simply assume that it is their obligation to shore up South Africa's porous borders by deterring, undermining, and denying applications for asylum in South Africa. Often this deterrence does not take the 'hard' form of citing a specific law that makes an individual ineligible to stay. Instead, officials erect 'soft' barriers, including unnecessary delays, development of new 'procedures', and failure to provide assistance during the labyrinthine application process (Vigneswaran 2011:112).

These challenges are discussed further in Section 2.4 in relation to the phenomena of xenophobia in South Africa. Yet, due process in the award of refugee permits is not all that matters when it comes to living in a foreign land. Leading a dignified existence also requires, amongst other things, safety from violence and crime, the possibility of earning a living, appropriate and affordable shelter, as well as access to education, health, a social safety net and other welfare provisions in times of need. With regard to social protection, the South African government has allowed recognised refugees progressive access to South Africa's social security system, including the right to apply for the South African Old Age Pension, the Disability Grant, and the Child Support Grant (LHR 2012). While there is a dearth of dedicated research, anecdotal evidence has emerged from the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) alleging incidents of undermining, misdirecting and 'creating hurdles', which

applicants perceived as attempts to obstruct access to much-needed grants (personal communication; also see Section 2.4).

Meanwhile, there seems to be some level of confusion as to who is ultimately responsible for the welfare of refugees and asylum seekers. On the one hand, Jeff Handmaker (2001) and Loren Landau (2006) note that South Africa's refugee policy does not envisage any specific responsibility on the part of the South African government in relation to asylum seekers and refugees beyond status determination, arrest and deportation, resembling thus a *laissez-faire* approach to their protection, integration and care (Makhema 2009). The UNHCR on the other hand is quite explicit that they, too, have no mandate to ensure the well-being of asylum seekers and refugees, stating that –

> States are primarily responsible for the provision of international refugee protection. UNHCR works closely with governments to ensure that persons of concern are protected. However, UNHCR is not a substitute for government responsibility (UNHCR 2011b:4-5).

This confusion notwithstanding, the UNHCR is funding a range of activities within South African territory, including co-ordinating functions, advocacy, training, community development, legal advice and individual support that incorporates 'promotion of self-reliance' and 'emergency assistance to vulnerable refugees and asylum seekers' (UNHCR 2011b:16). All these functions are performed by a group of fewer than ten 'implementing partners' (UNHCR 2011b:20), that is, non-government organisations located in South Africa's main urban centres and refugee reception points. The UNHCR takes direct responsibility for activities of 'procurement, transport and storage, RSD [refugee status determination] related activities, HIV/AIDS related activities and prevention of statelessness in Southern Africa' (UNHCR 2011a:22). In total, UNHCR country reports on South Africa suggest, about 20% of all 'persons of concern' receive UN support (see for example UNHCR 2011a, 2012, 2013b, 2015). While this might impress as a substantial number, the figure does not reveal much about the type, duration, perceived relevance or impact of assistance in the lives of the beneficiaries, nor does it say anything about the total number of persons who required but did not receive, support. In addition, questions have been raised concerning the appropriateness, outlook and effectiveness of these interventions (Landau and Duponchel 2011).

The image of South Africa's contemporary system of migration governance that emerges at this point is more complex – and contradictory – than that of the preceding regime. Two key

observations have been made. Firstly, as a newly established nation state and constitutional democracy, post-apartheid South Africa has enshrined principles of human rights and due process into its legislative, administrative and policy frameworks. Yet, there are concerns that this overall change in orientation and approach has not filtered down sufficiently to the level at which civil servants are tasked with implementing the new legal and policy regime. Secondly, even though the post-apartheid emphasis on due process and human rights serves to constrain previous overt and excessive forms of labour exploitation, it appears that in the current context of economic globalisation, the preceding regime's emphasis on migrants' economic utility has not changed. Yet, as noted in Section 2.2, South Africa's formal economy has become progressively less labour, and more capital intensive, and thus lost much of its former ability to absorb migrants into mainstream labour markets. Consequently, South Africa's main urban centres, where informal economic opportunities seem more readily available than elsewhere, have replaced South Africa's mines as key destination points for both domestic and cross-border migrants. In the process, these urban centres have become marked by high population density, exploitative rental markets and structural degeneration, where the socio-economic needs of foreign and local, resident and mobile populations, are not met, and where access to public resources and services, though formally extended to all South Africans and certain cross-border migrants, is not assured. Thus, it is left largely to urban residents themselves to find ways and means of getting by. In this regard, the post-apartheid state's approach to migration governance might be interpreted as not just a *laissez-faire* approach, but as a government confronting a field which somewhat eludes governability in that in important respects, the South African state appears institutionally weaker than is required to resolve the problems facing both its local and foreign residents.

2.4 The Challenge of Xenophobia and Xenophobic Violence in Post-apartheid South Africa

How do resident and mobile, local and foreign populations relate and interact in this context? It has been claimed that South Africans are highly xenophobic, exhibiting 'levels of intolerance and hostility to outsiders unlike virtually anything seen in other parts of the world' (Crush, McDonald, Williams, Lefko-Everett, Dorey, Taylor and la Sablonniere 2008:1). Building on

Gordon Allport's (1954) original work, Jonathan Crush and Sujata Ramachandran (2009:6) define xenophobia as a social and political phenomenon that –

> … Consists of highly negative perceptions and practices that discriminate against non-citizen groups on the basis of their foreign origin or nationality. It affects all categories of migrants … Xenophobia is perpetuated through a dynamic public rhetoric that actively stigmatizes and vilifies some or all migrant groups … Xenophobia is not simply an attitudinal orientation. Hostile and skewed perceptions of migrant groups generally go hand in hand with discriminatory practices and poor treatment of such groups. Acts of violence, aggression and brutality towards migrant groups represent extreme and escalated forms of xenophobia.

Xenophobic attitudes and actions intersect with other forms of discrimination such as racism and sexism, and thus result in varying degrees of social, economic, political marginalisation and exclusion of members of the targeted groups (cf. Pease 2010). Crush and Ramachandran (2009:46), noting that xenophobic attitudes and actions on the interpersonal and intergroup levels are co-dependant on discriminatory discourses, rules and practices at the level of public institutions (including, for example, the media and political parties, legislative and policy making bodies, public administration and law enforcement agencies), stress that there is a connection between xenophobia and 'the exclusionary impulse of nation-building', which in the context of globalisation has taken a historically specific dynamic. In this regard, Crush and Ramachandran (2009:53) observe that accelerated 'flows of capital, goods and people heighten citizens' anxieties and fears, stimulating a stronger fixation with belonging and identities, which in turn exaggerates exclusionary tendencies'. The authors add that both 'real competition over limited resources' and 'perceived … economic threats' play a role in the ensuing xenophobic dynamics (Crush and Ramachandran 2009:53). As globalisation deepens, the increasing inability of states to fulfil those functions traditionally considered to be the prerogative and duty of the nation state – such as the provision of education, health and welfare services, preservation of public infrastructure, and the maintenance of public order – may prompt politically expedient debates about nation, nationality and citizenship. For example, myths regarding the limits of public resources, and the depiction of non-nationals as an illegitimate drain on these resources, may be cultivated (cf. Bauman 2004; Hayes and Humhries 2004). In the process, 'national identity is increasingly tied to racist and xenophobic expressions' (Crush and Ramachandran 2009:56).

Colonial rule in Africa either disregarded or manipulated pre-existing social formations, and colonial boundaries cut across, rather than corresponded with, the ethnic organisation of

African societies. Systems of patronage were created along ethnic lines to facilitate and augment colonial subjugation, administration and exploitation, thus amplifying pre-existing inter-group tensions, and sewing division where previously there had been none (Reader 1998). As a result, nation building in postcolonial Africa, too, has been linked to attempts by some ethnic groups to dominate others, in the hope of securing, and maintaining access to, privileges and resources (Mamdani 1996; Mbembe 2001; Meredith 2011). In the experience of many Africans therefore, the notion of nation building and the question of ethnic conflict have become intertwined. South Africa is no exception to this dynamic. Indeed, apartheid's 'enormous emphasis on boundary maintenance' is said to have undermined people's ability 'to be tolerant of difference' (Morris 1998:1125) and thus, the relatively sudden increase in the number of foreign nationals in the country's urban centres has 'created a space for hostility and misunderstanding to develop' (Harris 2002:173).

The suggestion that popular xenophobic sentiments and actions are connected to public discourse, administrative and law enforcement practices, is supported by a wealth of recorded incidents and studies conducted during South Africa's first fifteen post-apartheid years. As early as 1994, then-Home Affairs Minister Mangosuthu Buthelezi described '*illegal aliens* as a direct threat', alleging that foreign nationals were responsible for 'criminal activities such as drug-trafficking, prostitution and money-laundering in what can only be described as typical Mafia-activity' (Crush, McDonald, Williams, Lefko-Everett, Dorey, Taylor and la Sablonniere 2008:16). Similar sentiments were echoed, among others, by South Africa's late President Nelson Mandela (Crush, McDonald, Williams, Lefko-Everett, Dorey, Taylor and la Sablonniere 2008). In 1998 and 2005, Human Rights Watch published reports which documented in detail how foreign citizens in South Africa were subjected to 'serious abuse' (HRW 1998:11), including 'harassment, mistreatment and extortion' (HRW 2005:36). Jean Pierre Misago, Tamlyn Monson, Tara Polzer and Loren Landau (2010:33-34) contend:

> There are [several] areas … that illustrate how non-nationals have been turned into the violable alien … [including] a … general lack of access to constitutional [rights and] protections ... Taken singly, none of these exclusions are unique to non-nationals … What separates the experience of non-nationals from that of poor and minority nationals is the degree to which exclusion is both bureaucratically and socially institutionalised.

The Southern African Bishop's Conference, Black Sash, the South African Human Rights Commission, and the Consortium for Refugees and Migrants in South Africa warned of

growing levels of xenophobia as early as the mid-1990s, and the Southern African Migration Project (SAMP) documented, through its periodically repeated opinion surveys, the extent to which xenophobic sentiments were spreading among the South African citizenry, morphed into sporadic acts of xenophobic violence and ultimately, into the May 2008 pogroms. SAMP found that between 1994 and 1997, the South African public had become increasingly intolerant of foreign nationals, irrespective of whether these were 'legal or illegal, immigrants or migrants, refugees or asylum seekers' (Crush, McDonald, Williams, Lefko-Everett, Dorey, Taylor and la Sablonniere 2008:19). Repeating their attitudinal survey in 1999, SAMP noted that 'very little had changed' (Crush, McDonald, Williams, Lefko-Everett, Dorey, Taylor and la Sablonniere 2008:19) and in 2001, cautioned 'that xenophobic attitudes could turn violent' (Crush, McDonald, Williams, Lefko-Everett, Dorey, Taylor and la Sablonniere 2008:48). In 2006, yet another opinion survey was conducted, finding further hardening of South African attitudes towards foreigners (Crush, McDonald, Williams, Lefko-Everett, Dorey, Taylor and la Sablonniere 2008). The authors conclude that,

> Facilitated by a decade of in-fighting on immigration policy, irresponsible political statements and an uncritical and xenophobic press, the cancer spread. At first, with some exceptions, it remained in the heads and words of South Africans. But when thoughts turned to action, xenophobic thugs discovered that they could act with virtual impunity. Increasingly, their 'cause' became less random and took on the character (and eventual horror) of 'ethnic cleansing' campaigns in other parts of the world' (Crush, McDonald, Williams, Lefko-Everett, Dorey, Taylor and la Sablonniere 2008:6).

Indeed, Misago, Monson, Polzer and Landau's (2010:38-40) account of 'major' incidents of xenophobic violence in the period of 1994 to 2008, demonstrates an escalation from three incidents over six years (December 1994 to October 2000), four incidents across 13 months (August 2005 to August 2006) and another four across nine months (February to October 2007), to ten incidents in only four months (January to April 2008). On 11 May 2008, xenophobic violence finally erupted into nationwide pogroms that lasted about three weeks. A total of 95 major excesses were recorded, at the end of which over one hundred thousand people had been displaced, dozens of women raped, more than 60 persons killed, hundreds wounded, and millions of Rand worth of property looted and destroyed (Crush, McDonald, Williams, Lefko-Everett, Dorey, Taylor and la Sablonniere 2008; Misago, Monson, Polzer and Landau 2010). Since then, there have been no pogroms at a national scale; still, xenophobic violence erupts regularly. The most recent, high-profile xenophobic utterances entered the

public domain in March 2015: Zulu King Goodwill Zwelithini reportedly asked 'those who come from outside to please go home' (Ndou 2015), a request that was endorsed by President Jacob Zuma's son Edward, who suggested that due to the continued presence of foreign nationals, 'South Africa was sitting on a ticking time bomb' (Khoza 2015). The latest two waves of violence occurred in January and March 2015 in Johannesburg and Durban respectively, costing more than ten lives, while displacing an estimated 7000 foreign nationals (Essa 2015; Moftah 2015; News24 2015). In response, complaints were lodged against both King Zwelithini and Edward Zuma whose remarks are being investigated by the SAHRC (Khoza 2015; News24 2015). In Johannesburg, over 150 arrests were made (Essa 2015; Moftah 2015), and in April, Home Affairs Minister Malusi Gigaba visited the displaced families in Durban to assure them that 'everyone … within [South Africa's] borders is entitled to dignity [and] to shelter' (News24 2015).

How could the May 2008 pogroms have happened? Why, following the large-scale condemnation of these excesses, do xenophobic sentiments continue to be expressed and anti-foreign violence continue to flare up? Jörg Barberowski's (2008) study of the 1905 anti-Jewish and anti-Armenian campaigns in pre-revolutionary Russia characterises pogroms and massacres in ways that transcend their historical context. Barberowski (2008) notes that pogroms tend to occur during times of perceived crisis in the context of institutionally weak states, stating that at the point at which violence against ethnic or religious minorities erupts, the targeted population is already stigmatised, visibly disadvantaged in their interactions with state institutions, generally considered to be deserving of a lower social status, yet perceived to be economically more successful than most members of majority groups. Minority group members have become marked as of little moral worth, and their mere presence has come to signify an unstable and insecure social, economic, political and ideological order. All of this renders the stigmatised groups ideal scapegoats, and a growing number among the majority group develop a desire to see them erased. However, for actual pogroms to erupt, two additional conditions need to be present:

- State institutions do not respond effectively to concerns and complaints and seem unable to ameliorate social injustices or to maintain social peace. In response, potential perpetrators begin to regard violence as an appropriate means of gaining power and making themselves heard; and –
- State institutions refrain from openly displaying sympathy, siding with, helping or protecting the potential targets of violence, for this might erode the majority's confidence

in the state's ability to represent their interests; and that is something a weak state cannot risk (Barberowski 2008).

At the same time, no functioning state – weak or strong – will surrender its power voluntarily by allowing popular violence to occur unchecked and to spread uncontrollably. Hence, although pogroms are likely only if there are leaders who provide sufficient organisation and a clear-enough purpose, pogroms are normally prepared clandestinely and therefore appear to break out spontaneously. As crowd dynamics set in, instigators tend to lose control (Barbarowski 2008; cf. Canetti 1960). It is for these reasons that pogroms spread unpredictably and dissipate as perpetrators tire and increasingly direct attention to looting. Many of the displaced return once the violence is over and when police and army appear to restore the state's authority and to re-assert its power and control (Barberowski 2008).

Misago, Monson, Polzer and Landau's (2010) study of the May 2008 xenophobic violence evidences the extent to which the events typify Barbarowski's (2008) notion of pogroms. The global recession of 2007/2008 led to 'record increases in the price of food and other basic commodities' (Misago, Monson, Polzer and Landau 2010:169), which many would have experienced as a crisis. Misago, Monson, Polzer and Landau (2010:36) also found that most residents in affected areas believed that 'the presence of foreign nationals in their communities' was a 'primary cause of challenges to their economic and physical well-being'. With regard to Barberowski's (2008) observation that pogroms require that the majority regard the targeted population as less deserving yet benefiting (unfairly) from the prevailing dispensation, Misago, Monson, Polzer and Landau (2010:166-167) produce some pertinent findings:

> Some South African residents complain that … local businesses are closing down because they cannot compete [with foreign nationals] … [and] that foreign nationals are 'stealing' jobs … [In addition,] there is a belief that foreign nationals … should not be living in any government housing while any South Africans remain homeless … Other accusations are that foreign nationals are] accessing social grants using fraudulent IDs … 'stealing' women … [and are failing to participate] in local practices and struggles.

Then, there are several references to institutional weaknesses of the contemporary South African state. These include, firstly, the suggestion that, 'in many of the affected areas … poor service delivery may have played a role in … delegitimising political leadership' (Misago, Monson, Polzer and Landau 2010:171). The authors also find 'strong evidence' of a lack in trust 'in the state's ability or will to provide services … [or] to protect its citizens from

perceived outside threats' (Misago, Monson, Polzer and Landau. 2010:168). Added to this is 'a worrying culture of impunity' with regard to attacks on foreign nationals (Misago, Monson, Polzer and Landau 2010:172) and a 'lack of effective conflict resolution mechanisms', with evidence of 'local authorities' failure to engage … during the events that precede the attacks' (Misago, Monson, Polzer and Landau 2010:175). Against this background, it seems entirely plausible that indeed, the 'absence of institutionalised, legitimate and trusted leadership … led to the emergence of informal, self-appointed structures … operating as an untouchable … leadership' and running parallel to the 'constitutionally mandated … local government structures' (Misago, Monson, Polzer and Landau 2010:173):

> The xenophobic violence in most affected areas was organised by those parallel structures and/or by some self-serving members of formal institutions who capitalised on residents' feelings, fears and negative attitudes towards non-nationals … While to many outside observers, violence against foreign nationals … appeared to be a spontaneous community uprising, the study shows that it [was] in all observed cases engineered and fuelled by influential individuals and groups that have direct and self-centred interests to serve (Misago, Monson, Polzer and Landau 2010:174-175).

Eventually, the South African Defence Force was called in to help end the violence (Crush, McDonald, Williams, Lefko-Everett, Dorey, Taylor and la Sablonniere 2008), but this does not mean that the pogroms ceased due to the state's intervention as opposed to tapering out. Either way, in Chapters 8 and 9, I describe how ultimately, the targets of aggression were encouraged to, and indeed often did, return to those areas from which they were supposed to have been erased. The South African state's responses to more recent attacks against foreigner impress as somewhat more decisive and authoritative than was the case in 2008. However, it appears that important underlying causes remain and continue to fuel xenophobic attitudes and practices, as well as triggering periodic outbreaks of xenophobic violence.

Image 2.1: A Person Looting a Foreign-owned Shop

2.5 Conclusion: Situating Social Work with Cross-border Migrants in South Africa

The purpose of this chapter was to situate the study within its broader global, regional and national contexts in order to tease out important economic, political, social and ideological dynamics surrounding social work with cross-border migrants in contemporary South Africa. At the broadest level I found that, driven by a neoliberal ideology as they presently are, processes of globalisation have led at once to an increase in cross-border migration, and to a weakening of nation states' autonomy with regard to social and economic governance options. This has caused an increased pre-occupation with borders, control and the exclusion of those cross-border migrants who are considered to be of little economic use and therefore a likely burden to the state. My review of Southern African migration and migration governance in South Africa revealed that South Africa transitioned to a constitutional democracy as a social economy that over 350 years, had been based on exploitation of unfree black labour of people who were displaced, whose movements the state sought to control,

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and whose welfare was defined as lying outside of government responsibility. Patterns established during this period prefigured both contemporary migratory movements and South Africa's efforts to govern cross-border migration in the post-1994 period.

While the causes of contemporary migration in Southern Africa are complex, I found that responses from post-apartheid South Africa, like those of other migrant-receiving countries, can be defined in terms of two distinct sets: one that focuses on 'economic', with the other focusing on 'forced' migration. In both regards, legislative and policy responses are not fully synchronous with public discourse and practices. Importantly, South Africa's formal economy no longer absorbs migrants into its mainstream labour markets as was the case under previous regimes. This function is largely fulfilled by informal economies in urban areas where population is dense, rental markets are exploitative, and structural degeneration is widespread. In this context, the question of how, and the extent to which, the socio-economic needs of residents are met is a precarious one. In all these respects, the South African state appears institutionally weaker than necessary to respond adequately to the challenges facing both local and foreign residents. Finally, I argued that the interplay between received, colonial and apartheid ideologies, and the present state's difficulties in managing in-migration consistently and assisting residents in meeting their day-to-day social and economic needs effectively, is an important contributor to the exceedingly high levels of xenophobia and the sustained incidence of violence against foreign nationals in post-apartheid South Africa. Focusing on the May 2008 pogroms, I suggested that these were preceded by the onset of a major global recession, with crisis-like effects in the lives of many. I interpreted xenophobic discourses as a means of projecting onto foreign nationals much of what may be experienced as uncertain, unsettling and threatening in contemporary South Africa. Xenophobic practices, of which pogroms represent an extreme form, can be seen therefore as a both a symbolic, exorcist and a practical, antropoemic[3] strategy.

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[3] Claude Lévi-Strauss's (cited in Bauman, 1993) identifies two strategic alternatives which, he claims, 'primitive' societies used in dealing with strangers. Bauman contends that these two strategies are endemic to *all* societies, including contemporary ones. One, referred to as *antropophagic strategy*, derives its meaning from the biological use of the term that is, *incorporating and assimilating*. The other, referred to as *antropoemic strategy*, means throwing 'the carriers of danger up – and away – from where orderly life is conducted' (Bauman 1993:163).

This then is the context of social work with cross-border migrants in South Africa. Historic and contemporary, economic, political, social, and ideological processes interact so as to limit a state's capacity to serve as a regulative, ameliorative and redistributive agency in the face of widespread unemployment, inequality and socio-economic hardship. Where the same processes lead to the stigmatisation, marginalisation, exclusion and violation of cross-border migrants, social workers and other practitioners of care are likely to receive complex, potentially unattainable and possibly contradictory mandates. They can, for these reasons, be expected to face considerable ethical challenges. To the extent that South Africa is typical of other migrant-receiving countries, such challenges might be comparable to those experienced by practitioners in the field of cross-border migration elsewhere. This, and the ways in which mainstream ethical discourses and instruments serve to facilitate and constrain ethical practice, forms the subject of the following chapter.

Chapter 3
The Ethics of Social Work with Cross-border Migrants

Having outlined key features of the study's economic, political, social, cultural, and ideological contexts, the purpose of this chapter is to delineate its discursive and practice contexts. To this end, I review a selection of writings on social work with cross-border migrants, published in the decade 2004 to 2014 and discuss the extent to which mainstream discourse on social work ethics – as represented by the document, *Ethics in Social Work, Statement of Principles* (IFSW/IASSW 2004) and the *Global Definition of Social Work* (IFSW/IASSW 2014) – is helpful in informing and guiding social justice-oriented practice in this field. I begin by locating social work with cross-border migrants within the larger field of international social work (Section 3.1), before engaging with the kinds of tasks, roles and challenges that appear to be specific to the field. This I do in two sub-sections. In Section 3.1.1, I focus on challenges pertaining to service provision, considering both the kinds of services that are provided and the way in which they are provided. Thereafter, in Section 3.1.2, I concentrate on work contexts and working conditions, relating these to practitioners' affective responses to the tasks and roles they perform and the challenges they experience in their daily work. At the end of this section, it will be apparent that even though the reviewed literature represents a great variety of national contexts, practice situations and intervention types, the ethical challenges which emerge as characteristics of the field are remarkably similar.

In Section 3.2, I engage with the question of ethics in the field of social work with cross-border migrants, focusing on the issue of social justice. To this end, I interrogate how the question of ethics, and specifically the issue of social justice, are framed in the reviewed literature (Section 3.2.1). It becomes apparent that in order to inform a moral evaluation of the practices they describe, many of the reviewed texts draw on social work's global statement of ethical principles (IFSW/IASSW 2004) and the profession's global definition (IFSW/IASSW 2014). While the literature is quite successful in delineating some of the origins, nature and dynamics of the ethical challenges in the field, and the ways in which social work practice falls short of meeting the profession's aspirations of countering social injustice and promoting

social justice, it is less clear how practitioners might be enabled to do greater justice to these aspirations. Yet, the purpose of the global definition, the statement of ethical principles and the debates the two documents are meant to inspire is not merely to provide reference points for evaluating practice: the documents should also be able to inform and guide practice.

To explore this latter concern, I discuss, in Section 3.2.2, some of the assumptions that seem to underlie the global definition and the statement of ethical principles about how social workers are meant to know what to do to promote social justice, and about what might prompt and enable them to do so. The discussion reveals the extent to which the two documents have been influenced by two dominant schools of ethical thought in social work: deontology and utilitarianism. It is in keeping with these two traditions that the documents supply overall points of orientation for practice. However, I am concerned that they do seem to fall short of providing adequate guidance for practitioners wishing to promote social justice in complex social, economic, political and ideological terrains – as is the case in the field of cross-border migration. I conclude that in the interest of social justice, interlocutors need to attend more to the intricate inner, relational and structural processes through which practitioners become involved in unjust practices in the first place. One of my key propositions in this regard is that perhaps, the questions of *knowing* and *doing* what is required in relation to social justice need to be supplemented with attention to the human reality of *being* – particularly the condition of *being entangled* in multiple structures and processes of injustice. Short of exploring this issue of entanglement in-depth, the ethical debate risks vacillating between moral prescription and moral condemnation – an unhelpful approach for social workers facing difficult practice situations.

3.1 Social Work Practice with Cross-border Migrants: Tasks, Roles, and Challenges

Karen Lyons and Natalie Huegler (2012:223) note that, 'mobility and migration have featured as major issues … from the beginning of the profession', with social workers called upon, for example, to attend to the plight of 19th century immigrants in the United States, and to the large numbers of persons displaced in the wake of World War II. Other scholars contend that in its contemporary forms, social work with cross-border migrants is a relatively new field of

practice (cf. Nash, Wong and Trlin 2006; Valtonen 2008; Hugman 2010a). Richard Hugman (2010a), and Lynne Healy and Rosemary Link (2012) regard social work with cross-border migrants as one aspect of the wider field of international social work, which itself can be seen as 'part of the process of globalisation within the profession, as both cause and effect' (Hugman 2010a:11). Hugman (2010a:37) observes that in relation to cross-border migrants, the professional literature has been predominantly concerned with social work's 'role in … the global North'. To the extent that South Africa's migrant-receiving regime has been characterised correctly as 'Global North-style' (Vigneswaran 2008:3), such writing offers important insights for this study. Still, South Africa's location 'in the Global South' (Vigneswaran 2008:3) means that practitioners may be facing contextual complexities and challenges beyond those confronting social workers in the Global North (See Chapter 2.2 to 2.4).

Uma Segal (2012:73) contends that social work with cross-border migrants requires interventions spanning 'macro, mezzo and micro levels of practice' and can range from clinical services directed at individuals and families, group work and community development, to advocacy, education, policy practice, and administration. The exact nature of services to cross-border migrants varies from context to context and in relation to factors such as the 'specific needs' of service users, 'political and public attitudes towards migration' and 'the professional location of social work … [including] the boundaries of social workers' roles and the resources available to them' (Lyons and Huegler 2012:223). More generally, the nature of services provided hinges on the 'capacity of nation states to manage their welfare systems according to local needs, practices … customs and values' (Hugman 2010a:12). Like other scholars, Lyons and Manion (2006) point out that frequently, cross-border migration entails trauma and loss, which people experience and work through in culturally and contextually specific ways. Thus, Segal (2012) alerts practitioners to the importance of simultaneously considering the histories, economic, political and cultural dynamics of their service users' countries of origin; the specific causes underlying their uprooting; their experience of the journey; the range of resources they may, or may not, bring along as they try to settle elsewhere; and the ways receiving societies respond to their arrival and continued presence. With regard to the latter point Hugman (2010a:26-27) adds that –

> Working with … international service users … is … a matter of … understanding what it is to live as a member of a minority community … Social work with refugees and other migrants also often involves dealing with questions of racism and other forms of discrimination ... There is a responsibility for social workers to develop and apply a conscious capacity to reflect on their own background and its relationship to social structures.

Hugman (2010a) proposes three core questions that social workers need to get to grips with if they are to practice ethically and to provide methodologically sound services. The first two questions concern the extent and ways in which social workers are able to 'grasp and respond appropriately to the needs of migrant communities or individuals'; the extent and ways in which 'the needs of migrant communities or individuals [differ] from those of other service users', and the extent and ways in which services 'for such communities … should … be approached as a different form of practice' (Hugman 2010a:24-25). The third question concerns the nature of the 'challenges facing locally trained social workers in working with clients whose culture and language', personal and collective histories, social positioning, and experiential horizons 'are different to the local "mainstream"' (Hugman 2010a:25).

The development of a practice that is based upon social workers' dialogical, critically-reflexive assessment of service users' histories, positioning and needs, would be ideal. However, the profession's responses to societal challenges have always been situated within specific historic – social, economic, political and ideological – contexts. As such, they have been developed in reaction not just to the perceived needs of service users, but also to the demands of other, more powerful, stakeholders, in particular the frequently articulated gatekeeping mandate. This mandate entails that social work services are rendered such that the ostensive 'drain' on public resources by people in need – often regarded as 'unproductive' – is controlled and curtailed (see for example, Parton 1996; Hayes and Humphries 2004; Sewpaul & Hölscher 2004). By extension, social workers themselves are also always at risk of being regarded as an unnecessary drain on public resources, their work in need of being controlled and their numbers in need of being curtailed (Clarke, Cochrane and McLaughlin 1994; Sewpaul & Hölscher 2004). The resultant tensions between care and control of service users, and social work's own vulnerability to discourses of scarce resources and budgetary constraints, have remained a defining characteristic of the profession at large (Parton 1996; Sewpaul & Hölscher 2004; Bozalek 2012; Briskman, Zion and Loff 2012). In a period of economic globalisation where nation states' claims to autonomy and sovereignty seem threatened (see Chapter 2.1), these tensions and vulnerabilities are likely to be pronounced;

more so in relation to service users who crossed national borders and do not have citizens' right in their new countries of residence.

3.1.1 Social Work's Gatekeeping Role and the Care-versus-Control Dilemma

A review of papers published between 2004 and 2014 on the experiences of practitioners working with a wide spectrum of cross-border migrants in a number of countries reveals how these tensions and vulnerabilities play themselves out in remarkably similar ways. Citing a study conducted by Crawley (2007), Sarah Cemlyn (2008) discusses the role of social workers at one of Great Britain's key entry points for foreign nationals, that is, the point of arrival of asylum seekers. As members of the country's Asylum Screening Units, practitioners were found executing their work while seated next to immigration officers and separated from asylum seekers by a glass screen. They were tasked, *inter alia*, to assist with the age assessment of applicants. Noting 'pockets of good practice', Cemlyn (2008:198) contends that overall, 'the quality of age assessment [was] poor, reflecting socially constructed understandings about behaviour and a culture of disbelief', and that social workers 'sometimes [succumbed] to pressure to assess children as older in order to avoid expenditure' (Cemlyn 2008:192).

Reporting on their study of the work of a Specialised Asylum Team in Great Britain, set up in terms of the 1996 Immigration and Asylum Act to support newly-arrived asylum seekers, Sales and Hek (2004) write that,

> Those leading and working with these teams were often professionals with a long-standing commitment to working with refugees and asylum seekers. The constraints of the new role were, however, acute. Asylum teams experienced a growing demand for the service as a result of new arrivals in a period of budget constraints, and their work tended to be dominated by assessing eligibility and providing for immediate needs, rather than a broader social work role (Sales and Hek 2004:64).

Participants in their study described how as a result, they formed what some called 'inappropriate' relationships with service users, in that 'the requirement to establish entitlement led to a focus on establishing the credibility of the client's claim and thus to a relationship built on suspicion rather than trust' (Sales and Hek 2004:68). In 2004, the British parliament promulgated further legislation with a view to eradicating such 'perverse

incentives' (Cemlyn 2008:200) as might encourage rejected asylum seekers to overstay their welcome. This was to be achieved by withdrawing all material support; however, 'minimal provision' was still available for 'destitute plus' cases where 'an individual's need is to a material extent made more acute by some circumstance other than the "mere" lack of accommodation and subsistence' (Cemlyn 2008:202) such as old age, disability or pregnancy. Consequently, social workers were placed in the even more challenging position of being asked to assess whether rejected asylum seekers were 'just destitute', or more than 'just destitute'. Both Sales and Hek (2004) and Cemlyn (2008) provide accounts of practitioners questioning, ameliorating the effects of, and participating in community-based resistance against Great Britain's tightening regime of exclusion. Yet, neither offer any evidence of sustained, systematic action to halt these developments.

Magdalena Mostowska (2014) studied the responses of practitioners to homeless Eastern European migrants living in Copenhagen. The legality of such migrants' residence hinged on their economic independence; and even though Denmark has 'universal' social security benefits, migrants' eligibility depended on a minimum period of employment. These circumstances had left many un- or underemployed migrants without residence permits and often destitute (Mostowska 2014). According to Mostowska (2014:i23) in 2009, the government 'withdrew funding for homeless migrants with no residence permit', a decision that was softened somewhat in 2011 when public funding 'for winter emergency shelter' was approved. Mostowska (2014) found that Copenhagen's municipal services for this group were restricted to 'advice, information and facilitating repatriation' while a small number of non-government organisations depended primarily on private funding to offer overnight shelter, a drop-in centre, and street work to a restricted number of people for limited periods of time, provisions that were largely uncoordinated (Mostowska 2014:i24). Given these constraints, service providers engaged a number of strategies in response to the plight of these service users, which Mostowska (i24-i25) categorises as follows: *submissive strategies* complying with state regulations, *subversive strategies* which undermined such rules, and *innovative strategies* that undermined government directives and were directed at structural change. Importantly, Mostowska (2014:i31-i32) contends that all three strategies were based upon interpretive frames which, in spite of ostensive differences, were remarkably similar in that they depicted a homeless migrant as –

Someone who has little chance of living up to the expectation … Service providers generally [saw] a homeless migrant as a helpless person, who is nevertheless responsible for his or her migration and thus is out of place seeking help [and should go home].

Jessica Jönsson (2014), researching social workers' attitudes and practices in relation to undocumented migrants in Sweden, found that practitioners framed this group along two broad discursive patterns. One, which she calls the 'victim discourse' (Jönsson 2014:i42), viewed the problem of undocumented immigration in terms of global challenges, such as 'lack of development' and wars in other parts of the world. This discourse was 'used mainly for undocumented women and children who deserve some kind of help from *Us*' (Jönsson 2014:i42). The other discourse framed the challenge of undocumented immigration in terms of men's 'bad individual choices' and illegal actions: because of 'their criminal existence in Sweden' practitioners concluded that they could 'not be entitled to any support and protection by government' (Jönsson 2014:i42). Social workers positioned themselves quite differently in relation to their service users, either 'distancing themselves from the complexities and problems of undocumented immigrants' (Jönsson 2014:i46); or adopting 'a balanced position to find "loopholes" … under national and international law … to help people get the right help' (Jönsson 2014:i47); or actively resisting the exclusion of undocumented migrants by engaging in what Jönsson terms 'undocumented practices' (Jönsson 2014:i45). *Undocumented practices*, she says, are actions that circumvent and contravene the rule of law where necessary to provide service users with the required protection and support. To this end, some government-employed social workers, feeling powerless to help particular undocumented migrants themselves, would refer such matters to colleagues in the NGO sectors, who seemed less constrained by government rules and regulations. These participants justified their actions as 'a matter of contributing to the realisation of human rights for everybody' (Jönsson 2014:i48). Ultimately however, Jönsson (2014:i50) concludes that 'such a solution to major social problems' may be 'ineffective' and 'unsustainable'.

Jelka Zorn (2007), writing from Slovenia, focuses on the role of social work in relation to the detention and deportation of rejected asylum seekers and undocumented immigrants. Noting that in these facilities, the police had ultimate authority, she reports that social workers were required to keep persons awaiting deportation busy, deal with their complaints, and provide 'psycho-social counselling' (Zorn 2007:133). One expressed aim of such counselling was 'to provoke homesickness in people whose fate is deportation anyway', accomplished among

other things, through 'asking questions about … family members and others left behind, [and] facilitating access to telephone calls to their homeland' (Zorn 2007:134). Ultimately, Zorn (2007:134) asserts, social work interventions served to make 'a refugee without status deportable' (Zorn 2007:129) and 'life in detention bearable, not only for detainees, but even more so for the employees' (Zorn 2007:134). It is worth noting that in spite of her stark criticism of these and related activities performed by social workers in Slovenia's detention and deportation centres, she points out that some practitioners were 'drawn into', rather than choosing to perform, these roles, and 'thus [were] not able', rather than choosing not to 'serve people according to their needs' (Zorn 2007:136). The processes by which social workers were 'drawn' into their roles, however, were not the subject of Zorn's study.

The above case studies depict a myriad of exclusionary practices, directed at a wide range of cross-border migrants, and located both externally at national borders and internally at states' institutional boundaries. As such, they show some of the ways in which states may try to control and restrict access not just to their territories but also to the protections and benefits deemed to be the privilege of citizens, even where they are formally designated to be universal (Balibar 2004; Bauman 2004; Behanbib 2004; Fraser 2008a). Importantly, the case studies illustrate the kinds of activities in which social workers in these contexts may be called upon to perform gatekeeping roles. The overall impression generated is that in relation to both actual and prospective claims by cross-border migrants, social workers have tended to lean more towards their control functions than towards their caring responsibilities, even though some forms of resistance against the harshness of exclusionary measures were also recorded. While some of the studies considered here focused on the discourses – the interpretive frames – that can play a role in the choices social workers make in their work with cross-border migrants, questions remain concerning the conditions under which, and processes in the course of which, social workers may come to regard certain discourses and practices as more appealing, convincing, feasible, or appropriate than others.

3.1.2 Social Work's Vulnerability to Discourses of Scarcity and Budgetary Constraints

Recent studies on the work of caring professionals with refugees in Australia (Robinson 2013, 2014), Great Britain (Guhan and Liebling-Kalifani 2011; Robinson 2013, 2014) and Jordan (Al-Makhamreh, Spaneas and Neocleus 2012) speak of the intricacy of service users' daily challenges. These challenges required service providers to deal simultaneously with 'immigration issues … clients with no support, money or accommodation … mental health needs and … traumatic experiences' (Guhan and Liebling-Kalifani 2011:213). Accordingly, practitioners were found offering 'individual treatment for mental illness and distress', engaging in 'group work and community development', promoting 'support for newly arrived groups', and addressing 'issues of settlement, exclusion, and marginalisation' (Robinson 2013:88). This stretch of activities does not simply indicate a holistic approach to practice, but rather a 'complex' field of work that makes 'heavy demands' on the service providers (Robinson 2013:89). Claims regarding the complexities and levels of demand of the field do not only relate to the vulnerability of cross-border migrants but also to practitioners' own sense of vulnerability. It is therefore appropriate that, beyond analysis of practitioners' roles and responsibilities and of discursive formations and processes of social positioning, these three studies attend explicitly to the service providers' perceptions of, and affective responses to their work. In Sahar Al-Makhamreh, Stafanos Spaneas and Gregory Neocleus' study, social workers talked about –

> Feelings of frustration … self-questioning … annoyance … anxiety and confusion … They feared that their work could become simply a technical activity shaped by the tools and institutions they work in rather than by social work's ethical and analytical base' (Al-Makhamreh, Spaneas and Neocleus 2012:1082-1084).

Rebecca Guhan and Helen Liebling-Kalifani (2011:227-228) describe their participants' experience as an 'emotional rollercoaster' where positive emotions associated with 'witnessing their clients' strengths, coping and resilience' and with 'becoming more understanding, developing confidence, or becoming stronger' overlapped and alternated with strongly negative emotions:

> 'Anger … sadness, depression, feeling down, flat, helpless and demoralised … were often described in relation to staff feeling limited in their ability to make a difference to their clients' lives … [This was] often due to the restrictions presented by … other agencies and systems … in particular … the asylum system. Feeling … frantic, stressed and overwhelmed … [was]

frequently [mentioned] in relation to staff's high workloads, as well as the pressures and responsibilities of their work … Some staff described feeling upset and tearful … mostly … as a response to the realities of clients' experiences and circumstances (Guhan and Liebling-Kalifani 2011:227).

All the participants regarded their work as 'more stressful' and as posing 'greater ethical dilemmas' than was the case in other fields of social work (Guhan and Liebling-Kalifani 2011:206). In Kim Robinson's study, participants –

Spoke about the emotional demands of listening to traumatic personal narratives [which] were experienced as having a large impact on their own mental health … Workers carried with them a sense of responsibility for the future safety of service users, even those that had been deported … Often, the demands seemed to be overwhelming, with one experienced social worker stating: 'I feel like I am just trying to help people get through a horrendous system' (Robinson 2013:93-94).

Like Sales and Hek (2004) above, all three studies note that for both personal and political reasons, the majority of their research participants were highly motivated to work in the field of cross-border migration, but that a number of contextual conditions undermined their resolve and constrained their ability to make a positive difference in their service users' lives (see also Briskman, Zion and Loff 2012; Barberis and Boccagni 2014). Based on her international comparison, Robinson characterises the legal and policy context of cross-border migration as one of 'continual and rapid change' (2013:93), but the cultural context is one that is consistently characterised by 'hostility and disbelief' (2013:89). As such, the cultural context provides the direction of change in the legal and policy spheres. In this way, the two contextual conditions work together to unsettle and delegitimise migrants' personal experiences, perspectives and narratives. Rendering cross-border migrants *en bloc* as 'a risk' to social, political and economic stability, these conditions also feed into, and encourage social work's gatekeeping and control function. Because this rendering clashes with social work's other tendency to relate to service users in terms of its caring mandate, that is, as people in need of support because they are 'at risk' of exclusion and deprivation, ethical practice requires that social workers 'unpack and reflect on these complex discourses' (Robinson 2013:95).

Such critically reflexive practice seems difficult to perform under conditions of neoliberalism, that is, in the context of austerity measures and welfare spending cuts integral to the neoliberal ideology (see Chapter 2.1). NGOs depend on increasingly limited funding from government, supra-national agencies (such as the UNHCR) and private sources for which they

have to bid. This funding context is said to generate 'a climate of competition' among organisations and 'anxiety' amongst staff, at the same time as it constrains organisations' ability to determine the contents and direction of their work (Robinson 2013, 2014; Barberis and Boccagni 2014; Jönsson 2014). There is a tendency to employ fewer staff albeit in the face of increasing demand, and to retain many on short term contracts with little to no social or job security of their own (Al-Makhamreh, Spaneas and Neocleus 2012; Robinson 2013, 2014; Barberis and Boccagni 2014; Jönsson 2014). This practice leads to outcomes, two of which are key to the arguments of this chapter.

Firstly, there is a propensity among NGOs in this field of cross-border migration to focus their work on 'providing direct services' (Robinson 2014:1606). One consequence is a leaning towards neglecting their 'critical political role' (Robinson 2014:1606) in relation to public discourses, practices, policy and legislation, which comes to be regarded as an add-on, rather than an integral part of the work. A second consequence is that direct services themselves are inhibited by scarce funding and budgetary constraints, limiting what practitioners are able to do. For example, Guhan and Libling-Kalifani (2011:214) observe that –

> A large caseload … tended to result in … significant pressures and difficulties managing their time at work … These pressures compromised the quality of the services they were able to provide … [and] left them little opportunity to process or reflect on their experiences at work … which tended to be compounded by the desperate nature of their clients' situations.

Such conditions left participants in Robinson's study 'feeling … like the service users' that is, 'outside of any supportive mainstream structure' (Robinson 2013:97), and 'increasingly placed in situations of crisis' (Robinson 2014:1612). Arguably, such similarities in the experiences of service users and providers could create additional bonds of empathy and solidarity between them. Instead however, the reviewed literature suggests that service providers tended to experience the relationships formed under these contextual conditions as burdened and strained. Powerlessness and exclusion seemed to be regarded as parallel, rather than shared, experiences. Several of Gulhan and Liebling-Kalifani's participants felt that 'their clients' expectations … were too high, causing [them] to make unrealistic demands' (2011:214) and reported that 'clients could at times be violent and aggressive' (2011:214), with the qualification that 'their awareness of how clients had been treated tended to result in them putting in extra efforts and/or hours' (2011:215). Similarly, the majority of practitioners in Robinson's study longed for better 'professional boundaries', which they

found 'difficult … to maintain … with service users who were so vulnerable and outside of systems of support' (Robinson 2014:1611). Robinson (2014:1607) notes conflicting affective responses among practitioners, akin to the 'emotional rollercoaster' described above: on the one hand, there was 'a withdrawal and a dread of work', while on the other hand, there was an inclination to become 'overly involved and needing to "rescue" service users'. Ultimately, Robinson (2014:1605) contends, conditions of neoliberalism generally, and in the field of cross-border migration specifically, render it 'odd' or radical to support service users rather than completing assessments for needs that are not going to be met' (cf. Barbaris and Boccagni 2014; Jönsson 2014).

This then appears to be the nature of social work's vulnerability to discourses of scarcity and budgetary constraints in the field of cross-border migration. The holistic, critically-reflexive and dialogical approach espoused by the theoretical literature seems to give way largely to a micro-focus and residual approach in practice. In this context, an image emerges of practitioners who are either co-opted as gatekeepers and agents of control, or who feel besieged by the exclusionary systems confronting their service users, and who feel limited in their ability to assist service users in integrating as equals in the societies among which they live. In subtle ways therefore, social work's responses to cross-border migrants appear to be undermined and constrained by the same global processes and conditions that have contributed to the large-scale cross-border migration and which necessitated such responses in the first place. The next section explores how the reviewed literature frames the question of ethics and, more specifically, the question of social justice, as well as considering the kinds of ethical guidance available to practitioners trying to navigate this complex terrain.

3.2   The Ethics of Social Work with Cross-border Migrants and the Question of How to Promote Social Justice

To interrogate how the question of ethical, specifically justice-oriented, practice is framed, I begin by considering how the authors concerned interpret the interplay between contextual conditions, the profession's moral aspirations, and the actual practices they have found to be characteristic of the field of social work with cross-border migrants. Since the global definition of social work and its statement of ethical principles can be shown to serve as key reference

points for a moral evaluation of practice, I analyse then the two documents. This is with a view to establishing what social work's mainstream approach is to guiding practitioners in identifying, understanding and responding to the social injustices they come across, or come to be part of, in the course of their work.

3.2.1 The Ethical Framing of Social Work Practice in the Literature on Cross-border Migration

All the publications considered in Sections 3.1.1 and 3.1.2 engage with the question of ethics in the field of cross-border migration. Explicitly or implicitly, all frame the core ethical challenges as arising from the dynamic interplay between three factors. These are the global processes that have created contemporary forms of cross-border migration; national contexts that place practitioners within institutionalised practices of exclusion and control; and the normative framework contained in the *Global Definition of Social Work* and the document, *Ethics in Social Work, Statement of Principles,* both of which orient social workers towards promoting 'social cohesion … the empowerment and liberation of people ... social justice [and] human rights' for all (IFSW/IASSW 2004, 2014). The reviewed literature highlights two tensions. Firstly, social workers in their great majority operated within, rather than across, the structures provided by territorial states. Drawing on the work of Hannah Arendt and Seyla Benhabib among others, Jönsson (2014) refers to the ethical predicament of the field as arising from 'a historical dilemma and conflict between universal values on the one hand, and the interests of the nation state on the other' (2014:i36). She contends that this dilemma has been exacerbated by processes of globalisation in that 'migration and global social problems increasingly challenge the national basis of social work' (2014:i37). Barberis and Boccagni (2014:i71) call this the 'dilemma between ethical universalism and tacit nativism', while Briskman, Zion and Loff (2012) refer to it as the tension between social work's dual, professional and institutional, mandate. Social work, as a profession, aspires to be guided by the needs of service users, responding to them equally and irrespective of citizenship or residence status. Yet this universal orientation tends to clash with the organisational arrangements that structure social workers' day-to-day practices. As employing agencies, states bind social workers to government rules, and as providers of the legal, policy and funding frameworks for NGOs' activities, states regulate the operational space of social

workers outside of government employment. In this way, the profession becomes aligned with state power, with practitioners promoting rather than challenging, government interests and sovereign claims. This has been shown above to include social workers' frequent participation in the exclusion of cross-border migrants, irrespective of the actual needs of the excluded.

Secondly, the overarching processes referred to by the term neoliberalism (see Chapter 2) and the micro-practices to which they have given rise (as per Sections 3.1.1 and 3.1.2 above) have been summarised by Barberis and Boccagni (2014) as the 'societal de-legitimisation' of social work's caring responsibilities by presenting service users as 'undeserving' (2014:i71; cf. Humphries 2004; Sales and Hek 2004; Cemlyn 2008) and by criminalising solidarity (Barberis and Boccagni 2014:i84; cf. Jönsson 2014). On the one hand, Hugman (2010a) proposes with Nussbaum (2000) that the notions of human rights, needs, and social justice cannot usefully be decoupled. While conceptually distinct, they 'exert a moral claim that they should be developed' (Hugman 2010a:133), and this provides the social work profession with a universally relevant purpose (see Section 3.2.2 below). On the other hand, the reviewed literature found that austerity measures in welfare translated into limited funding and increased use of competitive, project-based financing of services, while exerting pressures on bidding organisations to represent their work 'in technical terms' (Barberis and Boccagni 2014:i76). Against a background of nationalist-exclusionary discourses that rendered cross-border migrants 'excessive and illegitimate users of welfare', pressures then mounted on service providers to be selective in terms of which category of service users and which needs were foregrounded, and which kinds of claims were to remain unheeded (Barberis and Boccagni 2014:i79). A common outcome of this was a rationing of services based on the 'profiling of … clients [in] more rigid and less personalised ways' (Barberis and Boccagni 2014:i81; cf. Sales and Hek 2004; Cemlyn 2008). Consequently, needs were 'increasingly and even legally decoupled from social rights' (Barberis and Coccagni 2014:i84; cf. Hayes and Humphries 2004; Briskman, Zion and Loff 2012). In other words, the ideas of human rights, needs and social justice were severed in practice, even though an ethically well-grounded social work profession might require them to be seen in conjunction.

The preceding sections illustrate a range of consequences that these dynamics exert on the lives and practices of social workers in the field. Several studies came across practitioners who

had internalised, embraced and defended discourses that legitimised exclusionary practices, and who therefore seemed comfortable enough in their professional roles (Sales and Hek 2004; Zorn 2007; Cemlyn 2008; Jönsson 2014; Mostowska 2014). Conversely, some authors quoted participants who expressed sensitivity towards their service users' difficult life circumstances and awareness of burdened service provider/service user relationships, who articulated experiences of affective dissonance, and who spoke about their own strained mental health (Sales and Hek 2004; Guhan and Libling-Kalifani 2011; Al-Makhamreh, Spaneas and Neocleus 2012; Robinson 2013, 2014). Such practitioners were often presented as being conscious of the universalism-versus-nativism dilemma (Barberis and Boccagni's 2014), though less was said about their awareness and understanding of processes which worked to delegitimise their care for service users. Finally, a number of authors evidenced acts of solidarity and resistance. Yet by and large, these interventions appeared to be fragmented (Cemlyn 2008; cf. Briskman, Zion and Loff 2012), informal and spontaneous and had occasionally been driven 'underground' – as in Jönsson's (2014) *undocumented practices* and Mostowska's (2014) *subversive strategies*. And while such examples point to conceivable openings for resolving the identified dilemmas, they also appeared as 'maverick' and potentially short-lived exceptions to the rule (Williams and Graham 2014:13) rather than amounting to serious alternatives to the dominant practices.

Seeking to explain these responses, several authors apply a typology of social work practice in the field of cross-border migration which also contains a moral appraisal of their research participants' attitudes and actions. Hayes and Humphries (2004) and Jönsson (2014) are particularly explicit in their moral condemnation of those social workers whose practices were deemed to mirror exclusionary discourses, policies and laws. Hayes and Humphries (2004) contend that the official role of social work with cross-border migrants in Great Britain is to be 'part of the infrastructure of enforcement' of exclusionary rules and regulations (Hayes 2004:26), and that employing agencies have 'been transformed into technological machines' (Humphries 2004:33) that serve to facilitate this role. Humphries (2004:33-35) continues to assert that,

> It is not surprising then that the behaviour of social workers … appears to have little concern for the ethical questions raised by their being drawn into policing immigration status, or the morality of their complicity in leaving asylum seekers without money or accommodation, or the politics, the quasi-market mentality … The job is seen as a technical and mechanistic routine … Most social workers, although aware of the depth of poverty and human suffering

and of the limitations of their role to change this, have been content to continue with individualistic models of practice and ignore any attempt to change social structures.

Ten years on in the Swedish context, Jönsson (2014) comes to similar conclusions, complaining that, 'established technocratic and authoritative methods of social work practice today limit social workers' possibilities to initiate creative practices and develop new methods for working with new and globalised social problems' (Jönsson 2014:i45). In her view, social workers are able to conform to exclusionary discourses, policies, and laws simply by 'following established practices where global social problems are portrayed as individual problems, often based on individual choices' (Jönsson 2014:i46), and by avoiding critically-reflexive engagement with their own social positioning in relation to these problems. Thus 'distancing themselves from the complexities and problems' in the lives of their service users,

> They show no interest in discussions concerning global power relations and privileges as possible reasons behind increasing immigration. They have uncritically embraced the neoliberal adjustment, mainly referring to national laws and rules where undocumented immigrants as non-citizens are 'naturally' excluded … Some legitimise their passivity [by saying that] … they have no legal obligation. Many social workers … keep their mouths shut about injustices which they do not have to deal with … They can help, but they do not (Jönsson 2014:i46-i47).

Jönsson (2014) argues that there is a mutually reinforcing relationship between these observations and her sense that such social workers also lack general knowledge about global and structural processes and display little to no awareness of social work's global ethical commitments (IFSW/IASSW 2004).

A second type of response is characterised not as lacking in reflexivity in the sense that many social workers did express an awareness of the moral dilemmas intrinsic to the work in the field and engaged in such actions as might remedy these dilemmas. Still, their responses are considered to be uncritical and apolitical in that they did not seem to be grounded in a structural analysis of cross-border migration as a historical, socio-economic and political problem. Thus, several authors found that practitioners engaged in practices which Mostowska (2014:i26) labels as acts of *exceptional humanism*. Based on a notion of 'common humanity', they opted at times to overlook the differences between cross-border migrants and local service users, displayed kindness and care, and subverted or ignored those rules that they considered inhumane. Mostowska (2014:i26) is concerned, however, that these attitudes and actions were 'also an indication of helplessness; only short-term solutions

[seemed] possible in the context of the overall regulations'. Briskman, Zion and Loff (2012:43) offer a strongly normative assessment of such responses, calling them, with reference to Bill Jordan (1990), 'isolated acts of banditry'. They contend that 'in this way … professionals embraced … a morality based upon empathy,' and that 'caring and relationships were preferred to confronting questions of justice and rights' (Briskman, Zion and Loff 2012:48). Citing Saul Alinsky (Kenny 1999), they distinguish 'between those who are prepared to fight for the rights of the 'under-dog' and those who are … not', arguing that 'without active opposition, we perpetuate existing unequal social and political relations'. Their arguments mirror those of Hayes and Humphries (2004) who reduce the ethical question to a simple binary:

> Essentially, social work now has a choice: We can campaign, defend and battle for service users who have immigration problems or we can simply be part of the … immigration infrastructure. (Hayes 2004:26).

In Humphries' (2004:39) view, this opposition means that there is really only one moral choice:

> The profession has a choice to make a new moral effort, to find its anger about the plight of the poor [and] to engage its knowledge about the sources of inequality with a new sense of imperative and urgency'.

After all, Zorn (2007) says with reference to the definition of social work (IFSW/IASSW 2002, 2014) and its statement of ethical principles (IFSW/IASSW 2004):

> Social work is a profession that challenges inequality and structural oppression, whether perpetrated individually or socially through institutional structures and cultural norms … This is precisely the goal of social work practice: to empower people whose rights are violated or jeopardised and to be engaged in a mutual struggle for social justice … To rethink social justice, equality and solidarity in the local and global context, it is crucial to be explicit about our values and interests, thereby considering all the contradictions imposed on us (Zorn 2007:136-141).

In these arguments, 'social work', or 'the profession', comes to personify of all those practitioners who see themselves as working to advance the normative aspirations of the global definition of social work and its statement of ethical principles. This contains the notion that in so far as practitioners fall short of abiding by these norms, they also fall short of being 'true' social workers. To this end, several authors considered in this chapter propose a third type of response: interventions considered to be the 'most moral' in relation to cross-border migrants are political in that they arise from critical structural analysis and are likely to lead

to social workers joining progressive civil society alliances, organising and participating in social action, and engaging in critical, radical, structural, or anti-oppressive forms of social work (Hayes and Humphries 2004; Zorn 2007; Cemlyn 2008; Briskman, Zion and Loff 2012; Jönsson 2014). Implicit in this moral assessment is the idea that to ignore, undermine or break the law forms part of this third, 'most moral' type of response only to the extent that it is rooted in a critical structural analysis and understood to be one component of a broader orientation towards social justice, and one among a range of interventions aimed to counter social injustice, oppression and exclusion in the lives of individuals and families.

Yet it has been noted that many of those social workers who did not wish to collude with exclusionary discourses, policies and laws also felt powerless, vulnerable and found their radius for action constrained, and that those practices of resistance recorded in the literature, seemed somewhat fragmented, informal, spontaneous and potentially short-lived. What kind of provisions might encourage and enable social workers to engage in the kinds of inclusionary, anti-oppressive and socially just practices proposed by, among others, Hayes and Humphries (2004), Zorn (2007), Cemlyn (2008), Briskman, Zion and Loff (2012) and Jönsson (2014)? Either explicitly or implicitly, all these authors take recourse to the global definition of social work and the profession's statement of ethical principles.

Thus, Barberis and Boccagni's (2014:i77) unease about the fact that these ethical guidelines are 'quite general' is worth noting. While this is intentional as the global statement of ethical principles aims 'to encourage social workers across the world to reflect on the challenges and dilemmas that face them and make ethically informed decisions about how to act in each particular case' (IFSW/IASSW 2004), Barberis and Boccagni (2014:i77) are concerned that considerable levels of ethical awareness, critical reflexivity and skills are required as a prerequisite for social workers to be able to translate these guidelines into actual practices. Yet they feel, social work intervention in the field of cross-border migration is 'typically naïve' and 'experience-based'. The authors contend therefore that as practitioners use their 'discretionary power' and rely on 'communities of practice' to find ways of including 'innovation and social justice into the professional mandate', their 'good-willing unawareness' may increase their risk of experiencing 'burnout … at a personal level' and produce 'distorted effects … at a systemic level', (Barberis and Boccagni 2014:i77-i78). In respect of the latter concern, they write:

An oppositional culture that perceives normative production on immigration as discriminatory and thus 'breakable' … grounds a mistrust in norms that sometimes are not used even when favourable for clients ... This radical … discretion questions social justice, since it is grounded on an implicit and unpredictable selectivity, providing unequal responses to similar need profiles … This can boost exclusion in ways difficult to perceive and oppose, since they are typically based on informal and fragmented practices' (Barberis and Boccagni 2014:i78).

In other words, a critical political outlook and structural analysis might be an important but possibly insufficient resource with which to achieve inclusionary, anti-oppressive and socially just outcomes. Also required is a systematic engagement of social workers with themselves, their own social positioning, needs, desires, value base and practices, and an alertness to the always possible yet unintended outcomes of their interventions.

In short, the reviewed literature is quite successful in delineating some of the origins, nature and dynamics of the ethical challenges encountered by practitioners working with cross-border migrants, and the ways in which social work practice falls short of meeting the profession's aspirations of countering social injustice and promoting social justice. Yet the way in which practitioners might be enabled to do these aspirations greater justice is less clear. In the cited texts, the global definition of social work and the profession's statement of ethical principles have been shown to provide important reference points for academic writers wishing to evaluate the ethics of social work practice in the field of cross-border migration. Yet concerns have emerged regarding the extent to which these documents are successful in actually supporting ethical practice. It is important to explore these tensions before drawing this chapter to a conclusion.

3.2.2 Social Work's Global Definition and Statement of Ethical Principles: Guidance for Practitioners in the Field of Cross-border Migration?

It has been argued that social work, to a considerable extent, derives its identity from positioning itself in normative terms, with its practice being guided by an increasingly complex set of inter-related moral and ethical orientations, guidelines and prescriptions (cf. Reamer 1998; Banks 2004; Hugman 2005). Many of these pertain explicitly to 'humanising' and preventing abuse of power in face-to-face encounters between social workers and their service users. Others focus on structural issues, entailing normative deliberations and

statements about societal relations as such. These developments find expression, *inter alia*, in the on-going efforts by the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) and the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW) to define social work, and to build consensus around the profession's normative base. Social work's current definition was adopted by IFSW and IASSW in 2014. It reads,

> Social work … promotes social change and development, social cohesion, and the empowerment and liberation of people … Social work engages people and structures to address life challenges and enhance wellbeing … Principles of social justice, human rights, collective responsibility and respect for diversities are central to social work (IASSW 2014:1).

The document entitled *Ethics in Social Work: Statement of Principles*, adopted by IFSW and IASSW in 2004, notes that,

> Ethical awareness is a fundamental part of the professional practice of social workers. Their ability and commitment to act ethically is an essential aspect of the quality of the service offered to those who use social work services (IFSW/IASSW 2004:1).

The two organisations go on to explain that –

> The purpose of the work of IASSW and IFSW on ethics is to promote ethical debate and … encourage social workers … to reflect on the challenges and dilemmas that face them and make ethically informed decisions about how to act in each particular case (IFSW/IASSW 2004:1).

To guide their debates and reflections, the ethics statement provides two overarching ethical principles, namely, 'Human Rights and Dignity' (IFSW/IASSW 2004:2-3) and 'Social Justice' (IFSW/IASSW 2004:3). With regard to the latter, the document asserts that 'social workers have a responsibility to promote social justice in relation to society generally, and in relation to the people with whom they work' (IFSW/IASSW 2004:3; highlights added). This principle is then broken down into five sub-sets, namely:

1. Social workers have a responsibility to challenge negative discrimination …
2. Social workers should recognise and respect the ethnic and cultural diversity of the societies in which they practice …
3. Social workers should ensure that resources at their disposal are distributed fairly, according to need …
4. Social workers have a duty to bring to the attention of their employers, policy makers, politicians and the general public situations where resources are inadequate or where distribution of resources, policies and practices are oppressive, unfair or harmful …
5. Social workers have an obligation to challenge social conditions that contribute to social exclusion, stigmatisation or subjugation, and to work towards an inclusive society (IFSW/IASSW 2004:3).

My main concern here is not with the substantive issues referred to in both the definition and the statement of ethical principles. I engage with a number of these concepts in Part 2 of the thesis. At this point, I am more interested in the documents' implicit assumptions about how practitioners should go about *knowing* 'just' from 'unjust' and about the ways in which social workers could be motivated, enabled, or obliged to *do* what is needed to respond to 'injustice' and promote 'justice'. In this regard, it is important to note that the ethics statement accords upfront importance to ethical debate and does not prescribe the kinds of action practitioners may take towards the attainment of social justice. However, it is equally important to note that when it comes to the details of what is to be done, social workers are reminded of their 'responsibility', 'duty' and 'obligation' to 'recognise' and 'challenge' injustices and to 'ensure' that justice prevails (IFSW/IASSW 2004:3).

In the statement of ethical principles, the ideas of *knowing* and *doing* something about social justice are closely interlinked. In both respects, the influence of the deontological and utilitarian traditions in social work ethics are apparent. In deontological thought, ethics are seen to be founded in a form of 'rationalism, in which abstract and universal principles define the 'right conduct' (Hugman 2005:5). Regarding such principles as a definitive foundation for binding rules concerning behaviour and action, writers in the deontological tradition seek to ensure that ethical conduct is 'reasoned' rather than 'arbitrary, subjective, self-interested or capricious' (Hugman 2005:22). In this context, Kant's categorical and practical imperatives have been influential, especially in their implication that 'an act's moral worth depends on the reasons for which it is done' (Hinman, cited in Hugman 2005:6). In keeping with this tradition, the principle of social justice is declared central (IFSW/IASSW 2014) to the profession and therefore to defining the identity of its members. In asserting upfront that 'ethical awareness is a fundamental part of … professional practice' and that social workers' 'commitment to act ethically is … essential' (IFSW/IASSW 2004:1), the statement of ethical principles emphasises the importance of practitioners wanting to counter injustices and to promote conditions of justice as well as being able to discern what behaviours and actions are required at particular points in time. Thus, the IFSW and IASSW frame the attainment of social justice as dependent on social workers' knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of their professional duty.

How should practitioners go about knowing what their professional duties are in each particular case? In what direction should ethical debate be oriented as social workers try to work out what it is that they ought to do? The definition of social work and the statement of ethical principles draw on social work's utilitarian tradition for direction. Writers in this tradition prioritise the question of an action's consequence over that of its impetus. And indeed, social workers must often 'weigh up which actions would be least harmful/most beneficial to a particular service user and which action would benefit most people or use resources most efficiently' (Banks 2006:36). More generally then, utilitarianism's 'basic idea … is that the right action is that which produces the greatest balance of good over evil (the principle of utility)' (Banks 2006:36). Some utilitarian schools of thought highlight the importance of rules, which are not only said to facilitate ethical decision making processes, but which can in themselves be 'tested and justified with reference to the principle of utility' (Banks 2006:36). Utilitarian reasoning can be traced in both the 2014 definition of social work which commits the profession to promoting, for example, 'the empowerment and liberation of people' in general, in order to 'advance social justice' for all and to 'enhance well-being' at large (IFSW/IASSW 2014). To achieve this, the statement of ethical principles entreats social workers, for example, to 'ensure that resources at their disposal are distributed fairly, according to need' (IFSW/IASSW 2004). These directives rest upon an underlying assumption that it is both possible and desirable for social workers to base their pursuit of social justice in a rational calculation of the likely outcomes of their interventions.

Thus, it appears as a result of the influence of both deontological and utilitarianism traditions in the IFSW's and IASSW's normative outlook, that the overarching principle of social justice reflects two lines of thinking. One stipulates practitioners' duties so as to guide their conduct, committing them to act so as to counter injustice and promote justice. The other describes the desired outcomes of such conduct – that is, inclusive, cohesive, tolerant, non-discriminatory, non-oppressive societies in which resources are made adequately available and distributed fairly and according to need; societies in which people are liberated, empowered, and well. How does one explain, in relation to these two traditions, the above observations that across a broad range of contexts, social workers and other practitioners witnessed, found it difficult to resist, and even actively participated in, institutional regimes considered by a wide range of authors to be unjust? None of the authors cited in this chapter

suggest that their study participants were committed to promoting *in*justice. Instead in the majority of the studies cited, practitioners appeared to be doing their duty – at least in terms of what was expected of them by their employing organisations. Authors whom I found to be critical of the outlook, values and practices of practitioners in the field – such as Hayes and Humphries (2004), Briskman, Zion and Loff (2012), Mostowska (2014), and Jönsson (2014) – all leave open the possibility that many practitioners may have believed in fact that their actions were just and served to promote just ends. In other words, it is possible that when it came to the particular demands of specific situations, the *meaning* of social work's 'central' (IFSW/IASSW 2014) commitment to social justice may have been unclear. Other authors provide evidence of their participants' ethical awareness and the moral discomfort they experienced around unresolved ethical dilemmas in relation to the injustices in which they were implicated – for example, Sales and Hek (2004), Guhan and Liebling-Kalifani (2011), Al-Makhamreh, Spaneas and Neocleus (2012), and Robinson (2013, 2014). Yet, in spite of these practitioners' awareness and apparent sense of duty in relation to their ethical responsibilities, when it came to the particular demands of specific situations, the *implications for action* of social work's 'central' (IFSW/IASSW 2014) commitment to social justice may have remained unclear.

In deontological terms then, it is possible that even with a generalised sense of duty to promote justice and counter injustice, social workers may find it difficult to translate their universal orientations into particular visions for specific situations (that is, *knowing what it is that requires something to be done*), especially if surrounded by clearly articulated expectations, entrenched rules and known sanctions which suggest that in fact nothing needs to be done – or done differently – regarding a particular issue or concern. In utilitarian terms, it may be that among ethically aware practitioners, a global commitment to social justice can cause experiences of moral discomfort about a particular issue or concern. Still, this might not provide sufficient impetus and clarity for practitioners to discern what concrete actions may be required of them in response (that is, *knowing what it is that can and should be done* about a particular injustice, as well as feeling intent and able to do it), especially where this would entail reneging on concrete expectations, breaking set rules or exposing oneself to the risk of negative sanction from, for example, employing organisations. The implication is that indeed, agreeing on definitions, articulating moral expectations, stating rules for conduct and

explicating desired outcomes seem to provide a certain basis for the normative evaluation of social work practice. Yet, the global definition of social work and the profession's statement of ethical principles seem to provide insufficient grounds for a normative assessment of the values, attitudes and actions of the practitioners themselves. The two documents provide insufficient means for guiding, directing and supporting social workers practicing under difficult contextual conditions and facing complex work demands, in relation to which they have to discern, and act upon, the requirements of social justice. Yet this is the case in the field of social work with cross-border migrants.

3.3 Conclusion: Social Work and the Challenge of Responding Justly to Cross-border Migrants

The purpose of this chapter was to outline the study's discursive and practice context. To this end, I located social work with cross-border migrants within the broader field of international social work. Here I found some consensus regarding the need for practitioners to adopt a holistic approach that is alert to the historical and structural conditions surrounding the phenomenon of migration. This approach determined possibilities of intervention, and based intervention goals, methods and ethics upon a dialogical, critical and reflexive engagement with service users' histories, social positioning and needs. I then considered a range of studies on social work with cross-border migrants, emanating from a number of countries, and published in the decade of 2004 to 2014. I found that in the context of economic globalisation and turbulent, large-scale migration, interventions tended to lean towards exclusionary and control-oriented practices. Many practitioners were described as vulnerable in the contexts of their work and circumscribed in their radius for action. Alternative practices were sporadic rather than sustained alternatives to the forms that dominated the field.

Considering the moral evaluation of the practices their studies brought to the fore, several authors appeared to typify these in categories ranging from most moral to most immoral, with the least moral practices being those that demonstrated no opposition to the apparent social injustices at play in the field, and the most moral being those that emanated from critical, political analysis. Such moral evaluation often referred back to the global definition of social work and the profession's statement of ethical principles – documents which can be

shown to be influenced by social work's deontological and utilitarian traditions. My analysis of these documents' statements concerning social justice suggests that they contain a good deal of clarity with regard to locating the profession normatively, stating agreed-upon expectations regarding practitioners' value orientation and professional conduct, and stipulating the desired outcomes of social work interventions. However, none of this seems sufficient in terms of providing direction, guidance and support for practitioners working with service users who face complex injustices, under conditions characterised by complex constraints.

Thus, the literature reviewed in this chapter leaves readers with a conundrum. There are rich descriptions of what constitutes the contextual injustices, exclusionary processes, and oppressive practices in the field of social work with cross-border migrants, and the manner in which practitioners can be complicit in them. There is also a wealth of examples of the negative outcomes of their direct involvement in these structures, processes and practices – both for service users and for social workers themselves. Finally, there are strong normative statements as to what practitioners should do in order to resist such injustices. Yet while some attention is paid to the conditions that render resistance and alternative forms of practice difficult, I would suggest nonetheless that the intricate inner, relational, and contextual structures and processes through which practitioners become drawn into these injustices, need to be explored further.

For example, questions remain with regard to how different social workers come to embrace different discourses and practices even when they are placed in the same or comparable positions. Conversely, the literature generates an impression that social workers who are placed in remarkably different positions still come to share certain ideologies and engage in similar practices, a phenomenon that could also be explored further. It remains unclear therefore, just how social workers should go about challenging that within which they are not just implicated, but often deeply embroiled. Linked to this are questions concerning what contextual conditions might facilitate the development of shared experiences and solidarity between social workers and their service users, and the extent to which this is a precondition for service providers' and service users' dialogical engagement around social work goals, methods and ethics. Thus, the claim that structural analysis and political practice are at odds with empathy and care requires interrogation as well.

I conclude that thus far, the ethical debate in the field of social work with cross-border migrants has shown some propensity to vacillate between moral prescription and moral condemnation – an unhelpful approach for practitioners facing difficult practice situations. If the aim is to support practitioners wishing to respond justly to cross-border migrants, the questions of *knowing* and *doing* what is required in relation to social justice may need to be supplemented with attention to the human reality of *being* – particularly the condition of *being entangled* in multiple structures and processes of injustice. This is not merely an ethical problem but one in which ethics and politics are intertwined, and which I will consider next. To this end, Chapter 4 considers the promise of social justice that might lie in alternative, non-deontological, non-utilitarian and non-principle-based, conceptualisations of social work ethics.

Chapter 4
Paradigmatic Considerations

In Chapter 3, I noted that when it comes to responding to the plight of cross-border migrants in particular practice situations, mainstream discourses on social work ethics – as represented by the global definition of social work and the profession's statement of ethical principles (IFSW/IASSW 2004, 2014) – do not translate simply into *just* practice 'on the ground'. Indeed, in a context where consensus regarding the meaning of social justice is lacking (see Chapter 1.1.2), little agreement can be presumed to exist regarding specific practice implications that might flow from social work's global definition and statement of ethical principles. These discursive and practice contexts raise a particular conceptual challenge for this study: if the connections between ethical insights and social work practice are perilous while the meaning of social justice is under dispute, exactly *how* should the implications of displacement and cross-border migration for social work's commitment to social justice be considered? This is this chapter's guiding question. In response, I consider a range of writers in the feminist relational/ethics of care and anti-oppressive traditions, who – different ethical and theoretical leanings notwithstanding – do converge on the understanding that practitioners' ways of being, understanding and responding to the world are intertwined. These ways influence their interpretation of what it means to further the ends of social justice, as well as their inclination and ability to act upon these interpretations in the specific contexts of their daily work.

I begin with a discussion of Iris Marion Young's (1990, 2007, 2011) contribution to social work's understanding of how structural processes of injustice can affect the daily practices of social workers, other practitioners of care and people who feel called upon to respond to incidents or situations of social injustice (Section 4.1). Thereafter, in Section 4.2, I consider how Joan Tronto (1993, 2011, 2013, 2014), Fiona Robinson (2010) and other writers on the ethics of care might contribute to performing the leap from a critical analysis of structural injustices to actually responding to particular situations in concrete ways. To this end, it may be necessary to focus on the 'self' as the observer, thinker and actor. However, such emphasis has been noted for risking narcissistic preoccupation, as well as rendering the 'self' vulnerable

to manipulation in the interest of unjust institutional regimes. These risks have been discussed in the context of recent critiques of virtue ethics (for example, Clifford 2014), and I provide a brief review of this discussion in Section 4.3. Possible responses have been developed, among others, by *affective turn* theorists. I reflect on some of these contributions in Section 4.4, focusing on the notions of *critical emotional reflexivity* and *affective dissonance*. In my discussion, I draw, among others, on Clare Hemmings (2012), Michalinos Zembylas (2014), and Richard Hugman's (2005) consideration of emotion in the ethics of caring professions. It is in conjunction that these debates support the production of a situated, critical and emotionally reflective account of how structural processes of injustice entangled cross-border migrants, their social workers, other practitioners of care, and members of the receiving community in this study, and assist in discerning those openings for *just* practice that emerged in its course.

4.1   The Person-Structure Interface

Throughout her career, Iris Marion Young was concerned with the dynamic relationship between structural injustice and individual action (Tronto 2011). Her insights have considerable relevance for social work ethics (Clifford 2013). In *Justice and the Politics of Difference* (Young 1990), she uses the work of Jean-François Lyotard and Herbert Marcuse as her starting point, to assert that 'reflective, rational discourse about justice' (Young 1990:4) is inevitably situated. Those working towards social justice need to make their contributions within an awareness of their own economic, social, political, and cultural positioning, interests, and available openings for action. This outlook inspires the particular view I am taking in this thesis: it is in the process of critical and reflective discourse where one might overcome the apparent dichotomy between social work's aspirational commitment to social justice, and the need for individuals to practice in situations where the implications of this commitment may lack clarity:

> There are a class of … philosophically relevant concepts … where the … relation between the universal and the particular assumes a qualitative aspect; where the abstract, universal seems to designate potentialities in a concrete, historical sense … They synthesise experiential contents into ideas which transcend their particular realisation as something to be surpassed … Thus, the concept of [justice] comprehends all the [injustice] not yet [overcome] …

> Such universals … conceptualise the stuff of which the experienced world consists … with a view of its possibilities, in the light of their limitations, suppression and denial … [These] philosophical concepts are formed and developed in the consciousness of a general condition in a historical continuum … [and] elaborated from an individual position within a specific society (Marcuse, cited in Young 1990:6).

Young (1990) treats the notions of social injustice and oppression as inseparable. Individual actors are regarded as implicated in rendering oppression a structural feature of society and hence, as having a responsibility and possibilities for action in relation to it. She elaborates on this dialectic in *Global Challenges* (Young 2007). Drawing among others on Anthony Giddens and Jean-Paul Sartre, she notes that, 'social structures exist … not as states, but as processes' in that 'people act on the basis of their knowledge of pre-existing structures and in so acting reproduce those structures' (Young 2007:169). In other words, structures not only shape, they are also the aggregate outcome of, individual choices and actions. The dialectic relationship between social structures and the social positioning of myriads of individuals on the one hand and these individuals' consciousness, choices and actions on the other renders social injustice open to change. Young (1990:48) notes that 'in complex, highly differentiated societies … individual persons … themselves are heterogeneous and not necessarily coherent'. It is this complexity that ultimately enables people to explore different points of view, critically reflect on their expectations, priorities, values, habits, as well as the consequences of their actions, and as a result, choose to change. Consequently, Young (2007) asserts that to the extent that individuals are woven into structural processes of injustice, as agents, they are morally responsible for helping to change them, and for addressing the harms they have caused. This responsibility remains even if individuals cannot be held liable for the structural consequences of their actions.

Young returns to the options available to people in the face of structural injustice in *Responsibility for Justice* (Young 2011). Drawing on Hannah Arendt, she identifies four possibilities. Firstly, people may commit or directly contribute to actions, practices or institutionalised forms of injustice and therefore are *liable* for the harms that they cause. Secondly, they may support other individuals, practices, institutions or regimes that commit or directly contribute to structural injustice and therefore are morally *responsible* for the harms that they cause. Thirdly they may attempt to prevent harm through moral, often brave but generally private and therefore apolitical, actions and thus *avoid guilt*. Finally people may *take political responsibility for justice* in the form of collective and public responses to actions,

practices, or institutional forms of injustice. This means that if changes in individual consciousness happen at a large scale and as a result, collective political action is taken, then the targeted social structures can be rendered potentially more just (Young 2011).

Importantly, Young does not place the onus for taking action against injustice on the privileged only, or on remunerated providers of care. Instead, she points out that responsibility for justice falls on all who are woven into processes of structural injustice, noting, however, that the greater scope for action and impact lies with the relatively privileged (Young 2007, 2011) – who in the context of my arguments include social workers, other practitioners of care and members of the receiving community (see Chapter 1.4.4). Clifford and Burke (2009:17-20) sum up their ethical responsibility as follows:

> The personal interactions which are the subject of ethics are an integral part of social situations in which oppressions are systematically reproduced … Individuals … have varying degrees of … ability and awareness … to actively engage with powerful social systems … [For this reason,] the social context of the professional working with vulnerable individuals and groups demands recognition of the need to act in a way that minimises or overcomes some of the complex effects of discrimination and oppression, rather than adding to them through collusion, neglect or lack of self-awareness.

All in all, Young's work inspired what my co-authors and I referred to in several publications as *just practice* (see Part 2 of this thesis). At the time of writing the articles concerned, we intended for this term to signify any concrete response to a 'call to be just' (Young 1990:5) made by cross-border migrants upon social workers, other practitioners of care and members of the receiving community. In the course of this study, such calls appeared in all manner of forms: as formal requests for welfare services, as a spontaneous showing-up, as impositions that disrupted the routines of people who might not have expected to be called upon, or in the form of polite, respectful, submissive, startling, unpleasant or even offensive exchanges in existing relationships between people so unequally positioned. Sometimes, the call was almost inaudible. As such, the term was meant to signify a practical recognition of such a call (compare Leonard 1997), however ambiguous and difficult it might be to discern at the time (compare Bauman 1993), and irrespective of how the response may be interpreted with hindsight (Young 2011). However, in further considering socially just practice in this study, I would like to propose two additional meanings. Firstly, the notion of *just* practice should also reference any search among any of the study participants for the implications of these calls, responses, and the specific situations in which they appeared, for their broader

understanding of social justice and the responsibility they might hold in relation to it. Secondly, it is significant that Young (1990) uses the expression 'being just' rather than 'acting justly', for it implies that being, relating and interacting are interlinked indeed, and that *just* practice must also entail critically reflexive considerations of the social positions people hold in relation to one another, and the impact thereof upon their relationships and possibilities for action.

4.2   Justice as Care

In my review of the available literature on social work with cross-border migrants, I found that practitioners in the field are depicted as though principally committed to the ideal of social justice, yet experiencing deep-rooted difficulties in discerning its particular implications (see Chapter 3). I therefore raised the question regarding possible alternatives to social work's traditional deontological, utilitarian and contractarian approaches to supporting *just* practice. Noting the 'inadequacy of a rich philosophical tradition about justice that for all its prescriptive power cannot alter conditions of remarkable social injustice' (Tronto 1993:152), Joan Tronto published her ideas of a political ethics of care in *Moral Boundaries* (1993), thus beginning to develop one such alternative. Tronto (1993) describes the ethics of care as a contextual form of morality which espouses a kind of 'moral maximalism' (Tronto 1993:28). Rooted in an Aristotelian tradition, such an ethical approach regards 'politics and ethics [as] deeply intertwined' in that –

> The end of pursuing a good life must be shared … How individuals think about themselves or their fellows, as well as how they behave are central questions for the entire community … In such a community, individuals … can observe, correct, direct and help to shape the disposition of themselves and others … Much is required of individuals and their community in order for moral life to exist (Tronto 1993:30).

Another important source of Tronto's (1993) notion of care is found in the work of Scottish Enlightenment theorists such as Francis Hutcheson, David Hume and Adam Smith. These theorists contemplated the effects of those modern forms of production and colonial expansion that started to emerge in the early 18th century, and considered how the growing size, complexity and formalisation of economic, social and political practices and institutions impacted moral life. Finding the connections between people increasingly abstract in that

they could now arise out of interactions and processes spanning considerable social and geographical distances and periods of time, they began to regard moral obligations as rooted in the notion of a common humanity (Tronto 1993). Yet, Tronto (1993) observes that the Scottish Enlightenment theorists had few qualms about disregarding important moral challenges arising from the growing reach and complexities of modern economic, political and social life, including its colonial enterprise and consequent subjugation of the colonised. Conceiving of the latter as less developed, they ultimately contributed to the exclusion of *Others* from the realm of those who were seen as deserving full moral consideration. Since then, the question of *Otherness* has remained a conundrum for modern ethical thought (Tronto 1993). Citing Hannah Arendt, Tronto (1993:58) suggests that 'the problems of tribalism, of racism, and of conceiving of the *Other* with hatred' might be interpreted, at least in part, as a 'response to the tremendous moral burden placed upon people by the claims that all share in the "rights of man"' (highlights added), asserting that,

> At the heart of contemporary moral theory … must be … the question of … whether we can conceive of a way to think of morality that extends some form of sympathy further than our own group … [and] how the concern for universal rights and equality is to be made part of people's every day moral lives (Tronto 1993: 58-59).

It is, among other things, her engagement with this question that led Tronto together with Berenice Fisher to formulate the idea of care as a moral practice, describing it as inclusive of 'everything that we do to maintain, continue and repair our "world" so that we can live in it as well as possible' (cited in Tronto 1993:103). Thus, care is a goal-directed practice in which a principled orientation, thought and action are intertwined, involving five interconnected phases (Tronto 1993, 2013). To achieve its ends, care requires firstly that particular needs for care are recognised, secondly that someone takes the responsibility to ensure that these needs are met in particular ways, thirdly that there is direct engagement with the recipients of care, including the physical work required to provide the care, fourthly that care recipients respond to indicate the extent to which their needs have actually been met, and finally, that over time, such 'habits and patterns of care emerge' as are required for 'trust and solidarity' to develop (Zembylas, Bozalek and Shefer 2014:5-6).

According to Tronto (1993, 2013), many contemporary forms of injustice can be directly attributed to the reality that the different phases of care are not integrated in practice. For instance, the people in charge of identifying needs for care and thereafter taking care of a

particular problem are often not the same as those who are actually providing the care, and the persons providing care might not regard it as their responsibility to listen to what the care receivers have to say. As a result, both are sheltered, for example, from feedback and important opportunities for critical reflection. This then can lead to the root causes of caring needs being overlooked, a serious lack of resources remaining unaddressed, unfair divisions of labour staying unchanged, or needs being defined in ways that seem irrelevant to those who actually experience them. And if caring practices are not sustained long enough for trust and solidarity to emerge across the differences dividing the different actors involved, then the positive changes that may have been attained through intermittent acts of care are likely to remain unsustainable.

While the ideal of a fully integrated provision of care may be impossible to attain in practice, it still provides a standard against which to assess caring practices, including social work. Only to the extent that all phases of care are integrated, reflection and dialogue are enabled which ultimately force participants to 'think concretely about people's needs and about ... how these … will be met' (Tronto 1993:124). In this way,

> The vocabulary of care offers the greatest possibility for transforming social and political thinking, especially in the treatment of *Others* … It introduces questions about what we value into everyday life: Should society be organised in a way that helps to maintain some form of privilege before the more basic needs of *Others* are met? Those kinds of questions, posed in stark form, help us get closer to resolving fundamental questions of justice … than continued abstract discussions about the meaning of justice (Tronto 1993:124; highlights added).

If however, care's strength lies in its focus on the concrete and the particular, then the question arises as to whether an ethics of care is therefore necessarily parochial and constitutes an outlook that would ultimately contribute to, rather than overcome, a lack of regard for broader, structural injustices and for more distant *Others*, that is, those who are framed as residing outside the moral ambit of a given community or nation. Tronto (1993, 2014) acknowledges this challenge, picking it up, among other places, in her paper, 'Thinking about Global Responsibilities' (Tronto 2011). Care ethicists such as Christine Koggel, Virginia Held, Joan Orme and Fiona Robinson, have also engaged with this question, and a selection of their writings on the issue is considered here. Koggel and Orme (2010:109-110) observe that,

> The ethic of care has developed over the past few decades to become a body of theory that … has [generated] … complex accounts of … multiple and intersecting kinds of relationships …

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[in] a variety of domains … and contexts. Its application now extends from the moral to the political realm, from personal to public relationships, [and] from the local to the global.

Held (2010) emphasises that because the experience of requiring and providing care is a universal one, the ethics of care has the potential to inform and impact spheres of social and political life that are not traditionally associated with caring work. She asserts that 'the ethics of care … is increasingly appropriate for the wide but shallow human relations of global interaction' (Held 2010:117). However, Tronto (2011) cautions that an argument for the relevance of an ethics of care cannot be grounded sufficiently in a claim to care's universality. She argues that such an approach would only appeal to 'those who are already committed to expanding their relations of care' (Tronto 2011:4) but remain meaningless to those who happened to find other considerations more relevant. In other words, an approach that stresses care's universal relevance achieves little more than other appeals and aspirational statements that are too general and abstract to provide meaningful guidance in relation to concrete ethical challenges such as those with which this thesis is concerned.

Robinson begins her argument about what she terms 'a critical ethics of care' (2010:140) with a critique of the extent to which contemporary international relations resemble the atomistic view of the independent, self-reliant individual who gained prominence in liberal philosophical and political thought. Comparing the United Nations Charter (UN 1945) and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (OHCHR 1948), she detects a resemblance between the normative ideas of 'soverign equality', 'territorial integrity' and 'political autonomy' contained in the Charter and the notions of 'equality of all persons', 'human dignity' and 'individual autonomy' as appear in the Declaration (Robinson 2010:133). Finding the two sets of ideas to be 'mutually constitutive and reinforcing', Robinson (2010:133) performs the conceptual leap from care's focus on *the concrete Other* and particular human relationships, to being able to insert the notion of care into the normative analysis of overarching political constructs such as states, and into the debate around how to respond justly to *the socially distant Other*. The relevance of this exercise becomes clear as Robinson (2010:134) articulates the binary opposites of these ideas, namely, 'intervention' as signifier for a loss of sovereignty and equality; the notion of 'imperialism' which appears as the negation of self-determination and dignity; and the idea of 'dependence' which signifies the absence of autonomy. In attaching a positive value to such human attributes as autonomy and self-reliance, these

dichotomies render any apparent need for support, or signs of dependency, as an inadequate state of being that ought to be overcome. Robinson claims that in this way, liberal thought and the contemporary economic, political, social, and cultural ordering of the world 'limit our vision in the search for solutions to endemic suffering and violence around the globe' (Robinson 2010:134) and systematically obscure the fact that –

> Relationality and interdependence, and the responsibilities for and practices of care that arise therewith, are fundamental aspects of moral life and sites of political contestation (Robinson 2010:132).

Conversely, an ethics of care perspective highlights the centrality of relational responsibilities and caring practices, thereby directing attention to the importance of sustaining 'not just "bare life" but all social life, from nuclear and extended families to local, national and transnational communities' (Robinson 2010:132). As such, an ethics of care emphasizes –

> An ontology … that accepts the existence of vulnerability without reifying particular individuals, groups or states as 'victims' or 'guardians'. Through this lens, equality does not mean 'sameness' or 'equal opportunity'; rather, the focus is on ensuring that all people are able to give and receive care that is adequate to their needs as defined in the context of particular relationships and communities (Robinson 2010:132).

Tronto (2011) shares Robinson's (2010) view that interdependence and relationality are key to extending the ethics of care perspective into the realms of cross-border responsibilities and practices. Unlike an approach that draws on the universal aspects of care, Tronto (2011:4) claims that, 'it is out of … partial yet strong, not "wide but shallow" relationships that an ethics of care holds the most promise for overcoming the reluctance of people to recognise their responsibility to *Others* in a global setting' (highlights added). Citing Soran Reader, Tronto (2011) explains that while relationships constitute obligations and while the extent of the latter varies in accordance with the quality of its constituent relationship, the deciding factors are not bonds of proximity, membership in a community or shared nationality:

> Strangers may obligate us morally … [but they do so] not … simply by sharing with us the substantive property of being human. Some form of relation – either presence, biological, historical [or] institutional … ties, or some other form of "interaction" – occurred to create a responsibility (Tronto 2011:6).

However, because human beings exist in a myriad of competing relationships that vary in intensity and kind and thus create competing demands, people are unlikely to do justice to all, or even most of their moral obligations. This is what places 'conflicts about the nature of

responsibility at the heart of the political, social, epistemological, bearings of each and every individual' (Tronto 2011:11). Growing awareness regarding the impossibility of reconciling close and distant, immediate and longer-term, concrete and generalised responsibilities in relation to other individuals, groups, institutions and causes, allows us to re-direct concerns around the question of how to balance, calibrate and 're-calibrate our moral responses to the world' (Tronto 2011:16). An ethical approach that is expected to provide any guidance in this context will have to assist people in deepening 'their moral understandings':

> People who are used to recognising the complexity and tragedy of their conflicting moral responsibilities might be willing to entertain the claims of forgotten or abandoned responsibilities more seriously. Invoking the everyday complexity of moral life, rather than blaming people for their failure to be more moral, might be a better way to proceed in trying to persuade people to care more for those around the world … Humans are not faced with a choice between accepting all … and rejecting all responsibility. What people need to know is that … as they begin to reassess and rebalance their responsibilities, something they value, their capacities to care and be cared for, will also be honoured and protected (Tronto 2011:16-17).

This then is the contribution of a political ethics of care to guiding the interpretation of the empirical material collected in this study. In pursuing the question of the implications of displacement and cross-border migration for social work's commitment to social justice, the focus is directed, firstly, to the question of how social workers, other practitioners of care and members of the receiving community interpreted and negotiated their responsibilities to those *Others* who articulated, in whichever manner, a call upon them 'to be just'. Secondly, attention is directed to the question of what factors impacted, mediated and conditioned the responses thus evoked. What is required then is not an approach that simply assesses the responses of social workers, other practitioners of care and members of the receiving community along a scale ranging, for example, from 'most just' to 'most unjust', or from 'most moral' to 'most immoral' – even if ultimately there will have to be some kind of qualification. Required instead is an approach that asks what kinds of responses emerged in relation to what kind of plight and what kind of call, as well as how particular responses came to pass. Thereafter, it may be possible to work back to some cautious conclusions as to what is needed in the face of structural injustice that would enable people to care most, and to care best.

4.3   The Self as a Site of (In)justice

The arguments about the person-structure interface and the relationship between justice and care considered so far, present an image of human beings who are embedded in complex webs of relationships and interdependencies with one another, and a view of justice as a practice, an orientation, and an awareness, rather than merely a state of affairs. Some of the connections that place people in positions of responsibility for justice are immediate and tangible for the persons concerned, while others are more distant in time and place, and their impact on individuals – including their social positioning, needs for care, scope for action, and so on – is less obvious and mediated by many intervening factors. While it is never appropriate from these perspectives to regard people as autonomous and independent, this is not the same as saying that the way in which people respond *as individuals* to the injustices surrounding and implicating them is irrelevant How people respond depends greatly on how they perceive themselves in relation to the world around them, how they process their perceptions, and how they go about choosing different possibilities for action. This then remains the final theoretical point that I explore in this chapter's remaining two sections, beginning with a brief review of recent critiques of virtue ethics – an 'ethics of excellence' (Hugman 2005:108) – which shares its Aristotelian roots with Tronto's political ethics of care. Clifford (2014:2) notes that –

> [Virtue ethics] has been mined for useful ideas that are appropriate to … [an] age of uncertainty and complexity … where the importance of … character, commitment, and informed ethical judgement … appears to resonate widely with practitioners and theorists alike [as] principled conformity to rules of moral obligation no longer seems so attractive in a world where the rules appear difficult or impossible to apply.

At the risk of unduly reducing the complexities of the virtue ethical framework, I engage in this section with three of its main tenets. Firstly, virtues describe character qualities that are 'productive of "the good"' (MacIntyre, cited in Hugman 2005:108). Secondly, 'the good' can be discovered and understood only in the context of communities or societies where shared visions of what it means to lead a good life, and of what it means for individuals to flourish, can be developed (Gray 2010; Clifford 2014). Thirdly, once there is clarity in specific communities or societies around their shared visions at particular points in time, it is possible

to work back to establish which human qualities, orientations, attitudes and traits – that is, virtues – are likely to produce the desired outcomes (Hugman 2005; Gray 2010; Clifford 2014).

These tenets give rise to two concerns that are relevant for this study. Firstly, the assumption that consensus about what is 'good', and what constitutes a virtuous character, was attainable within a given community or society, is potentially flawed (Clifford 2014). Secondly, to the extent that the human character is regarded as the origin of the 'good', 'right', 'just', and so on, these outcomes depend on the ability of individuals to tune into, scrutinise, understand and care for their 'selves' *prior* to being able to attend to the people, community and society around them. Drawing on Aristotle and Socrates, Michel Foucault for example asserts that, 'ethics is (only) possible to the extent that a person can be responsible for and responsive to her or his self and *from that* to her or his encounters with the world' (Hugman 2005:109; brackets in original, highlights added). In this view, the development of their own character must be regarded as the first project of persons seeking virtue; and it is a function of this being done well that they can then also attend well to other matters, other people, and the afflictions of *Others*. Thus, while virtue-based approaches do not necessarily disregard individuals' embeddedness within their social contexts, to the extent that they begin their arguments with the individual character rather than with relationality, interdependency and the practices that arise therein, such approaches do risk reproducing an atomistic view of economic, social, political and ethical life. This view, however, has been identified in Section 4.2 as the source of some of the difficulties people experience in imagining alternatives, and responding justly, to contemporary forms of injustice.

It is, among others, with regard to these two concerns that Clifford (2014) articulates the potentially oppressive effects of an uncritical reliance on virtue ethics. With regard to its tendency to regard people as 'originating agents' (Clifford 2014:7) of moral life, he points to the danger of ignoring the complexities of social life. He notes that many moral responsibilities arise precisely because structural processes of injustice lead to certain groups of people being *unable* to participate on a par with their more privileged members of society and thus *lacking* agency. Citing Onora O'Neill, Clifford (2014:7) warns that, 'idealised conceptions of justice simply do not apply … in a world in which … men and women always lack the capacities and the opportunities of idealised agents'. Indeed, as Part 2 of this thesis illustrates, so long as members of certain groups do not enjoy equal participation in the

economic, political, social, and cultural life of the society of which they are part, they are habitually deprived of the necessary resources, misrecognised, find their voices frequently misrepresented or unheard altogether, and their experiences systematically unacknowledged. In assuming the existence of shared values and common purpose therefore, virtue ethics risks boosting 'the epistemologically unreliable perceptions of the privileged'. It may lead to virtues being defined 'in ways that may support rather than undermine dominant values', and consequently being 'skewed in favour of the interests of the privileged' (Tessman, cited in Clifford 2014:9). Foregrounding individual virtue in an ideologically skewed context, however, can contribute to the formulation of unrealistic expectations of what providers of social services and care can offer; of how receivers of services and care will respond; and of what the providers and receivers of services and care, together, ought to achieve. This, in turn, renders both social workers, other practitioners of care, and the receivers of services or care, vulnerable.

Two aspects of this vulnerability are important to consider here. On the one hand, Zembylas (2014:212) observes that where providers of services, or care, pay insufficient attention to the ways in which they are woven into webs of relationships and into their political, economic, social and cultural contexts, attention is drawn to developing their 'competency' and 'skills' in ways that unjustifiably reduce the provision of services, or care, to a 'project' the success of which depends upon their 'individual ability'. This can draw attention away from 'organisational and structural factors', leading instead to appeals to individual virtue 'against the notion that structural changes must be fought for' (Tessman, cited in Clifford 2014:12). This, according to Clifford (2014:12), bears the risk that 'when services falter', social workers and other providers of care will make 'an excellent scapegoat … They will be malleable to the needs of market forces, accepting their lot, making less demand for services, "responsible" for themselves'. The service providers' role is complemented, on the other hand, by those who are receiving social services or provisions of care. Service recipients, Clifford (2014:12) contends, stand a good chance of having their 'grasp of the virtues … found wanting, or inferior to those whose virtues have qualified them for employment in the social care sector', always with the attendant possibility of being identified further as undeserving of public provision and moral concern. Not only does Clifford (2014:12) say that this double effect directs attention away from 'power holders and systemic factors', it also means that 'self-

blame and despair … are probable outcomes' (Clifford 2014:12). In this way, 'the focus on their own character recommended by virtue ethics … [is] potentially damaging to the professional and service user alike' (Clifford 2014:12).

In sum then, the development of virtues appears to require principally just communities or societies in relation to which individuals can define and develop their virtues. Yet, the literature reviewed up to this point suggests that such principally just communities or societies do not exist. Still, communities of practice can develop reference points for individuals seeking to deepen their understanding of the requirements of justice and looking for support and fortification in their efforts to respond justly to apparent incidents and structures of injustice. This is how I read Tronto's (1993:30) assertion that 'much is required of individuals and their community in order for moral life to exist'. Or, in the words of Young (2011:92):

> Responsibility [for justice] … falls on members of a society by virtue of the fact that they are aware moral agents who ought not to be indifferent to the fate of *Others* and the dangers that states and other organised institutions often pose to some people … If we see injustices … being committed by the institutions of which we are a part, or believe that such … [injustices] are being committed, then we have the responsibility to try to speak out against them with the intention of mobilising others to … act together to transform the institutions to promote better ends … (Young 2011:92; highlights added).

What Clifford's (2014) critique of virtue ethics points to, is that as individuals engage one another in response to the kinds of structural processes of injustices in which they are implicated, there is a need for criticality, reflexivity and mindfulness of everyone's inherent interconnectedness and interdependence.

4.4   Critical Emotional Reflexivity and Affective Dissonance

How can social workers and other caring professionals conceive of social justice in a critically reflexive manner – a manner that is mindful of everyone's interconnectedness, interdependence and implication in structural processes of injustice? What might such alternative ways of relating and knowing consist of? Carolyn Pedwell and Anne Whitehead (2012) observe that the new millennium has seen a growing concern with 'pre- or extra discursive reality' that has evolved out of social critiques focussing more narrowly on

language practices, discourse and text (Cvetkovich, cited in Pedwell and Whitehead 2012:115). This shift in interest includes increased attention to 'emotions, feelings and affect'; a preoccupation that has been associated with feminist thought more generally. According to Kristyn Gorton (cited in Pedwell and Whitehead 2012:115-116), feminism is 'a politics suffused with feelings, passion and emotion' and is especially concerned with 'the way feeling is negotiated in the public sphere and experienced through the body'. In this context, affect describes 'visceral forces beneath, alongside or generally other than conscious knowing' … [and] signifies potential: a body's capacity to affect and be affected' (Gregg and Siegworth, cited in Pedwell and Whitehead 2012:116). Attending to these states, processes and dynamics opens up an important source of understanding what it means to be in the world. Feelings signify not only what happens within individuals, but affect refers to the intensities or energy forces which happen between them, and reveal crucial ways in which structural forces and contextual factors work through relationships to impact people's sense of self, agency and so on. At the same time, feelings shape the ways people respond to affect, by way of relating to other people, the structural processes of which they form a part. Citing Patricia Clough, Pedwell and Whitehead (2012:117) put it this way:

> Theories of affect and 'the deployment of affective capacity' are valuable at this conjuncture … 'to grasp the changes that constitute the social and to explore them as changes in ourselves, circulating through our bodies, our subjectivities, yet irreducible to the individual, the personal and the psychological.

In the remaining section of this chapter, I briefly review Hugman's (2005) discussion of the ethical relevance of emotions, as it creates an important link between ethical discourses in social work on the one hand and affective turn theories and relevant feminist debates on the other. Thereafter, I consider Zembylas' (2014) notion of *critical emotional reflexivity* and Hemmings' (2012) proposition of attending to *affective dissonance* as two available options for relating and knowing in ways that address some of the risks attributed to an over-reliance on individual virtue (see Section 4.3). Both Zembylas' (2014) and Hemmings' (2012) ideas are rooted in a critical, feminist relational tradition and sit well with the work of Young and the political ethics of care considered in Sections 4.1 and 4.2. Hence, they provide a suitable holding frame for analysis of the data generated in this study. Affective turn theorists have devoted much attention to teasing out the differences and connections between feeling, emotion, and affect (Pedwell and Whitehead 2012). However, engaging with these intricacies

is beyond the scope of this chapter and may not be necessary to meet the objectives of this study. Where quoting others either directly or indirectly therefore, I simply retain the language used by the cited authors. Where I use my own voice to interpret and link different authors' ideas, I use terminology as follows: I speak of affect to denote the relational aspect of feeling, and of emotions to denote feelings as observable by actors within themselves, knowing however that I may not always be able to distinguish neatly between the two.

Hugman (2005:48) points out that while most ethical traditions did not regard emotions as a reliable source of ethics, many of the chief concerns for social work and other caring professions are 'objects … not only … of the intellect, but of the variety of emotions that enrich our lives and from which we gain meaning'. Indeed, Young (1990:5) asserts that 'reflective discourse about justice', originates in 'calls' and 'pleas … upon some people by others' rather than being motivated 'by curiosity … or the desire to figure out how something works'. This implies that social justice in particular is a matter which is deeply intertwined with feeling, and with relating affectively. Bob Mullaly (2010:283) makes this connection even more explicit, asking:

> What would drive a person to take on such an onerous commitment to literally change the world as we now know it? The answer, I think, is to capitalise on a feeling that most social workers concerned about social injustice … possess: anger.

He concludes his thoughts on the issue with the following advice to social workers: '*Maintain the rage* (*but use it wisely*)' (Mullaly 2010:284, brackets and italics in original). In other words, responding critically, reflexively and justly to their enmeshment in structural processes of injustice might well require social workers and other practitioners of care to attend to affect as a matter of necessity.

Hugman (2005) structures his arguments concerning the relevance of emotions to ethical deliberation and practice around the feelings of compassion and its impediments, including shame and disgust, envy and resentment. Drawing on the work of Lawrence Blum, Martha Nussbaum, Andrew Tallon and Maureen Whitebrook among others, he claims that feeling 'is as much a ground for the will as is reason' and constitutes that faculty which translates what people 'understand to be important' into their moral compass, thus generating a commitment to realising their moral preferences (Hugman 2005:49). Exploring how affect works to connect structural and personal spheres of human interrelation and interaction, can

open up new spaces for caring and for potentially just responses to the plight of *Others*. Hugman (2005) uses several examples including those of compassion, envy and resentment, to illustrate his points. Compassion, he contends, is based 'on a belief that one's own life possibilities are similar to those of the person who is suffering' and requires both 'emotional engagement with someone who is vulnerable' and 'acting on that emotion' (Hugman 2005:52). And while it is in the context of specific situations and in relation to particular encounters with *concrete Others* that this affective engagement arises and takes shape, compassion also entails an overall orientation, which directs the practitioner towards compassionate action as a matter of principle. Envy and resentment, on the other hand, are rooted in an inability or unwillingness to 'accept the realities of *Others*', thus blocking opportunities for compassionate engagement with those whose life trajectories and possibilities appear to be profoundly different from one's own, while shame and disgust arise from a 'rejection of weakness, uncertainty, decay, death and so on', thus pointing to 'hostility to poorer sections of society … and resentment of ethnic minorities, immigrants and refugees' (Nussbaum, cited in Hugman 2005:53; highlights added).

Hugman (2005) sees the relevance of emotion in ethical thought and practice in its intermediary function, that is, the ability to translate into human action and interaction. As such, to engage reflexively and critically with one's own affective responses is not an end in itself; it is not merely about building a virtuous 'self' as an aesthetic project, nor is it only about engaging in relationships that are free from negative emotions. The point is rather that the actions, interactions, and inactions of practitioners correspond with a myriad of complex, even contradictory feelings that they may have in relation to the situations they find themselves in and in relation to the people with whom they are connected. At the same time, these actions, interactions – and inactions – also signify the viewpoints, thoughts and attitudes with which they are intertwined. If however affect is a substantive part of what forms and reveals human interconnection, then to observe, acknowledge and critically reflect upon their various emotions must be a necessary part of the attempt of caring practitioners' to make sense of the impact that structural forms of injustice have on themselves and the ways in which they respond to the plight of *Others*. In this way, attending to one's emotional responses might be the key to acting differently – and maybe responding more justly – in

situations in which alternatives might previously have seemed elusive. Such a critical, emotionally aware approach might make it ultimately possible to –

> Render an account of ethics in practice that is concrete, grounded in action but which at the same time reveals ethical meaning that is applicable beyond the specifics of the individual situation (Hugman 2005:61).

Coining the concept of *critical emotional reflexivity*, Zembylas (2008, 2014) discusses in detail what should be entailed in attention to one's emotional responses, and what ends it could serve. He defines reflexivity as 'the practice of changing one's life in response to knowledge about one's circumstances' (Zembylas 2014:211). While forms of reflexivity in which focus is limited to the development of individual skills, abilities and competencies might lead to important questions being elided (see Section 4.3), critical attention to affect might serve as an important backstop against this danger. Practitioners could ask, for example, how they are socialised into feeling about certain issues in specific ways; how such feelings can condition their responses to particular incidents of injustice and the experience of being implicated therein; and how institutional contexts and power relations pre-structure the process of reflection itself. Short of asking these kinds of questions, practitioners might find themselves encouraged to keep negative feelings in check in ways that render them pliable instruments that support and stabilise unjust institutional regimes rather than working to recognise, attend to and act upon moments of emotional disquiet.

Zembylas (2014) offers a more detailed and complex account than does Mullaly (2010) of the role of affect in *just* practice. With Margaret Archer, Megan Boler and Mary Holmes, he argues that because 'the reflexive self is formed by emotional relations to others', feelings must be recognised as having more multifaceted functions in the promotion of social justice agendas than merely to help practitioners 'form and maintain commitments to … [their] projects' (Holmes, cited in Zembylas 2014:213). Critical emotional reflexivity requires communities of practice – held together by participants' commitment to 'criticising', 'holding accountable', and where necessary, 'exposing one another's bad faith' (Young 2011:170) when interrogating their own and each other's positioning within regimes of social injustice, and when exploring how to use available but as yet overlooked openings for *just* practice. At the same time, such communities of practice would need to be characterised by sufficiently critical friendships (Bozalek and Matthews 2009) in order for participants to feel safe enough to try and disentangle how their feelings, thoughts, attitudes, perceptions and actions

correspond with the contexts within which they occur. In the words of Zembylas (2014:217-218):

> Critical emotional reflexivity … draws attention to the subtle and nuanced ways in which emotions, power relations and reflexive processes are entangled … how emotions are implicated in the production of certain regimes of truth … [as well as] exposing how socialised emotions inform the way in which one … has been taught to see and act (or not to see and act).

What Zembylas (2014:217-218) hopes to achieve with his propositions is to provide practitioners with a 'tool' to –

- Initiate and sustain 'alternative subjectivities and relationalities';

- Enable 'a conception of … reflection as a relational struggle for change';

- Draw attention to and provide a holding frame for engaging with the 'complex, often contradictory emotions' in providers and receivers of care which 'may either support or hinder the pursuit of more subversive … practices';

- Create 'opportunities' for social workers and other providers of care 'to adopt a critical stance into their own role and influence';

- Facilitate the analysis of how social workers and other providers of care 'are taught to feel the world through an ideological lens'; and ultimately –

- Render visible 'the potential for social action and transformation' that is embedded in particular situations as practitioners translate their 'critical emotional reflections into relationships that lead to better or more just … practices'.

What, then, might these transformative subjectivities and relationalities look like? What impact might the kind of emotional labour proposed by Zembylas (2014) have on social workers' and other caring practitioners' relationships with *Others*? Hemming's (2012) in-depth exploration of the intricate interlinking between being, experiencing, relating, feeling, knowing, and acting offers some helpful pointers in this regard. One of her starting points is a critical review of the concept of empathy, which can be extended to the notion of compassion discussed above. Hemmings (2012:151) finds the idea of empathy helpful in challenging 'the opposition between feeling and knowing, self and other'. However, she is concerned that an ethics of empathy relies too heavily on 'the reflexive capacities of the empathetic subject as the primary way of resolving difficulties of misrecognition or hostility that attend intersubjectivity' (Hemmings 2012:152). Importantly, the *Other* might not want 'to be empathised with', may resist 'the terms of recognition', disagree with what the empathiser considers 'significant in the empathetic encounter', or 'may already consider [the

empathiser's] position as part of the epistemological terrain rendered problematic by their own experience (Hemmings 2012:152; cf. Young 1997).

Similarly to Hugman (2005), Hemmings (2012:152) draws attention to the fact that 'affects … also force us apart, or signal the lack of any real intersubjective connection' but she offers a more intricate appreciation of negative feelings than merely regarding them as blocks to ethical practice. To this end, she reminds her readers that,

> The essential relation to the *Other* through which the self is constituted is riddled with the desire for domination as well as connection … A focus on empathy fails to address … the enjoyment of authority and judgement that remains with the one who empathises (Hemmings 2012:154; highlights added; cf. Bauman 1993).

In other words, social workers and other practitioners of care are not just placed passively within unjust structural arrangements but might also participate actively in structural processes of injustice – even when they did not consciously chose to do so, or indeed had made a conscious choice not to do so. This might be one of the key reasons why a simple injunction to promote social justice is so difficult to translate into practice, and which is why attention to one's affective responses is a prerequisite to addressing this challenge.

Furthermore, being placed in complex and contradictory positions is likely to be experienced as imbued with emotional tensions in that there is a probable misalignment between what one feels one ought to do, and those things that one actually does. Hemmings (2012) refers to this as an experience of *affective dissonance*; and it is this that she identifies as the hinge around which more just ways of relating, and opportunities for *just* practice, might be moved into sight. Such experience of dissonance can morph into feelings of anger (Leonard 1997; Mullaly 2010), rage (Ahmed 2004; Mullaly 2010) and passion (Braidotti 1991, 2006) and the attendant forms of resistance to which they might give rise. Additionally, feelings of dissonance can give rise to imagination of a world that could, and should, be different from what it is at present. In this way, Hemmings (2012) claims that affective dissonance has the capacity to ground alternative values and a different way of knowing. Persons feeling this way may develop a desire to share their experiences, perceptions and feelings with those who have similar experiences, perceptions and feelings, to engage around these and, perhaps together, to begin to consider what could be done to work towards such realities as might seem more just. It is for these reasons that Hemmings (2012:151) refers to politics as 'that which moves us' and affective dissonance as that which 'has a politicising potential'.

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However, to the extent that injustice is defined in terms of people's differential access – or indeed the denial of access – to material resources, representation, recognition and voice, it can hardly suffice to have a conversation between likeminded people who find themselves in similar or at least comparable social positions. Instead, it seems necessary to ensure that an engagement with *Others* flows from one's experience of affective dissonance, but without making one's own experience the 'primary basis' for this engagement (Hemmings 2012:155). To this end, Hemmings (2012:151) stresses the importance of being mindful that the kind of 'knowing differently', 'knowing different things' and 'knowing difference' to which affective dissonance potentially gives rise can be transformative only if this knowledge is understood as –

> Created through struggle between dominant and marginal voices and perspectives and … conceived of … as emerging from conflicts of interests within an uneven epistemic terrain ... Difficulty and difference are understood as constitutive parts of knowledge, and making sense of these becomes a question of value judgements among divergent positions (Hemmings 2012:155).

In contexts that can be considered structurally unjust, two responsibilities seem to arise. To the extent that practitioners feel relatively voiceless and powerless in relation to the contextual conditions of their work, they would be required to attend to how their feelings might prevent them from acting upon such structural injustices. And to the extent that practitioners are more powerful and placed in socially more recognised positions than their service users, they would need to make a conscious effort to create such conditions as would allow their *Others*, their services users, to speak. At the same time, practitioners would need to remain mindful that this is only an offer that could be taken up, rejected, or even resented by those to whom it is made. In the process of such engagement, says Hemmings (2012:150) 'individual experience[s]' of affective dissonance could turn into shared experiences of *affective solidarity* on the basis of which a 'collective capacity' for action might develop. I return to the notion of affective solidarity in the concluding chapter of the thesis.

4.5 Conclusion: Towards a Relational and Affective Frame for Considering Social Work's Commitment to Social Justice?

In Chapters 2 and 3, I had characterised the field of social work with cross-border migrants in South Africa as likely to entangle social workers and other practitioners of care in multiple structures and processes of injustice, thus placing them in situations where they might receive potentially contradictory and unattainable mandates and could expect to face considerable ethical challenges. It was against this background that in this chapter, I engaged with a range of writers in the feminist relational/political ethics of care and anti-oppressive traditions, all of whom attend to the ways in which people's being, understanding and responding to social injustices are interlinked. My intention was to consider the insights these authors provide into *how* the implications of displacement and cross-border migration for social work's commitment to social justice could most fruitfully be explored.

Following my review of some of Iris Marion Young's work, I proposed the term *just practice* to signify the idea that any commitment to social justice requires an acknowledgement that agents are inevitably positioned, and cannot but act, in relation to structural processes of injustice within which they may be embedded. In such contexts, *just* practice would consist of relationships between people and the ways in which they call upon one another to be just, try to listen, hear and heed such calls. This would include not just practical responses to particular incidents of injustice, but also the search for shared understandings of what justice might mean, and people's critically-reflexive engagement with their own social positioning within the contexts in which such calls to be just arose.

Thereafter, I considered some of Joan Tronto and Fiona Robinson's writings on the political, or critical, ethics of care. Their respective works respond on several levels to the question of how to consider social work's commitment to social justice. By linking of the notion of social justice with the idea of care as a practice, the political ethics of care introduces into the debate the concepts of relationality, interdependence, and vulnerability as a shared human property. It also provides the ideal of a practice, in which all five phases of care are integrated, as a standard against which to assess, for example, social work responses to cross-border migrants. As a result, the political ethics of care highlights the need to interrogate what kinds of relationships and responses are brought to the fore by what kinds of situations. Such

contextual and relational analysis can assist in drawing conclusions as to what it would mean to be just in the face of multiple and complex, structural processes of injustice within which practitioners may be entangled, and what would enable practitioners to practice justly.

Focussing on the responsibilities that arise for social workers and other practitioners of care in relation to their *Others* – both in direct service user-service provider relationships and in more distant, mediated relationships – implies a need for them to engage critically and reflexively with their own dispositions and actions. This is a chief concern for virtue ethicists. My review of recent critiques of virtue ethics was centred on a paper by Derek Clifford and highlighted how such self-scrutiny can be problematic insofar as it risks diverting attention away from important contextual conditions, instead regarding the individual dispositions and actions of practitioners in isolation. Yet, if structural processes of injustice, and the ways in which people are entangled in them, are disregarded, even virtuous practitioners can be rendered both agents and victims of oppression. Against this background, communities of practice – where practitioners can seek support and engage one another critically and reflexively so as to deepen their understanding of the requirements of justice – can have an important role to play. Both the practices considered in this study and the process of exploring them illustrate the relevance of such communities – and what can transpire in their absence – thus giving rise to particular recommendations regarding social work's commitment to social justice.

My review of some of the work of affective turn theorists demonstrated the extent to which theories of affect keep the idea of human interconnectedness at the centre of attention, interrogating its complex nature, and how it can be known and acted upon. Emphasising the importance of pre- and extra discursive realities, these authors highlight feeling, emotion, and affect as central features of ethics. This renders the affective particularly valuable to the question of *just* practice, care and the implications of cross-border migration for social work's commitment to social justice. I found that Michalinos Zembylas's work exemplifies how structural processes of injustice work within and through individuals and their multitude of relationships, and how, through processes of *critical emotional reflexivity*, openings towards relating better, caring more and responding more justly can be discerned. Finally, I found that Clare Hemmings' notion of *affective dissonance* demonstrates the importance of attending to the gap between what people would like to be and do, and what they actually feel able to be

and do. By carefully tracing the causes, dynamics and effects of this dissonance through their relationships, bodies and actions, people can begin to work out what it means to relate, care and respond better in situations where social justice can seem elusive, and where structural processes of injustice seem overpowering. The arguments of both Zembylas and Hemmings underscore not only the potential that communities of practice can hold, but also highlight the role of affect in pointing to openings for *just* practice that exist even within structural processes of injustice. In particular, the limits and possibilities that lie in the notion of *affective solidarity* are worth exploring further, and I want to return to this notion in the concluding chapter, considering its relevance for social work with cross-border migrants and beyond.

Together, the debates reviewed in this chapter provide what I would like tentatively, to call a relational and affective frame for considering social work's commitment to social justice. They also point to a need for a study on the implications of displacement and cross-border migration for social work's commitment to social justice to produce a situated, critical and emotionally reflective account of how structural processes of injustice entangled cross-border migrants, their social workers, other practitioners of care, and members of the receiving community; positioning, implicating, and affecting them differently. The relevant methodological considerations are presented in the following chapter.

Chapter 5
Methodological Considerations and Research Process

The preceding chapter concluded with the argument that an exploration of the implications of cross-border migration for social work's commitment to social justice would benefit from a situated, critical and emotionally reflexive account of how structural processes of injustice worked within and through cross-border migrants, their social workers, other caring practitioners and members of the receiving community as they positioned themselves and related to one another in the context of this study. In this chapter, I present the study's key methodological considerations and an overview of the research process by which I sought to achieve this purpose. This includes an explication of the research design, the units of observation and analysis, sampling sites and strategies, the different methods of data collection and analysis employed, as well as a discussion of the main ethical concerns, issues of trustworthiness, and the study's limitations. Some methodological questions are addressed in the empirical chapters (Chapters 6 to 10, in Part 2 of the thesis). However, as each of these chapters focuses on a specific objective and draws on a specific sample and data set, the main aim here is to show how these fit within an overarching methodological framework. Furthermore, my understanding of important methodological questions changed along with my evolving perceptions and interpretations of the study's subject matter and my own embeddedness therein. Hence, the chapter's second aim is to trace my methodological journey through the study's planning, data collection, analysis, and completion phases.

5.1   Research Design

In view of the study's concern with the concrete and specific, an ethnographic approach seemed the most appropriate choice. According to Barbara Tedlock (2003:165),

> Ethnography involves an ongoing attempt to place specific encounters, events, and understandings into a fuller, more meaningful context … It combines … various methods of

inquiry to produce historically, politically, and personally situated accounts, descriptions, interpretations and representations of human lives.

Drawing on Earl Babbie and Johann Mouton (2001), Tedlock (2003), Robert Lee Miller (2000) and later on Giampietro Gobo (2008), I designed my research initially as a case study which I was going to conduct while working as a participant observer with a local services provider in the field of social work with cross-border migrants (see Chapter 1.1.3). In the course of 2007, I negotiated entry with the service provider's director, and indeed practiced there as a social worker from 4 August to 31 October 2008. Here, I intended to take field notes, conduct depth individual interviews with colleagues, and collect life stories from cross-border migrants. For the life stories, I also recruited prospective participants through my workplace, at a local shopping mall, and through friends (see Chapter 1.1.3). These interviews took place between 31 May 2008 and 13 June 2009. Finally, in the aftermath of the May 2008 xenophobic violence in the course of which a group of foreign nationals came to stay at my local church, I included the church as an additional research site (see Chapter 1.1.3). On 17 June 2008, I began collecting field notes on my work at the church. My last diary record from this site is dated 31 October 2009. In effect therefore, what was intended to be a place- and time-limited study (Gobo 2008) turned into what Adele Clarke (2005:165) describes as 'multisite research', that is, an effort to –

> Capture the increasingly complex, diffuse, geographically, discursively and/or otherwise dispersed aspects of research topics, [thus contributing to] both a broad and deeply empirically grounded understanding of the phenomenon of interest.

My understanding of what it means to be involved as participant observer in an ethnographic study changed profoundly during the course of this study. Using standard research texts, I planned for my study to be 'naturalistic' (Terre Blanche and Kelly 1999:135), and my role to be that of a 'full' and 'genuine participant' (Babbie and Mouton 2001:295, 296). I saw no need to deceive colleagues, peers or service users regarding my dual roles of practitioner and researcher (Terre Blanche and Kelly, 1999). I was also aware of Carolyn Ellis and Arthur Blochner's (2003:240) suggestion that researchers should seek out both their 'participants' and 'their own … understandings' of the research matter. In particular, I was intrigued by Tedlock's (2003:180) discussion of recent shifts from 'participant observation' to 'the observation of participation' in ethnographic research, as I was by Ellis and Bochner's (2003:209) contentions regarding the depths of insight attainable through autoethnography:

> Concrete action, dialogue, emotion, embodiment, spirituality and self-consciousness are featured … as relational and institutional stories [that are] affected by history, social structure and culture, which themselves are dialectically revealed through action, feeling, thought and language (cited in Hölscher, Bozalek and Zembylas 2014:191; see Chapter 10).

However, my understanding of the autoethnographic component of my study evolved considerably over the years. When I completed my proposal in October 2007, I was aware that being able to move in and out of particular settings would be important in a study of social injustice, even though I had no way of imagining the ways in which it was important. I declared:

> Being an active participant in the rendering of social work services to cross-border migrants will allow me to experience the ethical tensions I seek to explore myself, rather than relying solely on accounts from others. In addition, my ability as a researcher to intermittently disengage from the context will enable me to reflect more critically upon my experiences than social workers might do who … earn a living by participating in the said practices' (Hölscher 2007:21).

Even though with hindsight, this claim sounds high-minded, it was nonetheless important to anticipate my overlapping roles as researcher, practitioner, and later as a member of a receiving community. However, it was naïve to assume that it would be possible to separate the processes of engaging with the different sites and samples of my study; that I could move in and out of my different roles and different contexts in neat, sequential steps; or that I would be able to assume 'distinct roles *either* as a researcher … *or* as a colleague' (Hölscher 2007:19; highlights added). My changing conceptualisation of the study's autoethnographic component and what it meant to observe my own participation hinged around my evolving understanding of what it meant to 'experience ethical tensions … myself' and the extent to which exploring this tension entailed exploring the implication of my 'self' in structural processes of social injustice. The impossibility of moving in and out of different roles became apparent early on in the data collection phase of the study. This realisation imposed itself through a deep sense of discomfort, or in the words of Hemmings (2012), *affective dissonance*:

> I arrive at the [refugees support group] meeting [at the church] a bit late, rushed, but most of all, beginning to feel terribly exhausted from my daily, even hourly, border-hopping between *Them* and *Us*. And still, unfortunately, without feedback on any of the issues where we as a group depend on third parties to make progress. I fear that this is the beginning of a pattern and think that, 'These are the frustrating details of what it means in our day-to-day lives that "we cannot change South Africa"', as I had said in the group just two weeks ago. How different it is to observe and describe the lines of exclusion and injustice which frame our society, than

to experience them daily, tangibly, financially, as the members of this group do, or to jump across this society's dividing lines, back and forth, as I am doing daily, and hourly, at this point in my life (Diary Record, 25.09.08).

It is like being in and out of a movie screen. Sometimes I am the spectator, at other times I am an actor. Still, even then, I do not know which is my part, and from which script I should read. When I look at my different lives at [the social services provider], at [the church], and my private life as a parent, as a friend, with my ordinary 'self' spanning across the other two sets of experiences from before to after, I feel like I am seeing myself in a broken mirror, assembled like a cubic piece of art. Distance, alienation and participation are sometimes only moments apart … Who am I? (Diary Record 10.09.08).

However, it was only during the data analysis phase that I began to appreciate the extent to which the reflexive engagement with my various roles, relationships, interactions, perceptions, feelings, thoughts, images and so on enabled me to gain at least some of that hoped-for, 'situated, critical and emotionally reflective account' of what it meant to be, relate, and practice within contexts of structural injustice. Following the transcription of data in 2009 and in order to make better sense of the material, I began engaging increasingly with feminist relational/ethics of care and anti-oppressive literature (in 2010). By March 2011 when Vivienne Bozalek and I started working on the first draft of *Encountering the Other* (Chapter 8), I realised that my understanding of the study's autoethnographic component had changed considerably since its initial conceptualisation. And in October 2012, when finalising the manuscript for my *Reflections on Misframing* (Chapter 9), I wrote to the editor indicating that I wanted to make one final set of changes:

I decided to rephrase three sentences … I don't want to sound judgemental … My suggestions are … to make sure that I … include myself in the critical evaluation of the project (Personal email correspondence, 12.10.12).

Over time, it became both easier and seemed increasingly important to be explicit in acknowledging the extent of my implication in the very structural processes I wanted to research. Thus, the methodology section of *Assuming Responsibility for Justice* (Chapter 10) on which Vivienne Bozalek, Michalinos Zembylas and I worked between December 2012 and October 2013, now included the following upfront statement:

Insofar as Dorothee was one of several care workers who participated in the 'normal' organisational discourses and practices, she experienced, did and said in many ways what was commonly experienced, done and said in her host organisation and beyond: such is the nature of structural processes (Hölscher, Bozalek and Zembylas 2014:192).

Finally at the beginning of 2014, when all publications were done and I re-engaged with the paradigmatic questions surrounding the study, I went out to search for literature that would help me theorise my growing awareness of 'being woven into' what I had intended to 'dip in and out of', and theorise around the ways in which the apparent 'inward turn' of my research interest was an important factor in achieving the aim of the study. Accordingly, the theorists considered in Chapter 4 enabled, within the limited context of the study, my efforts to –

> Reconceptualise the changing nature of 'the social' in a context in which 'politics, economy and culture' are 'being reconfigured … across various regions of the world' … [and] 'to explore … [these changes] as changes in ourselves' (Clough, cited in Pedwell and Whitehead 2012:117).

Apart from this 'observation of participation'–'autoethnography' continuum, the study also entailed other ethnographic research strategies, including of course the observation of organisational rules and practices, and of relationships and interactions between other research participants; holding formal interviews and informal conversations with other social workers, practitioners of care and members of the receiving community; as well as collecting life stories and having informal conversations with the cross-border migrants at the different research sites. I discuss the interlinking of these different methods in conjunction with the sampling, data collection and analysis choices made in the course of the study (Sections 5.3 to 5.4) and illustrated in Figure 5.4. First however, I explicate the relationship between the study's units of observation and analysis.

5.2   Units of Observation and Analysis

According to Babbie and Mouton (2001:84), the term 'units of analysis' refers to the objects of a study, that is, the phenomena, entities, processes or events that are investigated. In this regard, they differentiate between 'empirical research problems' and 'conceptual or non-empirical problems'. Durrheim (2006:41) warns that in identifying the units of analysis for a study, a common error is the 'ecological fallacy' which occurs when 'a researcher investigates one unit of analysis and then draws conclusions about another'. This might suggest that an exploration of questions regarding social work's commitment to social justice (an ethical, conceptual concern) cannot be grounded in an exploration of experiences of displacement

and cross-border migration in South Africa (an empirical concern). Yet in response to Margaret Urban Walker's (2001:3) disquiet about writers who treat morality 'as subject matter largely independent of empirical information about the real histories and contingencies of human relations in society', Sarah Banks (2004:73-74) asserts that,

> There is … [a] trend in the field of applied ethics for some philosophers to engage in empirical studies … [and] for social scientists to turn their attention specifically to ethics'.

So if the purpose of this study was to ground the exploration of an ethical, conceptual concern (regarding the meaning of social work's commitment to social justice) in an empirical study (of people's experiences of displacement and cross-border migration), how was I to avoid logical errors? Babbie and Mouton (2001:85) differentiate between units of observation and analysis, pointing out that sometimes, researchers choose, or are required, to 'observe [their] units of analysis indirectly'. I believe however that the debates considered in Chapter 4 go further than this. It is useful here to return once more to Patricia Clough's contention that 'changes that constitute the social … [circulate] through our bodies [and] our subjectivities' (cited in Pedwell and Whitehead 2012:117) (see Chapter 4.4). Related to this are the claims above that being, knowing, and doing (Chapter 3.3), responding to 'calls to be just' and thinking about justice (Chapter 4.1), and practicing and conceptualising care (Chapter 4.2); are all interconnected. Another important contention is that responding to social injustice is not a matter of either individual virtue or structural change but that both must be understood in relational terms and as processes that are intertwined (Chapter 4.3). In other words, from feminist relational/ethics of care and anti-oppressive perspectives, empirical and conceptual realities are most fruitfully regarded as interconnected, and the concept of social justice is most productively explored at the intersection of individual, relational and structural – that is, empirical – processes (Jackson and Mazzei 2012). If these propositions are accepted, then the task becomes a more fluid one of demonstrating throughout the different parts of this thesis, which empirical observations enabled what kinds of conceptual conclusions, and how these were reached, without regarding either of them as fixed and separate from the other.

Generally, however, the following applies. The study's units of observations are most apparent in the first three sets of research objectives (see Chapter 1.3). All three pertained to individuals, that is, the study of how differently positioned participants articulated or otherwise revealed their experiences, including their particular perspectives, feelings and

thoughts, relationships and interactions, as well as the different contextual layers in which these were embedded. Together, these data signified networks of structural processes. Tracing these networks and considering the ways in which they contributed to the maintenance and (re)creation of social injustice constituted one of the key conceptual tasks of this study and thus point to its unit of analysis, namely, the concept of social justice. Additional aspects of this unit are revealed in the fourth set of research objectives (see Chapter 1.3) which concern, firstly, the ways in which responses from social workers, other practitioners of care, and members of the receiving community could be considered socially just or unjust, and, secondly, the kinds of responsibility that might flow from the empirical findings for social work.

In short, the sampling and data collection strategies of the study pertained to its units of observation: individuals. A key purpose of the data analysis was to develop conceptual categories that could serve as a bridge from interpreting the empirical findings to the drawing of conclusions regarding the study's main conceptual concern and unit of analysis: social justice. The methods of sampling, data collection, and analysis are discussed in the following two sections.

5.3   Sampling Strategies and Methods of Data Collection

The study was conceptualised around three samples, all with their own attendant sampling strategies and data collection methods. These samples were cross-border migrants, social workers and other practitioners of care working with cross-border migrants, and an organisational setting within which the interaction between social workers, other practitioners of care, and cross-border migrants could be observed. As discussed in Section 5.1, the size of the study grew considerably during its 18 months of implementation, with sampling procedures becoming more complex as a result. Similarly, data collection turned out to be more multifaceted than anticipated, especially in connection with the participant observation and autoethnographic component of the study. This section sets out the study's sampling and data collection procedures in the following order: sampling settings, sampling incidents and collecting field notes for the participant observation and autoethnographic

component of the study (Section 5.3.1); sampling for life story interviews with cross-border migrants and collecting life stories (Section 5.3.2); and sampling social workers and other practitioners of care and conducting depth individual interviews (Section 5.3.3).

5.3.1 Participant Observation and Autoethnography: Sampling Settings, Sampling Incidents, and Collecting Field Notes

The participant observation and autoethnographic component of the study was initially planned around one prospective research site but in the wake of the May 2008 pogroms, I added a second research site before I even started my fieldwork at the first site. I begin by explicating the sampling process in respect of both sites, where I developed and applied an overlapping set of sampling, observation, and note taking strategies, which I discuss thereafter.

I identified one of the study's two research sites during the proposal stage of the study: a formal welfare organisation providing services to refugees. This was done through a combination of purposive and convenience sampling (Kelly 2006a; Gobo 2008). My two criteria for selecting the site were that the agency should employ professional social workers and render direct services to cross-border migrants. At the time of study, there was only one such organisation in Durban: an 'implementing partner' for the UNHCR, mandated to render social services to asylum seekers and refugees (UNHCR 2011b). The organisation is situated in the inner city of Durban where there is a high concentration of cross-border migrants. At the time, it employed four social workers (including the director), three community development workers, one communications officer and three administrative staff. As the director explained then, the organisation's services were intended to promote 'self-reliant integration into South African society', family reunification, and resettlement or voluntary repatriation of migrants. Specific interventions, she said, were concerned with child protection, couple counselling, assistance in cases of sexual and gender-based violence, interpretation services to statutory service providers, material assistance, skills training, and job placements. In total, the agency serviced over 400 individuals and families, with the majority of migrants receiving services on a short-term basis. In addition, there were group- and community-based services including lobbying and advocacy work, HIV/AIDS prevention,

and English classes. Informal negotiations for entry commenced in 2007, and the director granted formal permission to conduct the study at a meeting on 9 July 2008 (see Section 5.5.2) when she invited me to fill a vacant social work position for a period of three to four months. Figure 5.1 depicts the organisational space.
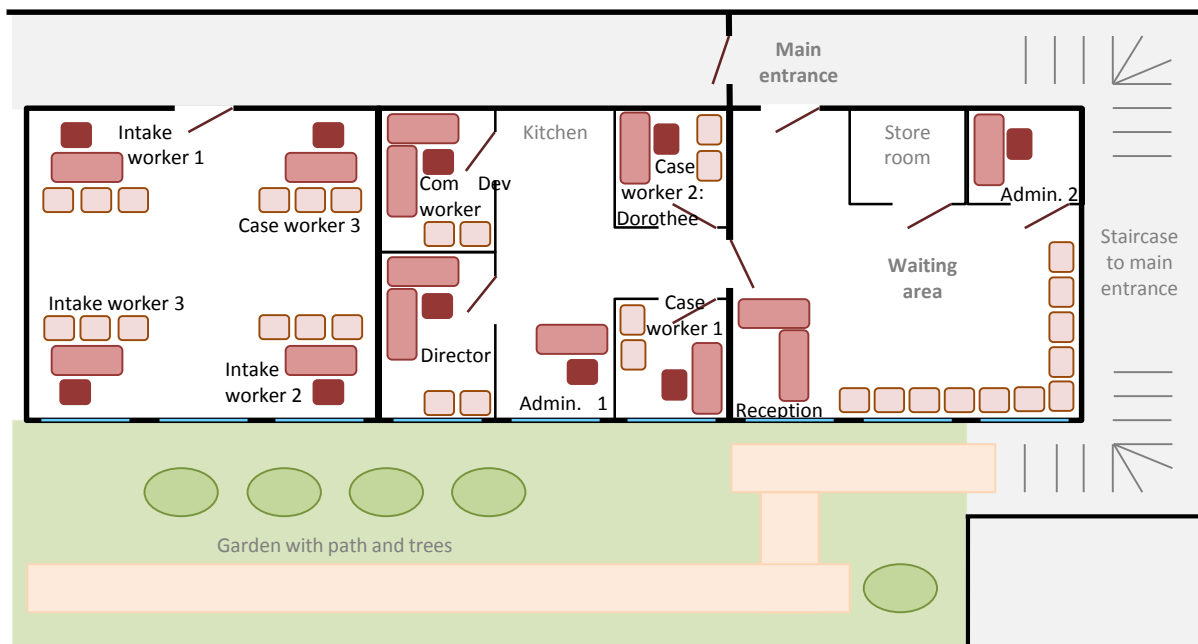
Figure 5.1: Research Site One – Office Space of the Refugee Services Provider

The second research site was an unplanned, convenience sample (Kelly 2006a; Gobo 2008). During the May 2008 xenophobic violence, many foreigners in Durban left their homes and sought shelter at the Durban Cathedral, an inner city park, the City Hall, and outside the US Consulate, among other places. Through a concerted civil society effort, they were 'distributed' to different shelters across the city. In the process, a group of twelve families with a total of 24 adults from Burundi, Rwanda, and the Democratic Republic of Congo, all with either refugee or asylum seeker status, were allocated to the church that my children and I attend, and on 27 May 2008, began moving into the church hall. A large group of volunteers – that is, members of the receiving community – began to assist immediately in a number of ways, with eleven volunteers entering relationships with some of the displaced refugees, which extended beyond the initial crisis of displacement.

The refugee families could not stay indefinitely and needed to move out again; yet several of them had given up their homes, lost their employment, and generally expressed an unwillingness to return to the inner city areas from where they had been displaced. Funding from Oxfam was to assist their 'reintegration' into the community, and I was asked to co-ordinate a response. I agreed and requested permission to collect data on the period of the refugees' stay and involvement with the church. The senior pastor conveyed this request to the church leadership, and it was granted. Image 5.1 depicts the church and church hall.

Image 5.1: Research Site Two – Church and Church Hall

The adults of the displaced families, and the practitioners of care and volunteers from the receiving community made up the study participants in this additional site. The two groups were distinctly different from one another with regard to race, residence status, educational qualification, employment status, field of work (prior to displacement), family size, and standard of living (as suggested by accommodation type prior to displacement). In addition, there were internal divisions along important socio-economic markers (see Appendix 1.1.1, which visualises and compares identity markers of the eleven practitioners of care and volunteers from the receiving community, and the 24 adults of the displaced families). However, given the prevailing context of South Africa's historically grown, overlapping racial

and class stratifications, and the recent xenophobic violence, many of the other socio-economic divisions became somewhat subsumed under the categories of race, class, and citizenship, which dominated the unfolding perceptions and relationships (see Chapters 8 and 9).

Taking notes on observations is a form of data collection, but deciding what notes to take is better conceptualised as sampling (cf. Gobo 2008). How closely these two processes are intertwined with each other and with the process of data analysis, is illustrated by Barney Glaser's (1992:101) notion of theoretical sampling which he defines as 'the process of data collection for generating theory whereby the analyst jointly collects, codes and analyses his [sic] data and decides what data to collect next and where to find them'. Also important is Anselm Strauss' and Juliet Corbin's (1990:177) assertion that in theoretical sampling, 'we sample incidents and not persons'. Thus, in the context of my participant observation in the two research sites, sampling meant to be alert to any incident that could provide pertinent information about, and insights into, people's social positioning and perceptions, feelings and thoughts, relationships and interactions.

At the beginning stages of data collection, my sampling strategy was 'open' (Strauss and Corbin 1990:181) in that I sought to record anything deemed potentially relevant. This broad focus was guided by the first two sets of research objectives in that I sought to be attentive to anything that signified the social positioning of cross-border migrants, social workers, other practitioners of care and members of the receiving community, their perspectives on the contextual conditions of their lives and encounters, as well as the type, quality, and dynamics of their unfolding relationships. The approach generated large volumes of recordable data, placing me under considerable time constraints. In addition, I realised early on that there was a disjuncture between my actual emotional responses, thoughts, and interactions and what I expected myself to feel, think, and do. As I transferred my experiences into written notes, I felt the temptation to 'beautify' some of my affective, cognitive, and practical responses, which in turn alerted me to the risk of self-censorship, distortion and misrepresentation. To address these two concerns, I settled on writing very fast, with a view to producing field notes that were more intuitive than refined; descriptive rather than explanatory; as well as capturing immediate, sometimes only fleeting, and often sensory, impressions, rather than carefully considered observations. Appendix 1.1.2 contains an excerpt from the notes I took

on 8 August 2008, my fifth day at Research Site One, the refugee services provider. It illustrates how my field notes in the open sampling phase stay close to the actual events, while at the same time pointing to the coincidence between contextual conditions, perceptions, feelings, thoughts, relationships and interactions between differently positioned research participants (including myself).

Out of this phase emerged what Strauss and Corbin (1990:185) refer to as the stage of 'relational and variational sampling'. Here, researchers 'find evidence of variation and process … in terms of … condition, context, action/interaction, consequences … [and] find as many differences as possible at the dimensional level in the data'. Indeed within a few weeks of fieldwork, I became increasingly conscious of the ways in which my own and other study participants' feelings, thoughts, and interactions had different qualities, depending on the particular contexts in which they occurred. The diary record contained in Appendix 1.1.3 is dated 25 September 2008 but also comprises two insertions dated 28 January and 11 April 2009, respectively. Compared with my field notes from the open coding phase, this second set of entries is considerably more detailed and complex. Its main storyline tells of a support group meeting held by the displaced refugees at the church, my second research site[4]. However, the recordings also contain mental images, similes, metaphors, some initial theoretical notes and repeatedly branch off into descriptions of related incidents, making comparisons across situations and sites, while tracing developments in relationships and changes in patterns of interaction across time. In other words, moving beyond merely sampling incidents, I began to interpret the responses of differently positioned people in relation to one another, to different kinds of situations, and to their changing set of circumstances across time. It was thus during relational and variational sampling, that my attention was drawn to issues relevant to the contextual conditions and relational processes by which broader structures of social injustice were enacted, reinforced, or subverted.

'Theoretical saturation' (Strauss and Corbin 1990:188) in the first research site, the formal welfare organisation, became increasingly evident by mid-October 2008. Appendix 1.1.4 contains a selection of field notes that signify the final phase of my stay as well as illustrating the process of my disengagement from the site. Due to the more complex dynamics of

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[4] Note that this support group served intermittently as a focus group as well. See Chapters 8.4 and 9.3 for details.

relationships and interactions between members of the receiving community, the displaced refugees, and the practitioners of care employed by the church, data collection at the second site continued into 2009. My last record was dated 31 October 2009, even though saturation had not been reached; I simply had to stop at some point (cf. Charmaz 2003). However, from about December 2008, my diary entries increasingly adopted the character of memos, that is, 'written records … related to the formulation of theory' (Strauss and Corbin 1990:197). Memo writing and the use of other adjunctive procedures are discussed in Section 5.4.3: Adjunctive Procedures and Conceptual Development.

5.3.2 Cross-border Migrants: Sampling and Collecting Life Stories

I implemented the life story component of the study at both research sites, as well as at sites I frequented in other roles – as an employee, as a consumer, and as a friend. In the following, I explicate the sampling strategies I used to identify potential participants, followed by a discussion of key methodological aspects of collecting life stories.

Sampling for the life story interviews was entirely purposive (Miller 2000; Kelly 2006a). As I was keen for this sample to be as diverse as possible, I applied the following criteria: age, gender, family status including relationships and number of children, country of origin, circumstances of travel, duration of stay in South Africa, residence status, highest qualification, employment status, source of livelihood, and living circumstances. Identifying prospective participants according to these criteria, I approached one service user at the first research site following the completion of my fieldwork there, and three participants at the second site after they had moved out of the church. I approached a colleague at work and a car guard at the local shopping centre. Another colleague asked to be included after hearing me speak about my study at a house party. Although I was happy to conduct the interview, I found upon data analysis that the main themes of his story were covered sufficiently by other participants and so did not utilise the data. Some seven months after completing my work at the refugee services organisation, I still felt that my sampling criteria were covered insufficiently by the participants included thus far (Gobo 2008) and recruited one more service user, who had by then also joined the refugees support group that continued to meet after all the displaced refugees had left the church.

Initially, I also wanted to include undocumented migrants in the study. Using snowball sampling (Miller 2000; Babbie and Mouton 2001), I made several contacts but did not succeed in winning the trust of any prospective participants from this group and eventually abandoned the idea. Apart from this gap, I felt that I had a sufficiently diverse sample of life stories, collected thirteen months after the first interview. By then, the sample comprised four men and four women aged between 27 and 41 years, including singles, divorced persons, and persons living in steady relationships. Their number of children ranged from none to seven. Originating from Nigeria, Somalia, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Zimbabwe, they included asylum seekers, certified refugees, temporary work permit holders, and permanent residents. They had come to South Africa on foot, by truck, and by plane, with, without, or with some of their children. They had lived here between one and nine years, and their living circumstances ranged from homelessness; living in shelters; sharing inner city flats; to occupying their own rented suburban homes. Levels of education ranged from primary school to PhD, while occupations ranged from unemployment; casual and intermittent; to permanent employment; from wageless work and flea market vending to low level labour, and to professional work. Table 5.1 represents the eight participants in relation to these sampling criteria. Points of origin and travel routes to South Africa are illustrated in Figure 5.3.

Code name	Sex	Age	Family Status	Country of Origin and Mode of Travel	In South Africa Since:	Residence Status	Highest Qualification	Employment Status and Source of Livelihood	Accommodation prior to May 2008 pogroms	Relationship with researcher	Interviews held on:	Interviews held in:	Discussed in publication:
Aliyah	F	27	Divorced; One child	Somalia; By truck	2004	Refugee	Primary School	Unemployed	Shared inner city flat	Service users at refugee services organisation	02.12.08 11.12.08	English	Dreams
Bola	F	41	Married with two children	Nigeria; By plane	1999-2003; 2004	Work permit (Interviews 1 and 2); Permanent residence (Interview 3)	PhD: Human Science	Temporary, full time employment: Tutor	Suburban house (not shared)	Colleague	27.11.08 10.12.08 09.06.09	English	Subjectivities of Survival
Émile	M	32	Single; living with girlfriend and their child. One other child from	Burundi; On foot and by truck	1999	Refugee	Intermittent / casual employment: Security service; Truck driver	Intermittent / casual employment: Security service; Truck driver	Shared inner city flat	Living at church after xenophobic violence	26.11.08 17.12.08	English	Subjectivities of Survival; Encountering the *Other*; Reflections on
Lance	M	39	Single; No children	Zimbabwe; By truck	2008	Asylum seeker	Technikon Diploma: Artisan	Intermittent / casual employment: Industry	Homeless	Service users at refugee services organisation	02.06.09 13.06.09	English	Subjectivities of Survival

Table 5.1: Overview of Participants in Life Story Interviews

Code name	Sex	Age	Family Status	Country of Origin and Mode of Travel	In South Africa Since:	Residence Status	Highest Qualification	Employment Status and Source of Livelihood	Accommodation prior to May 2008 pogroms	Relationship with researcher	Interviews held on:	Interviews held in:	Discussed in publication:
Léocadie	F	40	Married with seven children Three children in the DRC / missing	DRC (East); By truck	2005	Refugee	Bachelor Degree: Sociology	Wageless work: Home-based production and flee market vendor	Shelter	Living at church after xenophobic violence	29.11.08 19.12.08	English, French and Swahili, with assistance from Léocadie's husband	Subjectivities of Survival; Encountering the *Other*; Reflections on *Misframing*
Michelle	F	35	Separated; Three children (one is late) Caring for one of her sister's children	DRC (South); On foot and by truck	2002	Refugee	Secondary School	Intermittent / Casual employment and wageless work: Flee market vendor	Shared inner city flat	Living at church after xenophobic violence	12.12.08 11.06.09	English	Dreams; Encountering the *Other*; Reflections on *Misframing*
Sébastien	M	42	Married with three children Wife and children in the DRC	DRC (Kinshasa) By plane and by truck	2006	Refugee	Artisan: Secondary school level	Casual employment: Car guard	Shared inner city flat	Service provider at shopping centre	31.05.08 28.06.08 08.08.09	French, translated by Sébastien's friend	Subjectivities of Survival
Timon	M	40	Married; No children	Zimbabwe; By plane	2003	Permanent residence	Masters: Natural Science	Permanent, full time employment: Senior tutor	Suburban flat (not shared)	Colleague	16.06.08 05.07.08	English	Not included

Table 5.1 cont.: Overview of Participants in Life Story Interviews

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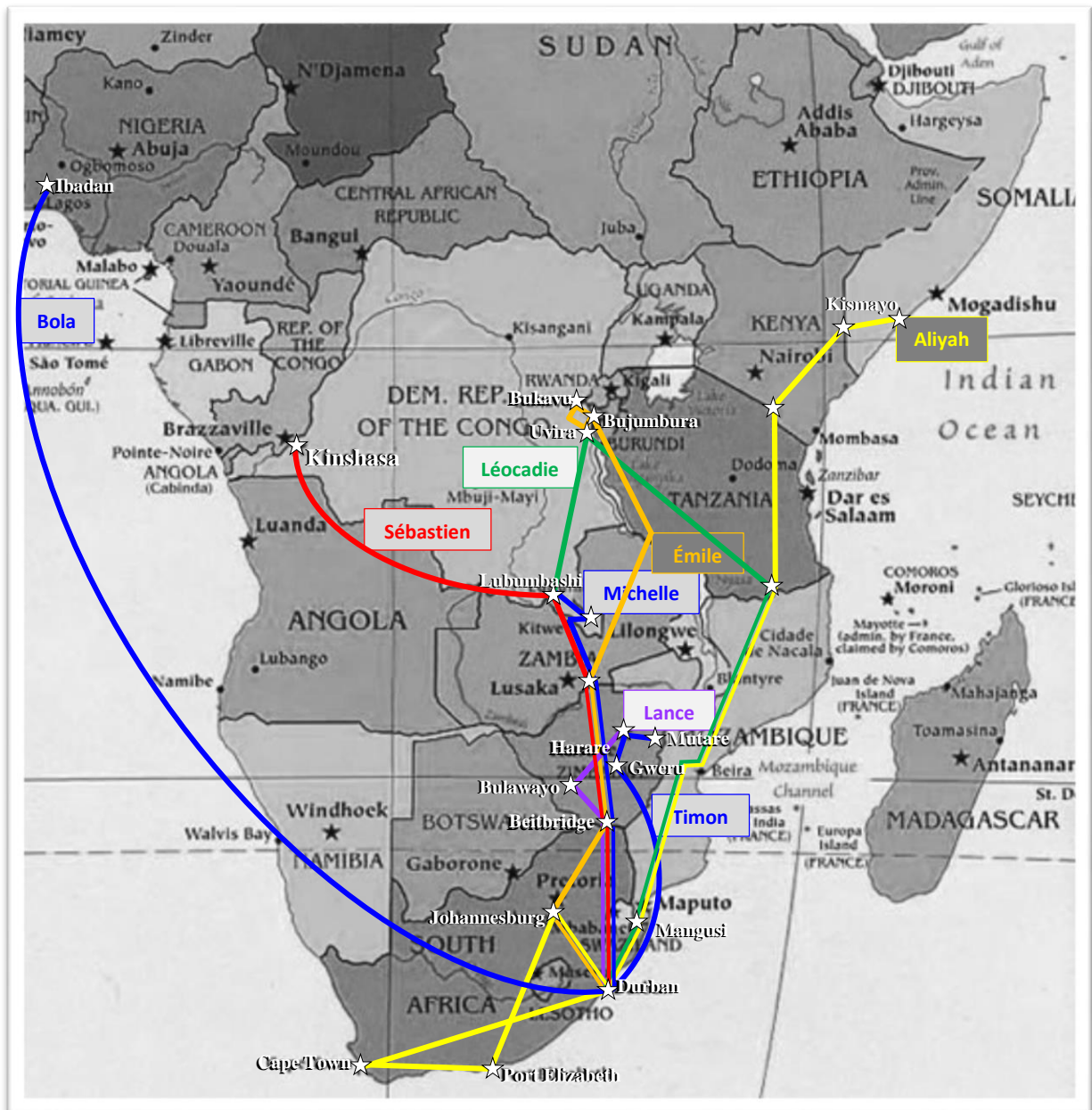
☆   Major residence, stop-over and/or border crossing points
⌒   Air travel
╲   Road travel

Figure 5.2: Origins and Travel Routes of Participants in Life Story Interviews

My initial choice of using the method of life story interviews (Miller 2000) with the sample of cross-border migrants was based on the idea that it would have been unsound to pre-determine which aspect of a person's past and present experiences, perceptions and reflections would or would not be relevant to questions of social justice. Beyond this, Miller (2000) contends that life story research is particularly well suited to exploring the intersection of the personal with broader historical patterns and social structures, thus enabling researchers to appreciate the individual 'choices, contingencies and options' (Miller 2000:9) emerging from this interplay. According to Tierney (2003:307), this kind of research is especially valuable for people who find themselves on the margins of the society within which they live and therefore tend to interpret reality in ways that can be 'in deep and ambiguous conflict with … official interpretive devices'. In view of the large scale redundancy and the various forms of economic, political, and social exclusion experienced (see Chapter 2.3 and 2.4), marginality is a condition that might well describe the lives of many cross-border migrants in South Africa.

In response to the potential marginality of migrants' perspectives, experiences, discourses and practices, Bishupal Limbu (2009:271) emphasises the need to seek out those 'stories and histories that have been ignored or that remain unassimilated within the apparent smoothness of the discursive field'. Halleh Ghorashi (2007:118), herself a refugee, narrates that her 'personal experiences' gave her 'a certain loathing of the type of interviews that are too fast, too purposive, or much too short', and advocates the life story interview as a helpful alternative. She demonstrates the suitability of this method for facilitating prolonged and dialogical engagement between researcher and research participants, for enabling the listener to engage with the contextual dimensions that have shaped the story teller's life, and for giving 'room for reflection' (Ghorashi 2007:120). All of these arguments underscore the suitability of life story interviews for a study that is centrally concerned with structural processes of injustice.

Between 31 May 2008 and 13 June 2009, I conducted life story interviews with the eight members of my sample. In all instances, the first interview was unstructured, allowing my interview partners maximum choice in determining content and emphasis of the conversation (Miller, 2000). I did, however, have a rough list of topics for use in case participants requested some guidance (see Appendix 1.2.1). In all eight cases, the participants and I felt the need to

explore specific topic areas in more depth and agreed to a follow-up interview. In two cases, a third interview was scheduled. For the follow-up interviews, I used semi-structured guides (Kelly 2006a; see Appendix 1.2.2 for an example). Of the eight participants, two felt uncomfortable being interviewed in English. One, Sébastien, brought a friend who assisted with French/English translation; another, Léocadie, spoke in English but switched to both Swahili and French on topics she found difficult. Her husband assisted with translations and additional explications (see Table 5.1). While I was able to check for accuracy of the French/English translations in both interviews when correcting the transcripts, I could only verify the accuracy of the Swahili/English translations against Léocadie's non-verbal expressions during the interview. Intermittently, her husband added his own views and experiences to the interview. To acknowledge this role, I retained his voice whenever he did, and indeed, he is quoted in several articles. In total, there were 18 interviews, which ranged from 45 minutes to 1.5 hours. All interviews were recorded, transcribed by research assistants, and corrected by me (see Appendix 1.2.3 for excerpts from one of the life story interviews).

5.3.3 Social Workers and other Practitioners of Care: Sampling for Depth Individual Interviews

My initial intention had been to conduct depth individual interviews with social workers in the field of cross-border migration. However, at the refugee services organisation – the first research site – both social workers and community development workers were employed to perform the same responsibilities. In the second site, several pastoral staff, including two theologians and one administrator, were directly involved in responding to refugees who had found shelter with the church. For these reasons, I began to refer to this sample as 'social workers and other practitioners of care'. The sampling procedures and data collection methods I employed in respect of this sample are as follows.

In the first site, the sample for depth individual interviews was based purely on convenience (Kelly 2006a): at the end of my stay as a participant observer, I approached all four social workers and all three community development workers with the request to participate. One of the social workers did not consent, leaving a total of six participants in this sample. At the

second site, sampling was purposive (Kelly 2006a) with the criterion that to participate, staff should be directly involved in caring for refugees at the church, beyond the initial crisis of displacement. Of the six staff employed at the church at the time – senior pastor, pastor, deacon, youth pastor, receptionist and office administrator – I approached the senior pastor (in November 2009), the youth pastor, and the office administrator (in September 2011). All three consented and were included in the sample.

My main motivation for including practitioners of care in this study was a matter of triangulation (see Section 5.6). I did not want to rely on me as the only practitioner whose experiences would be considered in drawing conclusions. Depth individual interviews using a semi-structured interview guide (Kelly 2006a; see Appendix 1.3.1) appeared to be the most suitable data collection method as I was keen for participants to relate their viewpoints, perceptions, feelings and thoughts regarding their current encounters, relationships and interactions to previous life experiences and more general world views (Babbie and Mouton 2001). All interviews were recorded, transcribed by research assistants and corrected by me (see Appendix 1.3.2 for excerpts from one of the depth individual interviews).

I conducted interviews with the six colleagues at the refugee services provider in November 2008, that is, after I had concluded my participant observation in the organisation. However, during data analysis, particularly when working on *Assuming Responsibility for Justice* (Chapter 10), I had growing concerns about the ethics of using the data from these interviews and eventually decided against this (see Section 5.5.2 and Chapter 10.3). On 25 November and 2 December 2008, I interviewed the senior pastor from my second research site, the church, by which time the majority of displaced refugees had moved out. In September 2011, after I had completed the bulk of the data analysis from this site and completed the first drafts of *Encountering the Other* (Chapter 8) and *Reflections on Misframing* (Chapter 9), I conducted one more interview with the youth pastor and the office administrator. This was specifically to explore some of the openings for just practice that had emerged in the period following my data collection at the site. However, due to intensifying time pressures especially from 2012 onwards, it no longer seemed feasible to include this as a publication in the thesis (see Sections 5.4.2 and 5.7). Next, I discuss the study's methods and process of data analysis.

5.4 Data Analysis: Methods and Process

Data analysis was the most long-lasting phase of the study, extending from August 2008 as my choices around incident sampling became more conscious, to January 2014 when I submitted my fifth empirical paper for publication. I present this complex aspect of the research methodology in the following order: overarching methodological choices made at the planning stage of the study (Section 5.4.1); overall process of data analysis (Section 5.4.2); and use of adjunctive procedures in the process of the study's conceptual development (Section 5.4.3).

5.4.1 Overarching Methodological Choices

My proposal for data analysis followed Jaber Gubrium and James Holstein's (2003) idea of *analytic bracketing*, an approach that aims to assist researchers in understanding the interplay between 'the actual procedures through which social order is accomplished' on the one hand, and 'what is being accomplished, under what conditions, and out of what resources' on the other (Gubrium and Holstein 2003:215). This approach is meant to produce an assemblage of 'both a contextually scenic and a contextually constructive picture of everyday language-in-use' (Gubrium and Holstein 2003:235). To accomplish this, investigators should alternate attention between *discursive practices* that reveal the 'practical reasoning' people apply as they construct 'a sense of everyday reality', and *discourses-in-practice* pointing to 'the cultural and institutional contexts … that substantively nourish and interpretatively mediate' daily interactions (Gubrium and Holstein 2003:215). In this study, various forms of being, knowing, and doing – including people's feelings and thoughts, their social positioning and resultant perspectives, perceptions, feelings and thoughts, relationships, and interactions – needed to be considered. Still, because my data comprised recorded interviews and written field notes, any interpretation of data depended on my understanding of participants' use of language. Thus, even though my study required attention to extra-lingual experiences, Gubrium and Holstein's (2003) approach remained relevant. To explore *discourses-in-practice*, I leaned on Fairclough's (2001) *Language and Power*, well operationalised by Martin Terre Blanche, Kevin Durrheim and Kevin Kelly's

(2006:328-340) basic steps for critical discourse analysis (CDA), which include consideration of the following:

- *Textual activities*, such as binary opposites, recurrent terms, phrases and metaphors, and allocation of the roles of speaker/author versus listener/reader;
- The *effects* of these textual activities, in particular the construction of subjects, objects, apparent truths, and the advancement of particular ideologies;
- The *contexts* of these textual activities and their effects, including both micro-context and macro-contexts;
- The *analyst's own social positioning*, as well as her theoretical and ideological leanings.

To assist me in exploring *discursive practices*, I settled on Kathy Charmaz's (2003) constructivist grounded theory (GT), a method which, she contends, directs analysts to how 'people create and maintain meaningful worlds through dialectic processes of conferring meaning on their realities and acting within them' (Charmaz 2003:269). Charmaz (2003) endorses the systematic use of established grounded theory methods such as open, axial, and selective coding, memo writing, theoretical sampling and so on, appreciating the ways in which these assist analysts in preserving 'realism through gritty, empirical inquiry' (Charmaz 2003:272; cf. Strauss and Corbin 1990; Glaser 1992). However, her intention is for these strategies to be used as 'flexible, heuristic methods, rather than formulaic procedures' (Charmaz 2003:251) in order to do justice to the complexities of human experience, which can neither be subsumed under single versions of 'truth', nor be reduced to what is depicted by 'overt data'. Instead, Charmaz (2003:275) aims to facilitate analysts' understanding of hidden meanings and people's often unspoken-about assumptions beneath the data. As a result, she claims, constructivist grounded theory is likely to lead to far more tentative and cautious findings than might be the outcome of more traditional, objectivist approaches (cf. Strauss and Corbin 1990; Glaser 1992). This produces what Charmaz calls an 'artful' interweaving of 'objectivist description, careful organisation and interpretive commentary' (2003:270) that regards causality as 'suggestive, incomplete and indeterminate' (2003:273) and allows 'emotions to surface, doubts to be expressed and relationships with subjects to grow' (2003:272). Consequently, 'data collection becomes less formal, more immediate, and subjects' concerns take precedence over researchers' questions' (Charmaz 2003:272). In spite of these tendencies towards the 'intuitive and impressionistic' (2003:277), Charmaz asserts that constructivist grounded theory should still be subjected to Glaser's (1992) criteria for evaluating grounded theory:

- *Fit:* Theoretical categories must emerge from analysis and explain the data they subsume, with any 'any existing concept' having to 'earn its way into the analysis';
- *Work:* The analysis should lead to such conceptualisation of the data as would explain the studied phenomena;
- *Relevance:* These explanations have to pertain to 'actual problems and basic processes in the research setting';
- *Modifiability:* A study's findings must be able to 'account for variation', and be able to be modified in response to changing conditions and additional data (Charmaz 2003:252).

I have sought to use these criteria in reviewing and revising my own work as I engaged with the data and worked to develop my findings into publications.

5.4.2 Overall Process of Analysis

Data analysis began in August 2008 with the coding that accompanied my data collection. At this stage the purpose of coding was to focus incident sampling during my participant observation in the two research sites (see Section 5.3.1), and to identify topics for follow-up sessions in life story interviews (see Section 5.3.2). The data collection process generated a large amount of written data: 27 life story and depth individual interviews and 85 diary entries in total. My field notes, written in longhand, took me the whole of 2009 to type up, during which time there were very limited coding activities. Transcription of the recorded interviews was done immediately by a research assistant but required substantial corrections. This I did in stages between January 2010 and February 2013 alongside my data analysis and writing of the five publications contained in this thesis, and hence, can be considered an important component of re-immersing myself in the relevant segments of the data (Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Kelly 2006).

The bulk of the coding happened in 2010, after typing up my field notes. As planned, I alternated coding for textual activities, effects, and contexts (Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Kelly 2006), with open, axial, selective coding (Strauss and Corbin 1990; Glaser 1992; Charmaz 2003). This was accompanied by renewed reading in order to aid the interpretation and integration of findings. However, there was limited opportunity to return to the field to obtain additional data, resulting in one of the key limitations of this study – a lack of integration between data collection and analysis as required for the development of grounded theory (Strauss and Corbin 1990; Charmaz 2003; see Section 5.7 and Appendix 2.1.1). Instead, I

returned repeatedly to existing data in order to fill apparent gaps in my emerging analysis. I wrote a number of memos comprising theoretical notes (Strauss and Corbin 1990; Glaser 1992; Charmaz 2003) and began to draw diagrams (Strauss and Corbin 1990), which I found particularly helpful in making sense of the data and in identifying a number of core categories, around which I was able to structure the five publications contained in Part 2 of the thesis (see Section 5.4.3 and Table 5.2).

Also in 2010, I decided to segment the data according to origin into the following overlapping groups with a view to managing the volume of information:

- *Research Site One:* field notes, interviews with six practitioners of care at the refugee services organisation, and life story interviews with Aliyah and Lance;
- *Research Site Two:* field notes, interviews with one practitioner of care, Robert, and life story interviews with Émile, Lance, Léocadie and Michelle;
- *All life story interviews*, including Bola, Sébastien and Timon.

In October 2010, I began focusing on analysing the data from Research Site Two. This was because my engagement with this site had been more extensive, I had developed more prolonged and in-depth relationships with the cross-border migrants at the church, and thus felt more deeply immersed in the data than was the case with the refugee services provider. Two publications emerged from this analysis: *Encountering the Other* (Chapter 8) and *Reflections on Misframing* (Chapter 9). *Encountering the Other*, which I co-authored with Vivienne Bozalek, draws on data linked to one of the study's core categories, 'Encountering (Relating I), and is structured closely along a timeline that emerged from axial coding (see Chapter 8.4 and Appendix 2.1.2). *Reflections on Misframing*, on the other hand, is structured around two core categories, namely, the notion of 'Framing', which I had 'imported' into my data analysis from Nancy Fraser's (2008a) publication, *Scales of Justice*, and 'Voice' which had emerged from my data analysis and fitted well with Fraser's (2008a) conceptions of 'participatory parity' and 'representation' (see Chapter 9.3).

As the analysis of the data from Research Site Two progressed, I became concerned that while able to trace the vicious circles of social injustice at play at the church, I remained unable to develop the idea of *just* practice. For this reason, I returned, in September 2011, to the site and conducted further interviews with practitioners of care at the church. The idea was to sample 'small openings' (Zembylas 2008) and to see whether the interviews, in combination

with my field notes and life story interviews, generated sufficient data to justify a publication dedicated specifically to the kinds of opportunities towards *just* practice that were available even within a context of deeply entrenched structural processes of injustice. Sadly, time pressures from the beginning of 2009 had escalated, and I thus found myself having to choose between abandoning either this or the planned publication from Research Site One. Eventually, I opted to forego *Small Openings*, which would have been my only article to emerge from theoretical sampling.

The article, *Dreams* (Chapter 6) was an invited contribution towards a special issue on gender and social work in South Africa, which I wrote jointly with Reshma Sathiparsad and Consolée Mujawamariya. This publication is structured around the core category, 'Surviving', with particular attention paid to the intersection of migration with gender. However, it is different from the other articles in that it is based on a thematic content analysis (Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Kelly 2006) of two selected life story interviews. During our initial consultations, we agreed that when read alongside one another, Aliyah's and Michelle's life stories well illustrated the intersection of gender dynamics and cross-border migration. Following steps outlined by Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Kelly (2006), we developed four themes, coded the data accordingly, selected quotes and jointly worked on the publication, with Reshma focusing on gender and migration, while I selected and applied an appropriate framing for the question of social justice, and Consolée reviewed our findings as a whole, incorporating her own experience and research on the experiences of other refugees in South Africa.

In 2012, I moved on to analysing the data from Research Site One, the refugee services organisation. This publication originated in a discussion I had with Vivienne Bozalek and Michalinos Zembylas about the concept of responsibility, and hence, the article *Assuming Responsibility for Justice* (Chapter 10) was co-authored by the three of us. It is centred on the core category, 'Responsibility-taking (Relating II)'. For reasons mentioned in Section 5.3.3 (see also Section 5.5.2 and Chapter 10.3), I decided against including the interviews with practitioners of care. A full audit trail of my analysis of the field notes from Research Site One is included in Appendix 2.2.1. Finally, in 2013, I returned to the life story interviews, corrected the outstanding interviews, analysed the data, reviewed additional literature on cross-border migration and completed the fifth empirical paper included in this study: *Subjectivities of Survival* (Chapter 7). Like *Dreams*, this publication is organised around the core category of

Surviving, exploring, however, the intersection of cross-border migration and class. A detailed audit trail of the data analysis for this publication can be found in Appendix 2.2.2.

5.4.3 Adjunctive Procedures and Conceptual Development

As I disengaged from the research sites, the focus of my diary records changed, and increasingly attained the quality of memos (see Section 5.3.1). Charmaz (2003:261-262) summarises the purpose and process of memo writing as follows:

> Through memo writing, we elaborate processes, assumptions, and actions subsumed under our codes … We connect categories and define how they fit into larger processes … Raw data from different sources provide the grist from making … comparisons, fleshing out ideas, analysing properties, and seeing patterns.

The transition from keeping field notes to memo writing signposts the study's process of conceptual analysis, which in fact began with the writing of the proposal and continued right into my development of the study's overarching arguments and conclusions. Consequently, data analysis informed, as much as it was informed by, my continued reading around social justice (see Section 5.4.2). The integration of data analysis and conceptual development was most pronounced when, within each of the three data segments, I developed themes, labelled phenomena, grouped them, identified core categories, and explored their properties and dimensions. Appendix 2.1.1 illustrates this intertwining with an example of a memo from the early stage of data analysis in which I begin to compare the impact of different contexts on both my sense of self as a researcher/practitioner and the quality of my relationship with one of my service users/research participants. Note that the category at the head of this memo is 'face-to-face encounter', a concept I imported from Zygmunt Bauman's (1993) discussion of Emmanuel Lévinas. Even though in the article, *Encountering the Other* (Chapter 9), I retained 'Encountering (Relating I)' as a core category, by that time, I had settled into regarding the notion of 'face-to-face' as a dimension of the property 'closeness in a relationship' rather than an integral quality of the category 'Encountering (Relating I)'. The property, 'closeness in a relationship', the dimension of which could range from a direct, face-to-face encounter to an indirect form of relationship where the parties were completely separated across space and time was especially helpful in my analysis of *Assuming Responsibility for Justice* (see Chapter 10). Here, my understanding of another core category,

'Responsibility Taking (Relating II)', benefited from my ability to distinguish between varying degrees of closeness and distance and how this impacted practitioners' responses to their service users' plights (see audit trail for this article in Appendix 2.2.1).

As described in Section 5.4.2, all empirical papers in Part 2 of the thesis were constructed around one or two core categories which were then elaborated in relation to those aspects of social justice literature with which they corresponded best. Both *Dreams* (Chapter 6) and *Subjectivities of Survival* (Chapter 7) are organised around the core category, 'Surviving', albeit with different emphases. *Dreams* (Chapter 6), which foregrounds women's experiences and perspectives, draws on a range of gender analysts and is framed by Martha Nussbaum's (2000, 2006) concept of central capabilities. My main reason for selecting the human capabilities approach as the article's theoretical frame was its articulation of a set of minimal requirements of social justice. Nussbaum's (2000) monograph, *Women and Human Development*, was particularly helpful in keeping the perspectives of those whose welfare was at stake in the centre of attention. This allowed my co-authors Reshma, Consolée, and me to make strong and pertinent points, akin to taking 'snapshots' of the intersecting ways in which women migrants experienced, and sometimes resisted, the social injustices prevalent in their lives.

In *Subjectivities of Survival,* I was more concerned with what impressed me as a cumulative loss of agency among both migrant men and women, and how this experience was connected with South Africa's class structure and the conditions of structural violence to which it gives rise. While exploring these using Bob Mullaly (2010) and the work of miscellaneous political economists, I found the Amartya Sen (1999, 2009) writings most useful in anchoring the discussion, simply because of the centrality he accords to the idea of agency. Both my engagement with the data and my renewed reading highlighted two properties of 'Surviving' as particularly important: dignity and hope (cf. Appadurai 2004; Simone 2004, 2010, 2011). To further explore their relevance for social work's commitment to social justice, I drew on Margaret Urban Walker (2006) and Martha Nussbaum (2000), respectively. As with Nussbaum, Sen's approach enabled me throughout the article, to keep within focus the individual perspectives of the protagonists of the stories.

Neither Nussbaum's nor Sen's work, however, seemed sufficient to inform my discussions of the relational aspects of social injustice which are the subject of the other three publications.

Of these three, *Encountering the Other* (Chapter 8) was the first to be written. Its title at once denotes the core category at the heart of this article – Encountering (Relating I)' – and points to the phenomenon of *Otherness*, and unfolding processes of *Othering*, to which my interest was drawn especially during the earlier phases of the data analysis (see Appendix 2.1.1 and the discussion above). My co-author Vivienne and I considered a range of related concepts, including difference, inter-group domination, oppression, and resistance. The resultant publication relies on a variety of works, including Iris Marion Young (1990), Emmanuel Lévinas (Zygmunt Bauman 1993), Joan Tronto (1993), Nancy Fraser (2008a), and Lena Dominelli (2002). Conversely, *Reflections on Misframing* (Chapter 9), was inspired by my reading of Fraser's (2008a) *Scales of Justice*, which fitted well with the core category of 'Voice' that I had already developed (see Section 5.4.2). Importantly, Fraser (2008a) provides the idea of 'Framing', which, when introduced into the analysis, wielded such 'conceptual power' that it enabled me to group a whole range of concepts around it, which I now began to regard as its 'subcategories' (Strauss and Corbin 1990:65).

Together, these four publications well illuminate the structural injustices at play in the field of cross-border migration in South Africa. What remains insufficiently clear in all of them, however, is how practitioners should respond to the comprehensive regimes of injustice in which they were so apparently implicated. This is the chief interest of the thesis' fifth publication, *Assuming Responsibility for Justice* (Chapter 10). In it, my co-authors Vivienne, Michalinos and I sought to retain a relational perspective, to critically engage with the social positioning of service providers vis-á-vis service users in the field, and to develop a more pointed discussion of what social workers could do about social justice. Iris Marion Young spent the last years of her life exploring the question of responsibility for justice (see Young 2006, 2007, 2011), thus providing a most suitable framework for our endeavour. In addition, Derek Clifford and Beverly Burke (2009) offer helpful deliberations on the relationship between individual identity and social histories, and on the role of social service organisations as a hinge around which social structures and individual perceptions and interactions are connected. The core category, 'Responsibility-taking (Relating II)' denotes all of these concerns.

With each of these five publications focusing on specific aspects of social justice, and employing different approaches to achieve their respective purposes, the thesis still required

an overarching framework, able to pull together the various issues raised in the articles, and the different ways in which they were raised. With this in mind, I developed the chapters that are now located in Part 1: Overarching Considerations of the thesis. Chapter 2 delineates the study's historical context, considering a range of economic, political, social, cultural, and ideological factors. Chapter 3 explores the ethics of social work with cross-border migrants and enables the study to reach conclusions around the ways in which the experiences around displacement and cross-border migration that lie at the heart of this study might be considered typical of the field at large. Lastly, Chapter 4 considers those ethical approaches and debates that are not sufficiently explored in the publications section of this thesis, yet are deemed suitable to pull together the five articles' philosophical contents in a concluding debate: these are Young's (1990, 2007, 2011) theorisation around the person-structure interface, the political ethics of care (Tronto 1993, 2011, 2013, 2014; Robinson 2010), an anti-oppressive critique of virtue ethics (Clifford 2014), and a consideration of how affective turn theorists might contribute to a re-grounded conceptualisation of social work's commitment to social justice (Hemmings 2012; Zembylas 2014; cf. Hugman 2005). Table 5.2 contains an overview of Chapters 4 and 6 to 10, outlining the data segments on which they are based, method of data analysis, core categories, aspects of and approaches to social injustice, and key theorists considered.

Publication (Chapter)	Data Sources	Methods (and Periods) of Data Analysis	Core Categories	Aspects of/Approaches to Social Justice Considered:	Key theorists consulted:
Dreams (Chapter 6)	Life stories	Thematic Content Analysis (2011)	Surviving (Focus on the intersection of cross-border migration with gender)	Central Capabilities	M. Nussbaum
				Intersectionality and the multiply reinforcing nature of oppression	B. Pease; misc. gender analysts
Subjectivities of Survival (Chapter 7)	Life stories	Constructivist Grounded Theory and Critical Discourse Analysis (2013)	Surviving (Focus on the intersection of cross-border migration with class)	Agency	A. Sen
				Structural violence and surplus populations	B. Mullaly; misc. political economists
				The dialectics of hope, dignity, and agency	M.U. Walker, M. Nussbaum
Encountering the *Other* (Chapter 8)	Research Site 2: Life stories; interview with practitioner of care; field notes	Constructivist Grounded Theory and Critical Discourse Analysis (2011)	Encountering (Relating I)	Injustice as oppression	I.M. Young, L. Dominelli
				Privilege and relating to *Others*; the dialectics of structural and interpersonal violence	Z. Bauman (E. Lévinas), J. Tronto, I.M. Young
				The dialectics of (mis)recognition and (mal)distribution	N. Fraser
Reflections on *Misframing* (Chapter 9)	Research Site 2: Life stories; interview with practitioner of care; field notes	Constructivist Grounded Theory and Critical Discourse Analysis (2011)	Framing Voice	The dialectics of (mis)framing, (mis)representation, (mis)recognition and (mal)distribution	N. Fraser
Assuming *Responsibility for Justice* (Chapter 10)	Research Site 1: Field notes	Constructivist Grounded Theory And Critical Discourse Analysis (2012)	Responsibility Taking (Relating II)	Social connection and political responsibility for justice	I.M. Young
				Moral encounter	Z. Bauman (E. Lévinas)
				The dialectics of individual and social histories; the role of organisations in structural processes of injustice	D. Clifford and B. Burke
Overarching, Paradigmatic considerations (Chapter 4)	N/A	N/A	N/A; Integrative chapter	The person-structure interface	I.M. Young
				The political ethics of care	J. Tronto, F. Robinson
				An anti-oppressive critique of virtue ethics	D. Clifford
				Critical emotional reflexivity and affective dissonance	R. Hugman, C. Hemmings, M. Zembylas

Table 5.2.: Overview of Data Analysis and Theoretical Choices

Returning to the use of adjunctive procedures, I need to comment, finally, on my use of diagrams in this study. Strauss and Corbin (1990:197) discuss different types of diagrams which they define as 'visual representations of relationships between concepts'. Producing diagrammatic representations of my emergent understanding of the structural processes of injustice at work in the data was a strategy that I found particularly helpful and which I employed throughout my data analysis. The earliest diagram dated was 26 October 2010 and the last one 16 June 2013. Indeed, I started the writing process for three of the empirical papers – *Encountering the Other* (Chapter 8), *Reflections of Misframing* (Chapter 9) and *Subjectivities of Survival* (Chapter 7) with diagrammatic representations, and then wrote the first drafts of the publications along the structures provided by the diagrams. Table 5.3 lists the visual representations I selected for inclusion in this thesis. Other aspects pertaining to the data analysis – including triangulation, blind coding by an independent researcher, critique and confirmation by co-authors and members check by research participants – are discussed in Section 5.6: Issues of Trustworthiness. First, however, I will touch on the ethical concerns that emerged in the context of the study.

Date	Diagram Type	Reference
26 October 2010	Open coding diagram on the core category, 'Encountering (Relating 1)'	Appendix 2.1.2.
17 December 2010	Axial coding diagram for the publication, *Encountering the Other*	Appendix 2.1.2
13 February 2011	Conditional matrix for the publication, *Encountering the Other*	Figure 9.1: Socio-economic Structures and Dynamics Surrounding and Impacting the Encounters between *Them* and *Us*
01 August 2011	Flow chart depicting the dialectics of (mis)framing, (mis)representation, (mis)recognition and (mal)distribution for the publication, *Reflections on Misframing*	Figure 9.2: Circle of Social (In)justice at Work in the Study
7 June 2013	Flow chart with themes for the publication, *Subjectivities of Survival*	Appendix 2.2.2
16 June 2013	Flow chart with categories and sub-categories for the publication, *Subjectivities of Survival*	Appendix 2.2.2

Table 5.3: Overview of Diagrams Included in this Thesis

5.5 Ethical Concerns and Considerations

The ethical concerns of the study can be divided into those anticipated at proposal stage and those that emerged during implementation of the study. I discussed most of these in considerable detail in the publications (see Chapters 6 to 10), so the purpose of this section is to provide a summary, as well as to expand on some lingering concerns. I begin with the ethical requirements that were considered at proposal stage. Thereafter, I deal with the main ethical concerns relating to the research sites in conjunction with those pertaining to colleagues and members of the receiving community, and lastly, with those relating to the participant cross-border migrants.

5.5.1 Ethical Considerations at the Proposal Stage

The proposal was guided by the standard ethical concerns listed by Babbie and Mouton (2001); voluntary participation and informed consent; confidentiality; beneficence and non-maleficence; the right to withdraw from the study; and the absence of rewards or sanctions for participation and withdrawal. As required by the University of KwaZulu Natal's Research Ethics Committee, these issues were covered in the gate keeper letter, information sheet, and consent form addressed to the refugee services provider's director; a separate information sheet and consent form for prospective participants in the depth individual interviews; and another set for prospective participants in the life story interviews. Permission to conduct the study was granted by the university's Research Office on 7 November 2007 (see Appendix 3.1). However, upon commencement of the study, I realised that the language of the documents needed to be revised as it was not accessible to all prospective research participants. The final versions are attached in Appendices 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4, respectively.

5.5.2 Ethical Concerns Regarding the Research Sites, Colleagues and Members of the Receiving Community

Gaining entry to Research Site One happened according to plan. I sought permission to conduct the proposed study at the refugee services organisation on 6 June 2007 in a written

request, followed by informal discussions. A formal meeting was held on 9 July 2008, at which point the director informed me that my letter had been discussed in a staff meeting and invited me to temporarily fill a position due to become vacant on 31 July 2008. The main challenges with regard to this site confronted me only at the point of publishing my findings. Given the refugee services provider's distinctiveness, it would not be difficult for readers, especially of the article *Assuming Responsibility for Justice* (Chapter 10), to figure out the organisation concerned. The potential harm was foreseeable, and I raised the issue at different points of data collection both with the organisation's director and with staff. I asked all staff members at the refugee services organisation to consent individually to participate in the study, and indeed, one colleague withheld consent and could not be referred to. In addition, when writing the publication, my co-authors and I decided to rely on my personal experiences rather than those narrated by others (hence the decision not to use any of the depth individual interviews), and where the cited field notes referred to colleagues, I sought to disguise their identities as best as possible. Finally, in the methodology section of the publication we were explicit about how we intended the article to be read, that is, in a spirit of a shared, forward-looking responsibility (see Chapter 10.4.3).

The situation at the second research site was also complex. I had been approached to assist when the church leadership faced difficulties in managing an unprecedented crisis of displacement. Even though gatekeeper consent was requested formally, and the church executive was involved in granting it, I cannot be sure that everyone felt there was choice in the matter. I, too, felt unable to refuse to become involved; and I needed to collect data. Ultimately, only time allowed me to glean the extent to which there was genuine consent (Hugman 2010b). I conclude that as far as church leadership and staff were concerned, the climate was one of general consent since I was allowed access to an empty office from which to work well into 2010, and a further two staff members agreed to participate in depth individual interviews in September 2011.

The situation concerning individual members of the congregation was even more challenging. Gobo (2008) considers gatekeeper consent sufficient grounds for ethical practice. Yet, Hugman (2010b) cautions that because of the service context and the researcher's multiple roles, the use of ethnographic methods in practice settings gives rise to intricate, and

comprehensive power differentials between the social worker/researcher and the service users/research participants. Hugman (2010b:157) cautions that,

> It seems difficult to be sure that the relationship between staff and their service users ... does not create an implicit 'compulsion' to give consent [to participating in research while receiving – or in the hope of receiving better – services]. Similarly, the researcher's identity as a social worker ... might also ... [encourage] greater disclosure ... In response, reflexive checking that pays attention to such ethical questions is part of good quality methodology (brackets, added).

This argument can be extended to include those members of the church community for whom my dual role of fellow congregant/researcher might have made it difficult to express dissent. Following the completion of the data collection, I developed a sense of ethical discomfort about the absence of explicit consent from congregational members and thought of ways to ameliorate the situation. In January 2011, before embarking on writing the first article, *Encountering the Other* (Chapter 8), I invited the congregation at large to attend an open presentation and discussion of my preliminary findings. Individuals – both members of the refugee group and of the receiving community – who expressed a particular interest, were asked to comment on the first drafts of *Encountering the Other* and *Reflections on Misframing* (Chapter 9). To all others, I extended an open-ended invitation to read and give input on the write-up of findings. These kinds of activities are normally regarded as measures to enhance the trustworthiness of a study (see Section 5.6) rather than a matter of ethics. However, the fact that fellow congregants were afforded opportunities to express disapproval of particular findings, or object to featuring in the articles, entailed the chance to express dissent, even if in a restricted and post-hoc manner. My final ethical 'backstops' were to disguise the identities of all individual congregants referred to in the publications so that particular statements or actions would be difficult to trace back to specific persons and to include my own actions in all critical reflections on the church's responses to the refugees who had been hosted.

5.5.3 Ethical Concerns Relating to Participating Cross-border Migrants

The participating cross-border migrants were the most vulnerable among the study's participants: Miller (2000) stresses that giving a life history can be a traumatic experience at the best of times, but the data collection and analysis confirmed that without exception, all

cross-border migrants involved in the study had been, and still were, exposed to both traumatic and stressful life circumstances. The ethical responsibilities flowing from this pertained to all cross-border migrants in the study, not only those who had consented to participating in the life stories. In addition to Hugman's (2010b) concerns about the power differentials that can result from a participant observer/social worker's multiple roles in practice setting, Hugman, Eileen Pittaway and Linda Bartolomei (2011:7) found that across a number of studies with refugees, participation was often 'based on mis-apprehension of the research process'. They conclude that in order to avoid harm therefore, it is important that,

> The relationship between ... researcher and participants is based on a process and not seen as a single event. It must involve dialogue in all aspects ... of the research (Hugman, Pittaway and Bartolomei 2011:7).

In the context of my work at the refugee services organisation, the majority of service users were short term clients, hence my relationships with them were limited to once- or twice-off events. At the beginning of the interview, I informed each and every person of my dual roles as social worker and researcher, asking if she or he preferred to be seen by a colleague instead. Nobody made use of this opportunity which is unsurprising in the context of the organisation's fast-paced work and the continued sense of crisis in the months following the xenophobic violence. At the church, the engagement with participant cross-border migrants lasted for months, giving me greater opportunity to try and mitigate the possibility of unethical research relationships (see Chapter 8.4). In the life story interviews, I had ongoing relationships with all participants whom I had known between three months and eight years. Follow-up interviews took place between nine days and six months after the preceding session. This provided the opportunity for respondents to reflect on whether or not to continue participating. Importantly, it allowed us to talk about the impact of the interview and to provide debriefing where necessary. Even though none of the participants in the life story interviews required this, one member of the group requested referral for additional counselling, and I was able to make this referral.

Finally, it has become acceptable practice in life history research to fictionalise aspects of the accounts to protect participants and others – so long as the revised account stays as close as possible to the original one, and the subjective meaning behind the story is preserved (Miller, 2000). This was necessary in a few instances only, and was done jointly with the research participants. All participants in the life story interviews had access to their interview

transcripts; and those interested also had occasion to read, engage with, and provide feedback on preliminary findings as a matter of both trustworthiness and ethical research practice (Kelly 2006c). I discuss this and other considerations of trustworthiness next.

5.6   Issues of Trustworthiness

My planning towards producing trustworthy findings was informed by Babbie and Mouton (2001), Ellis and Blochner (2003) and Kelly (2006c). Drawing on the work of Yvonna Lincoln and Egon Guba, and Adri Smaling, Babbie and Mouton (2001:276) claim that the key question in this regard is how a researcher can 'persuade … her audiences … that the findings of an inquiry are worth paying attention to'. An inquiry worth taking note of, they suggest, is one where the findings can be transferred to other contexts. This requires that findings are dependable, credible, and confirmable. Apart from the final research report needing to provide an 'accurate description of the research process; … an explication of arguments for the different choices of methods; and … a detailed description … of the research situation and its context' (Smaling, cited in Kelly 2006c:381), there are a range of measures which researchers can take during implementation of a study to enhance their findings' trustworthiness.

I have applied the following. Firstly, I used the method of *triangulation* at the levels of sampling, data collection (even though one data set was eventually not used – see Sections 5.3.3 and 5.5.2), and at the level of data analysis (see Section 5.4.1), and achieved *investigator triangulation* by involving independent researchers at the stages of coding and publishing (see Section 5.4.2, and Appendices 2.3 and 3.6). I ensured *prolonged engagement* with the participants at both research sites. Then, I kept *differentiated field notes* to record immediate observations, reflexive notes, theoretical reflections, and notes on the research process (see Sections 5.3.1, 5.4.3, and Appendices 1.1.2 to 1.1.4). Data collection during the latter stages of fieldwork and follow-up sessions of the life story interviews were guided by *theoretical sampling* (see Sections 5.3.1 and 5.3.2), inasmuch as following through on theoretical sampling proved difficult once the period of fieldwork was over (see Section 5.4.2).

Furthermore, I sought to achieve *theoretical saturation* in both research sites, even though this was observable only in the first site (see Appendix 1.1.3).

All *interviews* were *recorded*, *transcribed, corrected* (see Sections 5.3.2)*, and *made available* to participants *for checking*. *Member checks* also happened at the level of publication in that I gave all draft papers to research participants, and considered their feedback in subsequent drafts (see Chapters 6 to 10). I explored *differing modes of interpreting findings* in different publications, which was aided by my use of a fairly wide range of writings on social justice (see Chapters 6 to 10). There were *blind peer reviews* of all publications emerging from this study. Finally, detailed *audit trails* for two of the publications are available in Appendices 2.2.1 and 2.2.2. The overall research process, including measures taken towards enhancing the trustworthiness of findings, is depicted in Figure 5.4. The strengths and limitations of the study as a whole are discussed in the concluding section of this chapter.

Study approved

Sampling Site 2
Convenience Sample:
Church

Sampling for life story interviews:
Cross-border Migrants: **Purposive sample**

Sampling Site 1:
Reasoned Sample:
Refugee Social Services

May 2008

Xenophobic violence displaces cross-border migrants across South Africa

Data collection:
Participant observation
First diary record: 17.06.08

Data collection:
Life story interviews
Three participants
First interview: 31.05.08

Data collection:
Participant observation
First diary record: 04.08.08

Data collection:
Support group with focus group sessions. First meeting: 17.06.08

Purposive Sampling:
Depth individual interviews

Purposive Sampling:
Depth individual interviews

Theoretical sampling:
Interactive units, encounters, speech acts & relationships

Theoretical sampling:
Interactive units, encounters, speech acts & relationships

Data collection:
Participant observation
Last diary record: 31.10.08

Data collection

Data collection:
Last focus group: 23.10.08
Support group continues

Data collection:
Life story interviews
Three group members
1st interview: 26.11.08

Data collection:
Life story interviews
Service user 1:
02-11.12.08

Data collection:
Depth individual interviews
Six practitioners of care:
05-21. 11.08

Data collection:
Depth individual interview
One practitioner of care:
25.11.08 – 01.12.08

Data collection:
Life story interviews
end on 13.06.09

Additional sampling:
Life story interviews:
Service user 2: 02-13. 06.09

Data collection:
Participant observation
Last diary record: 31.10.09

Data analysis

Member check

Writing memos

Mar. 2011

CDA 3: Contextual analysis

Transcription & Immersion

Joint analysis:
Independent researchers

CDA 2: Analysis of textual effects

Dissemination of findings:
Work on **1st empirical paper**
commences in March 2011

Thematic content analysis

Theoretical sampling:
Two practitioners of care:
11.09.11

CDA 1: Analysis of textual activities

Dissemination of findings:
5th empirical paper
completed in Jan. 2014

GT 1:
Open coding

Blind coding:
Independent researcher

Keeping audit trails

GT 3:
Selective coding

GT 2:
Axial coding

Jan. 2014

Critique & confirmation:
Independent researchers

Drawing diagrams

Dec. 2015

Development of overarching arguments & drawing conclusions:
Study completed

Figure 5.3: Research Design & Process

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5.7 Conclusion: Strengths and Limitations of the Study

This was a multi-site ethnographic study with an autoethnographic component, focusing on the case of a refugee services provider, a church that had hosted a number of displaced persons following the 2008 xenophobic violence, and on the experiences of a diverse sample of cross-border migrants living in South Africa. Its purpose was to explore the implications of displacement and cross-border migration for social work's commitment to social justice. In hindsight, the study's design and implementation process show up several strengths and limitations. One strength is that it facilitated triangulation across several stages in the research process. This helped in my efforts to capture the complexities of the economic, political, social, cultural, and ideological processes under investigation. It also allowed for flexibility in response to the rapidly unfolding socio-political events in South Africa at the time of data collection.

The study's autoethnographic component drew the research gaze inwards, enabling detailed observation and analysis of exactly how structural processes of social injustice worked their way from contextual conditions through relationships, encounters and interactions, into perceptions, interpretations and affective responses, and outwards again. It also made it possible for one of the publications (Chapter 10) to rely on field notes as a sole data source when I developed ethical concerns around using data from the depth individual interviews. The limitation attached to the study's strong autoethnographic focus is that I had limited recourse to the kind of corrective that would have been ensured by greater consideration of alternative views and experiences among other practitioners of care. However, the idiosyncrasies of my personal perceptions, experiences, and responses are balanced in two other respects. There are, firstly, field notes that describe in as much detail and accuracy as is possible, actual events, conversations and interactions of colleagues and other members of the receiving community. Secondly, there is the data obtained from my eighteen months of engagement with, and collection of life stories from, a wide range of cross-border migrants over many encounters.

I believe that the presentation of findings in Part 2 of the thesis (Chapters 6 to 10) demonstrate the fruitfulness of combining critical discourse analysis and constructivist grounded theory when seeking to understand those complex, often submerged economic,

political, social, cultural, and ideological processes that inform and sustain institutionalised forms of social injustice and the hardships that flow from these. Also important is that the chosen forms of data analysis rendered my field notes as a text, equal to all other data collected during the study, rather than being set apart as a privileged account. This made it possible to subject my own experiences and reflections to the same rigorous analysis as all other data. In this way, I hope that that the thesis can demonstrate the possibilities that lie in systematic, critically emotional reflection around social workers' and other practitioner's implication in structural processes of injustice. Finally, I believe that beyond just importing and applying conceptualisations of social injustice from the field of political philosophy, the chosen analytic approach has facilitated an in-depth and critical engagement with these discourses from a social work and practice of care perspective.

The context in which the study was implemented gave rise to a particular set of challenges. In my experience, the post-2008 university context is well described by pointing to increasing resource and time constraints and the tightening grip of managerial measures intended to extract ever greater output of university graduates and paid research from academic staff. Together with the accompanying ideological discourse which aggressively highlights the need for academic self-reliance and self-sufficiency, researchers wishing to function effectively have found themselves drawing on private resources, including the under- or unpaid reproductive labour extracted from others who are placed lower down in South Africa's socio-economic pecking order. Such trends must reflect in an intensification of participatory disparities and growing experiences of voicelessness at the lower rungs of hierarchies, where people cannot afford to purchase relief from their individual time and resource constraints. The experiences that are at the heart of this study's reflections must thus be considered as one of the many facets of what I regard as a web of deepening, widening, and increasingly diverse form of social injustice. I return to this observation in Part 3 (Chapter 11), the concluding section of this thesis.

With regard to the research methodology, two important limitations flow from the resource and time constraints surrounding this study. Data that emerged from theoretical sampling conducted after the main phase of data collection could not be fed back into the data analysis and publication of findings. This means that theory development where it might have been key – that is, in my search for small openings towards *just* practice across the study's different

samples and sites – remains in some ways incomplete. This slanted the study's focus somewhat. Consequently, the kinds of dynamics that could potentially serve as the hinges around which practitioners of care might contribute to turning vicious circles of injustice into virtuous circles of justice, remain, to a certain extent, under-explored. Partly as a result of this, there is a stronger reliance on imported theoretical concepts than I would have wanted, and important findings regarding the implications of displacement and cross-border migration for social work's commitment to social justice are not grounded as well as I would have liked.

Finally, the publications format of this thesis resulted in a particular set of strengths and limitations that needs to be touched upon briefly. The publication of the study's empirical findings as scholarly articles resulted in Part 2 of the thesis comprising a set of fairly pointed and concise arguments. In the context of a doctoral study, however, this format also gave rise to considerable repetitiveness due to the need, in each publication, to re-state summaries of the study's context and methodologies. And while the format enabled me to avail findings to the public well before completion of the study as a whole, it also meant that ideas developed and insights gained after the respective articles were published could no longer be fed back into the relevant chapters. As a result, it became necessary to 'bracket' the presentation of the study's empirical findings (Part 2 of the thesis) with a set of overarching considerations upfront (Part 1) and a summative discussion, including some re-interpretation of the substantive chapters, at the end (Part 3). This gave rise to some undesired complexities both in terms of argument and style. These limitations notwithstanding, the study has been able to produce ample findings worth reporting, and this is the purpose of Part 2 of this thesis.

Chapter 6 – Interpreting Refugee Women's Life Stories

Towards a *Human Capabilities* Framework for Social Work with Cross-border Migrants (Dreams)

Details of Publication

Key Words

Abstract

This article narrates the struggle of two female refugees for a dignified life in South Africa. It is based on their life stories and a personal diary compiled as part of an ethnographic study conducted between 2008 and 2009. The data were interpreted using the *Human Capabilities Approach* as an ethical frame of reference. We found that at the intersection of cross-border migration and gender inequality, both women suffered grave hurt and disadvantage. They did not enjoy many of the capabilities essential to human flourishing. And yet, both women asserted their humanity and agency, displaying resilience and resistance to the social injustices they encountered. The insights that this analysis provides lead to practice recommendations for social work with cross-border migrants, ranging from personal to structural levels of intervention. Hence, the paper demonstrates how a listening that is guided by the *Human Capabilities Approach* can inform our understanding of, and responses to, the multifaceted impact that social injustice has on the lives of the people whom social work seeks to assist.

Acknowledgement

6.1 Introduction

International migration has increased dramatically over the past couple of decades both in scale and complexity, leading to the establishment of social work with cross-border migrants as a field of practice in its own right (Hugman 2010a). In South Africa the field is still in its infancy, with specialised agencies in South Africa's main urban centres employing just a few dozen social workers. But this situation might well change: Since 1994, South Africa has emerged as a main destination for intra-African migratory systems. While much of this migration is irregular and the exact number of foreigners living in the country can therefore not be established, by 2010 South Africa recorded 417,000 asylum seekers and 53,200 refugees, having received for the fourth consecutive year the highest number of applications for asylum worldwide (UNHCR 2011).

For all its advantages, specialisation into distinct fields of service has one significant drawback for social work: there is a danger of developing reductionist views of certain service user groups. While it is important to be able to respond to particular groups and their specific needs, which often result from people's exposure to structural injustices along lines of race, class, gender, or citizenship, specialisation of services risks doing disservice to ethical practice in two respects. Firstly, there is the danger of perpetrating the injustice of *misrecognition* by failing to acknowledge the *Other* in her complete humanness – violating therefore what Immanuel Kant (cited in Nussbaum 2000:56) called *the principle of each person as an end*. Secondly, specialisation tends to direct our thinking along '*single cause theories* [which] view all forms of oppression as arising from one fundamental source' (Pease 2010:17; emphasis added). The resultant practice may fall short of the *principle of competent practice* since in fact, 'different oppressions are distinct, but ... interrelated and mutually reinforcing' (Pease 2010:18) and hence clamour to be responded to in all their complexity.

Bearing this tension in mind, our article interprets the life stories of two migrant women: Aliyah, a refugee from Somalia, and Michelle, a refugee from the Democratic Republic of Congo. We begin with a brief overview of the methodological considerations of the study, as well as a synopsis of its ethical and theoretical framework. Our presentation and discussion of findings foregrounds the women's respective experiences of migration, but we also apply a gender lens to their analysis. In a second step, we interpret our findings further in the light

of the *Human Capabilities Approach* (Nussbaum 2000, 2006; Sen 1999, 2009). We conclude that the emerging field of social work with migrant women is well grounded when we give attention to our service users, each as their own end – if this is combined with a critical gaze and systematic response to societal structures that unfairly disadvantage entire groups of people.

6.2 Collecting Life Stories from Migrant Women: Methodological Considerations

The two life stories on which this article is based, were collected as part of an ethnographic study conducted by one of the authors (Dorothee) between May 2008 and November 2009 (Miller 2000). The data are derived from two separate sites, where I (Dorothee) worked as a participant observer/social worker for three months, respectively. I met Aliyah at the first, and Michelle at the second, site[5]. Both women were part of a purposive sample. They were aware that I was also collecting field notes as part of my study and had consented to this, as well as agreeing to being interviewed. The life stories were collected over two sessions each. The first interview was unstructured, allowing the participants maximum choice in determining its content and emphasis (Miller 2000). In the second, semi-structured interview, we explored specific topic areas that had emerged during the first conversation (Kelly 2006a). The data presented in this article have since been subjected to thematic content analysis (Kelly 2006b).

Standard research ethical principles were built into the study's design in keeping with the requirements of the local university, which also granted ethical clearance. However, on account of my (Dorothee's) combined roles as social worker/researcher and to counteract the resultant power differential between me and the research participants, I understood consent giving as an iterative process, which afforded the women repeated opportunities to consider withdrawing from the study (Hugman, Pittaway and Bartolomei 2011). Trustworthiness and validity of the findings presented here have been ensured, *inter alia*, through triangulation at

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[5] Names of both women have been changed and their personal details fictionalised to protect their identities and those of significant others wherever necessary in the write-up of this article.

the stages of sampling and data collection; members check; construction of an audit trail; and analysis of selected data by independent researchers (Kelly, 2006c). The limitations of this study include those that generally flow from a qualitative research design, such as a lack of generalisability.

6.3 Human Capabilities and Gender Analysis: A Framework for Interpreting Migrant Women's Live Stories

In her publication *Women and Human Development*, Martha Nussbaum (2000:36) explains that one of the purposes of her book is to provide systematic arguments that might assist us in 'criticising unjust social arrangements', as well as 'preventing the sort of self-deceptive rationalising that frequently makes us collaborators' or silent and sometimes ignorant bystanders in the perpetuation of injustice. The Human Capabilities Approach (Nussbaum 2000, 2006; Sen 1999, 2009) addresses both general and particular concerns, taking into account how people are positioned and what they are able to do with the personal, social, and material resources available to them. Both Sen and Nussbaum insist that particularity and context are important in deciding which resources are needed for people to flourish. Importantly, their approach looks at people as ends rather than as means to ends. The *good life*, according to Sen and Nussbaum, is the ability of people to be and do what they have the capability of being and doing. This means being able to do valuable things, to choose from different livings and meaningful affiliations, and not to be constrained into a particular form of life:

> We want an approach that is respectful of each person's struggle for flourishing that treats each person as ... a source of agency and worth in her own right ... But this very respect means taking a stand on the conditions that permit them to follow their own lights free from tyrannies imposed by politics and tradition (Nussbaum 2000:69).

At the core of the Human Capabilities approach is 'the ... idea of the human being as a dignified ... being' who has an inherent need, indeed a claim to being supported in her desire to shape –

> Her own life in co-operation and reciprocity with others, rather than being passively shaped or pushed around by the world ... We see the person ... as somehow ... above the mechanical

workings of nature, and yet in need of support for the fulfilment of many central projects (Nussbaum 2000:73).

To this end, Nussbaum (2000) proposes a list of ten central capabilities (see Table 7.1). As suggested by Richard Hugman (2010a), the Capabilities Approach provides for a useful extension of social work's existing ethical frameworks: Despite being developed with people's particular situations in mind, the central capabilities exert *a primary moral claim* in that they have cross-cultural resonance and 'do not require justification by reference to any other value' (Hugman 2010a:133). As such, the notion of capabilities grounds rather than competes with, people's claims to human rights. Values and principles traditionally embraced in social work such as respect for diversity and uniqueness, or the right to self-determination, are *secondary values* in that their details, meanings, and emphases 'differ between contexts and assist in achieving primary values' (Hugman 2010a:134).

Important for the purpose of this paper is that Nussbaum (2000:2-3) locates her arguments in the observation that, 'all too often women are ... treated as mere instruments of the ends of others – reproducers, caregivers, sexual outlets ... There is no country that treats women as well as its men ... Developing countries, however, present especially urgent problems'. It follows that,

> Feminist philosophy ... should ... focus on the urgent needs and interests of women in the developing world whose concrete material and social contexts must be well understood, in dialogue with them, before adequate recommendations for improvement can be made (Nussbaum 2000:7).

It is here that Nussbaum's arguments connect with those of gender analysts from whom we draw in making sense of Michelle's and Aliyah's lives: Raewyn Connell (2002), Michael Kimmel (2004) and Robert Morrell (2005) highlight the constructions of gender in the context of class, race, and social conditions in which people are situated. And Floretta Boonzaaier (2003) points out a need to shift from situating women abuse within an individual pathology and to include social or cultural theories, suggesting therefore that we adopt feminist multi-systemic perspectives to allow for the inclusion of multiple constructs and the exploration of various facets of women's experiences (Boonzaaier 2003). This article presents one such effort.

1.	Life	Being able to live to the end of a human life of *normal length*; [and] not ... one ... so reduced as to be not worth living
2.	Bodily Health	Being able to have *good health, including reproductive health*, to be adequately nourished; to have adequate shelter
3.	Bodily Integrity	Being able to *move freely* from place to place; having *one's bodily boundaries treated as sovereign*, i.e. being able to be secure against assault, including sexual assault, child sexual abuse, and domestic violence; having opportunities for sexual satisfaction and for choice in matters of reproduction
4.	Senses, Imagination, and Thought	Being able to *use the senses, to imagine, think and reason* – and to do these things *in a 'truly human' way* – a way informed and *cultivated by an adequate education* ... Being able to *use imagination and thought* in connection with *experiencing and producing self-expressive work and events* of one's own choice, religious, literary, musical, and so forth; ... Being able to *search for the ultimate meaning of life* in one's own way
5.	Emotions	Being able to *have attachments to things and people outside ourselves*; to love those who love and care for us, to grieve at their absence; in general, to love, to grieve, to experience longing, gratitude, and justified anger; *Not having one's emotional development blighted by* overwhelming fear and anxiety, or by traumatic events of abuse and neglect (Supporting this capability means supporting forms of human association that can be shown to be crucial in their development)
6.	Practical reason	Being able to *form a conception of the good* and to *engage in critical reflection about the planning of one's life* (This entails protection for the liberty of conscience) ...
7.	Affiliation	A. <u>Being able to live with and towards others:</u> [That is,] to recognize and show *concern for other human beings* ... B. <u>Having the social bases of self-respect and non-humiliation:</u> [That is,] to be treated as a *dignified being* whose worth is equal to that of others ...
8.	Other Species	Being able to *live with concern for and in relation to* animals, plants and *the world of nature*
9.	Play	Being able to *laugh*, to play, to enjoy *recreational activities*
10.	Control over One's Environment	A. <u>Political:</u> Being able to *participate effectively in political choices* that govern one's life ... B. <u>Material:</u> Being able to *hold property ...*; having the right to *seek employment* on an equal basis with others *...*

Table 6.1: Martha Nussbaum's List of Central Capabilities (Nussbaum 2000:78-80; emphases added)

Feminist theories have claimed that masculinity is about the drive for domination, power, and conquest, and that this also is how women experience masculinity (Connell 2002; Kimmel 2004). However, Stephen Whitehead (2001) cautions that such discourses reinforce gender inequalities, for example by positioning men as strong and women as vulnerable. And indeed, the analysis below of Aliyah's and Michelle's stories demonstrates otherwise. In the following, we evidence how both women draw on their manifold capabilities in the face of considerable adversity, developing complex patterns of compliance and resistance in the face of intersecting forms of oppression (Morrell 2001).

6.4 Presentation and Discussion of Findings: Seeking to Understand Michelle's and Aliyah's Stories

This section presents our study's findings, discussing the two life stories along the themes of *flight*, *arrival and economic survival in South Africa*, *family dynamics*, and *resilience*. We ask, in particular: In terms of their central capabilities, how do the two women fare?

6.4.1 Flight

That gender affects people's experience of migration generally, and flight from political violence and civil war in particular, is well documented (Deacon and Sullivan 2009). This fact is clearly articulated by Michelle and Aliyah in relation to the build-up and dynamics of their respective journeys. Michelle explains that it was her husband, not her, who –

> Started doing politics … And … when Kabila died, they thought that people from Kasai were doing a plot to kill Kabila. And for all the people who were doing politics like my husband, they liked to kill them … And so things became very hard for us … I was suffering with him (Recorded Interview, 12.12.08).

In the context of the male politics of her country, Michelle didn't enjoy the ability to *participate effectively in political choices that govern one's life* (Nussbaum 2000:80). She continues:

> I was even deciding to tell him if we can go to my town Lubumbashi, the place where … he married me, and he said, 'No!' … [Some time later,] he was rushing and said to me, 'Just take some blankets and some clothes, let us go!' I asked him if he wants to go and bring me back to my town, and he said, 'No!' (Recorded Interview, 12.12.08).

Aliyah relates how after having successfully crossed the border into Kenya, she found herself without any means to survive:

> And they said, 'maybe people who don't have money can jump here …' I was crying to myself, and I said, 'I don't know what to do.' And then, that man was saying, 'Okay, what do you think if I pay for you, and then we can go together to South Africa. But one condition: you have to marry me'. I said, 'Okay,' without even to think twice because I didn't have a choice (Recorded Interview, 02.12.08).

What shines through both women's accounts is that given then constraints of the situations in which both women found themselves, decisions that might have appeared liberatory and advantageous at first, rendered their life circumstances changed but no less oppressive, and served in the end to translate broader patriarchal and political constellations onto their bodies (Ratele and Shefer 2003). Consequently, both Michelle and Aliyah found that their *Bodily Integrity* - that is, their ability *to move freely from place to place* - (Nussbaum 2000:78) had been severely undermined (Michelle), and the right to have *one's bodily boundaries treated as sovereign* (Nussbaum 2000:78), was violated (Aliyah).

6.4.2 Arrival and the Challenge of Economic Survival

Arriving and having to survive in a new country does not necessarily bring the desired and much needed respite. Instead, women may find themselves exposed to insecurities that may be qualitatively different, but are nonetheless as existential as the ones they had hoped to escape. Aliyah recounts that by the time she and her husband arrived in South Africa they were left with a mere 100 Dollars. Michelle and her family found themselves with even fewer resources:

When we came, they even robbed the *clothes* ... I came here, empty, with only one dress ... In the morning, we went to ... Home Affairs ... We got the paper on the same day ... But with that paper, where to go? We didn't know (Recorded Interview, 12.12.08).

Textbox 6.1: Aliyah …

… was born in Kismayo, Somalia, in the early 1980s. Civil war disrupted her schooling before completing secondary school. Aliyah's mother died in a 2003 when a bomb hit her house, and she lost track of all her family in the chaos that ensued thereafter. During flight, Aliyah depended on help from others because she didn't have money. This help ran out somewhere in Kenya, in response to which she found herself agreeing to marry a stranger so that he might pay for the rest of her journey to South Africa.

After a less than peaceful trip, during which Aliyah fell pregnant, the couple arrived in South Africa, by now almost penniless. The Somali community stepped in to help, along ethnic lines. This caused the couple to separate since they originated from two different tribes. With this began an Odyssey, in the course of which Aliyah lived in four different cities, gave birth to a son, twice reconciled and separated again from her husband, who had, in the interim, become physically abusive. She made several attempts at becoming economically independent, none of which were sustainable.

Eventually, Aliyah became a cook in a Somali lodging facility. This finally proved promising of financial viability and stability for Aliyah and her son Muadh, by then two years of age. Her husband followed her, urging Aliyah to reconcile yet again. But now she refused, asking for a divorce. When his persuasions proved fruitless, he attacked her, almost stabbing to death, leaving her broken, unwilling and unable to re-start her life yet again. By the time we met, Aliyah was completely dependent on charity, scared to pick up her phone, scared to go out, desperately hoping to be resettled to the United States – and yet, scared to entertain any hopes for the future. Aliyah says,

All [my] dreams died. Because you can't dream of something that can't happen ... The door of the dreams, it was closed ... I just sit ... I am like an animal, I am not a human being ... because I don't think. ... You can think about the future [only] if you have the way to start (Recorded Interview 11.12.08).

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The South African Refugees Act (No. 130 of 1998) allows people who meet the criteria of the UN's 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (UNHCR 1996), entry and the right to remain legally in the country but makes no provision to facilitate such persons' social or economic integration. Refugees, like all able-bodied South Africans, are expected to fend for themselves. And yet, a growing number of protectionist rules and regulations restrict access of foreigners to both formal employment and informal work opportunities (Makhema 2009). Consequently, foreign nationals find themselves highly dependent on their ethnic networks for survival. Aliyah took up several employment opportunities within her Somali community. These, however, proved unsustainable. Having worked just under a year for one family, Aliyah found that on account of South Africa's economy's downturn and spiralling cost of living at the time,

> The family ... were desperate and the business was down ... They couldn't afford to pay the rent for the shop, it was too much (Recorded Interview, 02.12.08).

A year and a city later, another family who had begun supporting Aliyah, became the victim of – quite possibly, xenophobic – violence (compare Jinnah 2010):

> That family ... decided to go ... because [South Africans] broke the shop, and there was nothing left, and they were very upset, too. Because in the location, they can come ... and take *everything* ... Their shop was left empty, empty! (Recorded Interview, 02.12.08).

A third attempt in yet another city, Aliyah became a street trader, selling goods on behalf of another Somali woman. But she found herself at the mercy of a peculiar interplay between law enforcement and crime, causing this endeavour to eventually fail as well:

> We didn't have the place to sell stuff ... We just put our stuff somewhere ... [When] the traffic cops come ... we [had] to *run*! And sometimes we lose half of the stuff because when they come, you are rushing! And this place was a taxi rank ... there are many people [and] when they see the cops are coming ... they just steal the things ... And ... sometimes [the cops] catch you, and you pay!' (Recorded Interview, 02.12.08).

Throughout her years in South Africa, Michelle sold at flea markets, trying out different locations, various goods, and sales strategies. At one point, Michelle and Thomás were actually beginning to thrive. They had begun trading in fake labels, including Levis, Puma, and Adidas. Did Michelle know it was illegal? She says she did not because so many other vendors – local and foreign – were doing the same, with items traded openly, in public, by everyone:

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Even the police used to come and buy from me ... Even the one who came to lock our things, he used to come and buy from me (Recorded Interview, 12.12.08).

Just as Michelle and her husband had stocked up for Christmas, the self-same police came to confiscate all their goods. Thomás was arrested, charged, found guilty and upon payment of his fine, was released from prison. But by then, all the stock and equipment that had been deposited in a police store room had disappeared. So Thomás left for better fortunes in another town, while Michelle tried to get by, now in the formal economy - as a bar tender, cleaner, even starting a crèche for refugee children. But she did not earn enough to make ends meet in the urban ghetto where she was now trying to raise her children as a single parent.

> [Michelle earns] between R1,100.00 and 1,400.00 [per month], depending on the hours worked. Her rent alone is 1,500 ... Sometimes she is not well. She gets anxious ... Basic needs of her children remain unattended ... 'What must I do ...?' she asks me, 'what must I do?' (Diary Record, 18.10.08).

Michelle's experience is consistent with Jonathan Mafukidze and Vandudzai Mbanda's (2008) findings that even when migrant women find employment, their wages are insufficient to overcome poverty and to sustain their families. While in most cities the police perennially raid informal businesses and try to prevent street trading, they are more likely to seize the goods of immigrants or ask them to pay protection money (Jacobsen 2006). Thus

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Textbox 6.2: Michelle...

...was born in the late 70s in Lubumbashi, DRC. She completed her high school education, but got married and fell pregnant while at university. This was when she left her home town to join her husband Thomás, who was working in the mines in the country's East, and who was involved in politics. When Laurent Kabila was assassinated, not just her husband's political organisation, but his entire tribe were amongst the suspects. Violence and civil war erupted, putting Michelle's husband's life at risk, making the family's survival increasingly difficult. Eventually in 2002, Michelle and Thomás fled.

Michelle had her second child in South Africa. She was able to reunite with her sister and other women she knew from home, developing networks of mutual support. She started a business, selling necklaces and second hand clothing from a flea market stall, while her husband was making an income as a car guard. The business grew and started thriving when the couple began trading in counterfeit items. But in the summer months of 2007/2008, the business was raided and shut down by the police. Her husband was arrested. Her third child died, not even six months old, in her arms, while waiting to be attended at hospital. Thomás, having been released from jail, left his family to start a new business in another town – and failed to return.

Following the xenophobic violence in May 2008, Michelle was amongst a group of refugees who found emergency shelter in a local church. She was offered much needed emotional support; and employment in the business of one of the church members. But it was just not enough to make ends meet. So when her husband returned a year later, receiving the necessary pressure from her community, Michelle reconciled. From there onwards, poverty, family violence and disintegration began to spiral Michelle's life downward:

One day, Michelle's daughter Thérèse talks to me ... Her parents are always fighting. Sometimes during such fights, Michelle throws herself on the floor ... Thérèse's little brother often lies with his mother and cries with her. Thérèse cannot go to church because her father takes her bus fare away from her: The self-same bus fare, which her mother earns at the night club and gives her ... while she, Michelle goes to sell that self-same liquor that her husband drinks (Diary Record 30 January 2009).

for Aliyah, selling 'stuff' required paying bribes to the police and at the same time, losing stock to thieves. Likewise, police harassment in some way, contributed to the breakdown of Michelle's family (see below).

Did Michelle and Aliyah enjoy their capabilities in terms of leading healthy lives, having their bodily needs and those of their children adequately met (Nussbaum 2000)? We do not think so. Michelle's and Aliyah's survivalist efforts were hampered by a whole range of factors, including the destitute circumstances of their arrival in the country; their difficulties as foreign nationals in relation to the workings of law enforcement in South Africa; and their vulnerability to huge costs associated with making a living in urban areas – where they preferred to live and work, due to perceived threats of crime and xenophobia in townships.

6.4.3 Family Dynamics: Knowing Your Place

By and large, women are constructed as caregivers (Morrell and Richter 2006). Aliyah's and Michelle's husbands, too, understood child-rearing as a woman's responsibility. In addition, Romi Sigsworth, Collet Ngwane and Angelica Pino (2008) point out that the power imbalances inherent in most male-female relationships are increased in situations where women's vulnerabilities are heightened by external conditions – in this case, as foreign females in an unfamiliar country. Both men deserted their wives intermittently, but even when at home, they were often unavailable, either on account of drinking (Michelle's husband) or smoking marijuana (Aliyah's husband). Added to this were dimensions of abuse, i.e. verbal abuse coupled with plain disregard in Michelle's case, and physical abuse together with financial neglect in Aliyah's. As a result, motherhood was difficult, even traumatic for both Michelle and Aliyah. For example, Michelle recounts the night when her youngest son died:

> In the night ... the baby cried. And in the morning he passed away ... I ... went with the baby to the hospital ... That night [my husband] was drunk ... The baby was crying, and [his father] was sleeping (Recorded Interview, 12.12.08).

This experience resonates with Robert Morrell and Linda Richter's (2006) observation that in many African households, some fathers may be physically present, but in essence, they are absent. For Michelle, Thomás' attitude meant that the responsibilities not just for care giving,

but also for bread winning were placed squarely on his wife's shoulders – under already trying circumstances, as observed by the following:

> Michelle cannot provide food and shelter for the entire family alone while [Thomás] sits at home and drinks (Diary Record, 30.01.09).

Carrying dual responsibilities is particularly hard for women at the bottom rung of the economic ladder (Chant and Pedwell 2008). In the following example, Michelle took a day off from her job as a cleaner to take her surviving son to hospital when he was ill with asthma.

> She is not going to lose another child ... [But her employer] feels that too often, she is absent from work: If ... everybody always [had] reasons not to show up for work, he might as well close down the business (Diary Record, 18.10.08).

Aliyah, too, was left by an abusive and neglectful husband to fend for herself and her son:

> He hit me ... every time. Then I said, 'No, I suffered enough' ... He left me with the child, but he said, 'I'm not going to give you even *one* cent. You're gonna know *how* to take care of him from *right now*.' I said, 'Okay, from the beginning I took care of him. I'm still gonna take care of him!' (Recorded Interview, 02.12.08).

Sigsworth *et al.* (2008) point out that migrant women often start having their own money for the first time, in their land of refuge, which results in some of them beginning to exercise their rights – something their husbands may find threatening – increasing the risk of domestic violence and/or leading to separation. Although financial and other household responsibilities rest with women, the failure to fulfil socially and economically constructed masculine ideals may, for these men, result in a crisis of identity linked to threatened patriarchal privilege (Reid and Walker 2005). Furthermore, a fear of being left may well point to an additional sense of having their masculine image undermined, hence prompting harsh - even criminal - responses on the part of the men concerned. Aliyah's husband returned at the point where she seemed to make a financial break for herself and her child. 'You know,' Aliyah said, 'the men, they are jealous.' He attacked her the day she requested a divorce, stabbing her over 20 times, in front of three-year-old Muadh.

Having survived by a thread, Aliya tried to ensure her safety by applying for a Protection Order in terms of the Domestic Violence Act, 116 of 1998. Unfortunately, her experience resonates with those of many women who are disappointed at the lack of effective response from the police. Aliyah explained:

> Every time he comes, I call the police, but they don't come. So I call one of my neighbours (Recorded Interview, 02.12.08).

Michelle, although she had experienced frequent abuse and disdain from Thomás, proved reluctant and unable to leave her marriage. In this regard, Boonzaaier (2003) suggests that an exploration of why women stay in relationships should involve an interaction between the meanings women attach to their experiences, the social and cultural context, women's social networks, and the practical realities of their lives. Thus, Kopano Ratele (2003) reminds us that to be enabled to leave abusive situations, individuals need other people, in fact alternative identities in relation to which they can be understood. More specifically, Sally Engle Merry (2009) contends that migrant women who leave their abusers risk the condemnation of their communities on whom they, as discussed above, depend for survival.

In other words, Michelle remained in a marital arrangement that was harmful to her on account of combined structural, cultural, and situational factors that need to be considered in all their complexity if support from social workers were to be meaningful. While Aliyah did try to divorce, her vivid description of her husband's assault on her coheres with findings from Reshma Sathiparsad's (2005) research with South African men who rationalized that women needed to be punished if found to be rejecting of them. Aliyah's narrative thus demonstrates the interconnectedness of power and the cultural constructions of maleness, including the chastisement of a wife who does not know her place (Bassadien and Hochfeld 2005) and hostility to women's independence (Bennett, Maharaj and Ncanywa 2008). Frustrated by his inability to control Aliyah's actions, her husband may have resorted to the power of violence to assert his masculine identity.

So not just during flight, but also after arrival in their land of refuge, Michelle and Aliyah were both denied *Bodily Integrity* (Nussbaum 2000:79). And certainly, neither were they provided with the *social bases of self-respect and non-humiliation* (Nussbaum 2000:80). By the time we met, *Play* (Nussbaum 2000:80) interestingly placed amongst the ten central capabilities - seemed beyond imagination altogether.

6.4.4 Resilience

Nussbaum (2000:73) explains that centrality of human dignity to the Capabilities Approach has an intuitive appeal of cross-cultural resonance because –

> We see a human being as … a kind of awe-inspiring something that makes it horrible to see this person beaten down by the currents of chance – and wonderful … to witness the way in which chance has not completely eclipsed the humanity of the person.

And indeed, both Aliyah and Michelle demonstrated what Zermarie Deacon and Chris Sullivan (2009) describe as being proactive in the face of exclusion, showing innovation and versatility in the face of adversity. Both women negotiated for space and structured their survival strategies in a context where they were disadvantaged: by displacement and gender discrimination; through lack of financial and emotional support; on the labour market and in the informal economy; and by their vulnerability vis-à-vis South African law enforcement agencies. Seeking out supportive networks, sharing food, jobs, profits, and accommodation, were amongst the strategies employed to bring positive changes to their lives. Over a period of years, Michelle demonstrated perseverance and creativity in the face of seemingly overwhelming obstacles to meeting the survival needs of her family. And whenever she could, she discerned opportunities for emotional support and spiritual connection so as to find strength in hope for the future:

> The church … fortified me … to accept *some* things and carry on with *life* … I can remember one day, Pastor Robert was preaching about accepting anyone in life … and don't make a mask … you just give face to people … [The words] gave me power … because I was … almost dead (Recorded Interview, 12.12.08).

Interviews with Aliyah were frequently dotted with the phrase, 'I fight', 'I fight'. But most impressive was her willingness to laugh in the face of adversity: Thus, when narrating one of her encounters with a charity she had approached for help, she began to giggle and related how she continued to return for support even when it was made it clear to her that she was unwelcome:

> We shout at each other, and then I go back again [laughing some more] (Recorded Interview, 11.12.18).

Image 6.1: *Women at Work (Darlene Menzies, Durban Chamber of Commerce)*

6.5 Conclusion: The Relevance of Human Capabilities as a Framework for Social Work with Migrant Women

The stories of Michelle and Aliyah demonstrate the complexity of the migratory process and the multiplicity of needs of cross-border migrants generally, and refugee women in particular. According to the Human Capabilities Approach of Martha Nussbaum (2000, 2006) and Amartya Sen (1999, 2009), when grounding social work ethically in a context of structural injustices (such as the realities of refugeehood, migration, poverty, gender inequality, and discrimination faced by Michelle and Aliyah), one key question to ask is: Are people able to be or to do what they have, in principle, the capabilities of being and doing?

Clearly, neither Aliyah nor Michelle were able to live in accordance with their potential, to fulfil their hopes and dreams in accordance with their actual capabilities. Both women's life courses were profoundly impacted by the coincidence of being born women, and as citizens

of countries that have suffered prolonged civil war, massive destabilisation, and the displacement of huge populations. Having fled, they were never able to rebuild their lives to a level which, had conditions been enabling, they might have attained. At the same time, both women experienced the kinds of injustices to which many South African are also regularly exposed, such as urban poverty and the inadequate functioning of the state's protective roles. This highlights the importance of recently popularized discourses on intersectionality (Pease 2010): injustices along the lines of gender, class, and citizenship, compounded to heighten levels of disadvantage in the lives of the women concerned. On the other hand, the Human Capabilities Approach enabled us to discern a resilience through which the women concerned preserved their humanity and continued to assert their agency. They did this within the constraints of their social positioning (such as, mothers), but in ways that challenged social hierarchies (for example, when Aliyah decided to divorce her husband). Even when these actions had dire consequences, they both shaped and were shaped by, the two women's actual capabilities, thus forming the structure of their resilience.

For social work, we conclude that attention to individual human beings needs to be combined with a critical gaze and systematic response to those societal structures that unfairly disadvantage entire groups of people, on the grounds of specific identity markers alone. We thus recommend in order for services aimed at cross border migrants and more specifically women migrants, to be effective, it is essential that firstly, the size and focus of social work services in this field begins to match the number of people and complexity of the challenges they face. It cannot be assumed that the number of cross-border migrants in South Africa will decrease, and we must anticipate that many are likely to remain either for good, or for considerable lengths of time. Mainstream society would ignore people's psycho-social and material needs or the structural condition from which they arise, at everybody's peril.

Secondly, social workers in the field must become sufficiently resourced so that they can respond to the gendered nature of women's experiences and the ways in which these experiences influence their particular needs, and their particular ways of asserting agency in response to the challenges they face. Without over-emphasizing women's vulnerability, we must remain mindful that both the home and host societies of migrant women are structured along deeply patriarchal terms. On these grounds alone, women do require more support to flourish than do their male counterparts.

Finally, the Human Capabilities Approach would be under-utilised if it were regarded merely as an addition to social work's ethical framework. It must also serve as a practical tool for assessing the state of human rights enjoyed by the people who live in this country, a means for informing those policy recommendations that social workers in this field must make, and as a feed-back loop for our own practice. For so long as our service users' quality of life remains below a threshold of that which their respective capabilities would principally allow, we will know that policies are either ineffective or altogether neglectful of certain groups of people. We must then take a critical look at the conditions, outcomes, and the ethical orientation of our work. In this regard, all people are indeed equal.

The key to understanding and responding justly on levels ranging from the personal to the structural in this and other fields of practice is to base our social work on listening to the stories of those people whom we seek to assist.

Chapter 7 – Subjectivities of Survival

Conceptualising *Just* Responses to Displacement, Cross-border Migration and Structural Violence in South Africa

Details of Publication

Key words

Agency; Justice; Life Story Research; Relative Surplus Populations; Social Work; Social Services

Abstract

This article considers the implications of displacement, migration and structural violence in urban South Africa for social work. To this end, I explore the life stories of five cross-border migrants. I find that all five form part of South Africa's larger pool of surplus populations but face additional, citizenship-based forms of exclusion. Even though generally self-reliant, all experienced cumulative agency constraints and felt vulnerable. Before this background, I propose that current, refugee-centred services should be expanded and that interventions should be carefully balanced to attend to structural issues, inter-group conflict and the range of vulnerabilities articulated by cross-border migrants.

Acknowledgements

7.1 Introduction

The concept of justice is so complex that according to Amartya Sen (2009), we are required to deduce many of its qualities and requirements from our awareness of what transpires in its absence: we know justice when it is lacking. Sen (1999, 2009) maintains that for justice to prevail, certain conditions need to be present. For example, people require the 'freedom to choose' (Sen 2009:19) between different kinds of valuable beings and doings; they 'have to be seen … as actively involved – given the opportunity – in shaping their own destiny' (Sen, 1999:53). In other words, *agency* is a constitutive component of justice. Yet, while justice remains a generally accepted reference point in social work discourses and debates (Hölscher 2012), questions of agency are considered less often. The purpose of this article is to apply the concept of agency in the analysis of cross-border migration to South Africa and to explore its implications for social work interventions and services in this field of practice.

Following the end of apartheid, South Africa has attracted cross-border migration at an unprecedented scale (Crush 2011). For example, from 2006 to 2011, the country received the world's highest annual number of individual asylum applications (UNHCR 2013a).While the total number of cross-border migrants living in South Africa has been found difficult to establish (Crush 2011), the number of registered asylum seekers and recognised refugees is currently in excess of 300 000 persons (UNHCR 2015). The majority of migrants settle in South Africa's fast-growing urban centres (Landau, Segatti, & Misago 2011; UNHCR 2015). These are dynamic environments characterised *inter alia* by escalating levels of poverty, degradation, and local authorities trying to meet their governance mandates under considerable budgetary constraints (Simone 2004; Landau *et al.* 2011; Hart 2013). A growing body of literature attends to issues of poverty and survival among South Africa's urban poor at large (see for example Simone 2004, 2010, 2011). Yet, much is still to be understood about the specific challenges and survival strategies among cross-border migrants and how these might intersect with the conditions imposed on them by South Africa's social, political, economic and legal environment (Amisi & Ballard 2006; Black *et al.* 2006). The implications thereof for social work will need to be explored accordingly.

Some generic and a few specialised social services are provided for South Africa's urban residents by provincial administrations and a small number of NGOs; however, these have

been found to be far from adequate (Raniga & Kasiram 2010; Lombard, Kemp, Viljoen-Toet, & Booyzen 2013; Patel 2015). Dedicated, largely UNHCR-funded, services for recognised refugees and certified asylum seekers exist. These focus strongly on emergency relief for material needs and reach but a fraction of the eligible population (Hölscher, Bozalek & Zembylas 2014). Questions have been raised concerning their outlook and effectiveness (Landau & Duponchel 2011; Hölscher, Bozalek & Zembylas 2014). South Africa does have a system of social grants, and the state has been successfully challenged to extend its provisions to permanent residents and recognised refugees (LHR 2012). However, the grants are remedial in nature and cannot therefore address South Africa's chronically high levels of unemployment, underemployment and poverty (Ballard 2013). Much like their South African contemporaries therefore, cross-border migrants have been found to rely on their own initiatives and networks to survive (Amisi & Ballard 2006; Landau 2006, 2007; Crush 2011; Hölscher, Sathiparsad and Mujawamariya 2012).

A recent survey of refugees and other migrants in four southern African cities (Landau & Duponchel 2011) found, following an analysis of the data for aggregate vulnerabilities and sources of resilience, that refugees, other migrants and indigenous residents in southern Africa's urban centres were all surviving self-reliantly, without 'welfarist intervention' (2011:13). The authors conclude that, 'receiving refugee status is not a good indicator of someone's substantive experience nor does it have a strong effect on welfare [needs]' (2011:2). They recommend therefore that refugee-centred social services as currently provided in South Africa should be reduced to 'a series of initial interventions based on what are … likely … obstacles towards self-reliance and social integration' of 'newcomers' (2011:15-16) and the provision of a temporary 'emergency safety net' for those who are vulnerable, that is, unable to 'capitalise on cities' opportunities': 'unaccompanied minors, single parents, the elderly and infirm, and people of rural origin' (2011:16-17). Focus on 'refugee-centric programming' (2011:2) beyond these limited interventions may 'foster political resentments that will ultimately undermine [their] sustainability' (2011:14). Instead, Loren Landau and Marguerite Duponchel (2011) propose that xenophobic and exclusionary discourses and practices and the apparent need for greater inclusion be addressed at the political and policy levels. This, they suggest will help to create enabling conditions for people's exercise of *effective choices* (2011:14) and *agency expansion* (2011:15). Before the background of South

Africa's already limited welfare provision, however, their call for the reduction of direct services requires careful scrutiny.

In this article, I draw on the qualitative analysis of five cross-border migrants' life stories. I explore the implications of their experiences around displacement, migration and structural violence in South Africa for social work and the provision of social services. I begin with an outline of the study's methodology, followed by a presentation of findings. These are organised such as to trace the development of each research participant's experience of agency: Moving from a reflection on that phase in their lives when migration or flight seemed inevitable (Uprooting) over a discussion of their choice of destination, arrival and initial efforts of re-rooting (Taking action to survive), I interrogate some of the obstacles experienced in this regard (Facing obstacles). Lastly, I present the participants' reflections on their lives' accomplishments, as well as their affective and strategic responses to life's challenges (Losing hope, losing dignity, claiming agency). I conclude that the concept of agency can be helpful in the critique and development of social work services and interventions, but that it should be de-linked from the notion of self-reliance. Likewise, vulnerability and self-reliance should be seen as separate concepts. I suggest that to respond *justly* to the challenges experienced by cross-border migrants, social services should not be curtailed but improved: Interventions should be carefully balanced to attend to structural issues, inter-group conflict and the range of vulnerabilities articulated by cross-border migrants themselves. In this way, social work may be able contribute to the deepening and expansion of agency among cross-border migrants in South Africa.

7.2 Methodological Considerations

A qualitative, dialogical conceptualisation of social policy and services requires a methodology that is able to capture at once the separateness of human experience, the idiosyncrasies of human agency and the relationality of human existence – without losing sight of the ways in which broader societal constellations pre-structure and condition human lives differently for different people. A growing body of methodological arguments in the field of refugee studies provides guidance in this regard (for example, Ghorashi 2007; Limbu 2009). More generally, Miller (2000) contends that when the aim is to explore the intersection of personal

trajectories with broader historical patterns and social structures, life story research is particularly well suited. I collected the life stories considered in this article from a group of cross-border migrants as part of a multisite ethnographic study designed to explore the implications of cross-border migration for conceptualisations of justice. I identified potential participants through purposive sampling from a variety of relationships and research sites. The eight adults who agreed to be interviewed were of a similar age but otherwise roughly representative of the diverse population concerned in the study. I excluded two life stories because the data had been processed elsewhere already (Hölscher, Sathiparsad and Mujawamariya 2012) and a third life story because the material it contained was covered sufficiently by the interviews already selected[6].

Between May 2008 and June 2009, I conducted twelve interviews with the five participants concerned. In all instances, the first interview was unstructured. In the one to two interviews that followed, semi-structured guides were used to explore topics that had emerged during the first meeting. Three of the interviews were held in English, and two required the presence of an interpreter. One participant (Sébastien) preferred to be interviewed in French and brought a friend who translated both questions and responses. I checked the accuracy of his interpretations during the transcription of the interview. Another participant (Léocadie) brought her husband (François) along. During her interviews, she switched between English, Swahili and French, with her husband translating French and Swahili into English; he did not translate my questions. I could only verify the accuracy of his interpretations from Swahili against Léocadie's non-verbal expressions during the interview but was able to check his translations from French during transcription. Intermittently, he added his own views and experiences to the interview. To acknowledge this role, I retained his voice whenever he did.

I analysed the data using Kathy Charmaz's (2003) model of constructivist grounded theory and Norman Fairclough's (2001) method of critical discourse analysis. The initial results guided a comprehensive literature review, followed by a circular movement between contextual analysis, delineation of this article's topic and theoretical approach, reduction of themes, development of sub-themes and core categories, and selective coding. The process ended with the integration of participants' stories with empirical and theoretical literature

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[6] The original article contains a table providing an overview of the five research participants included and the sampling criteria used. I have removed it here as readers can revert to Table 5.1 for details.

into the narrative presented here. The names of people and places in this article have been either withheld or changed. All participants had access to their interview transcripts, and two provided feedback on the first draft of this article. I kept a detailed audit trail, and selected data were analysed by an independent researcher. The study's limitations are those that are common to ethnographic research, including the impact of the researcher herself on the type and quality of data generated (see Gobo 2008). Due to the small sample size, I lay no claim to generalisibility of findings. Instead, the article's value lies in its substantive contribution to the study of cross-border migration and its implications for social work.

7.3   Presentation of Findings

This section contains my interpretation of the stories narrated by the study's participants: Bola, Émile, Lance, Léocadie and Sébastien. Between them, they held three different residence permits in South Africa – along with three concomitant sets of obligations and entitlements. They held in common that none of them could, or would, live in their respective countries of origin. Hence, all were committed to establishing sustainable livelihoods and acquiring what they considered appropriate social positions. My objective for this section is to render visible the weave of emotions, thoughts and actions in each life, and how this relates to the particular contextual conditions within which the protagonists found themselves over time. This allows me to develop a genealogy of the different forms of agency the participants had experienced by the time we met.

7.3.1 Uprooting

Many analysts agree that since the early 1970s, structural changes in global economic and political constellations have undermined and unsettled emerging social and political economies in post-colonial Africa, setting in motion large, complex population movements. The variety of precipitating events in particular instances notwithstanding, migration remains one of a shrinking number of viable survival strategies for individuals and households alike (cf. Findley 2001; Kihato 2004; Black *et al.* 2006; Collyer 2010). While some of the people thus

displaced remain within the boundaries of their country, others cross national borders. It is in relation to this context that I would like to introduce the concept of agency into the argument. David Crocker & Ingrid Robeyns (2009:75) define agency as follows:

> A person … is an agent with respect to [a particular] action … to the extent that … [she] *decides for herself* rather than someone or something else making the decision …; [she] *bases her decision on reasons* …; [she] performs or *has a role in performing* [*the action*]; and … thereby brings about, or contributes to *bringing about*, *change in the world* (highlights added).

The common distinction between 'labour' or 'voluntary' and 'forced' migration is based upon presumed levels of agency exercised at the point of uprooting: 'refugees *are forced* to flee' while 'migrants … *choose* to move' (UNHCR *n.d.*, highlights added). As noted above, in South Africa this division gives rise to differential access to social grants and welfare services, amongst other things. The extent therefore to which the differentiation reflects the lived realities of the people concerned merits exploration. To this end, I draw on the stories narrated by Bola, the 'labour migrant', and Émile, one of the refugees, noting however that similar points were made by all five participants. Before coming to South Africa, Bola was an academic at a Nigerian university, an environment which she characterises as endemically corrupt. She describes how she tried to take a stance against corruption in her workplace and suffered prolonged victimisation as a result. Interpreting her experience in relation to Nigeria's history of successive military regimes, Bola suggests that under military rule,

> Corruption … became the culture, a way of life. If you were not doing it, you became the odd one out. It is actually normal now to bribe … [But] if you come to Nigeria, you find that people pray a lot … And people with that kind of background try to separate themselves [from these practices] … and they persecute them … [After challenging the corruption surrounding student admission into my programme,] I was persecuted … My colleagues … sabotaged my training … My life was made miserable … If you really want to be academic, there is no way that you can stay (12.06.09).

In this statement, Bola positions herself in terms of particular principles that defined what being an academic meant to her, as well as placing her outside of what she considers to be dominant norms and practices. The changing subjects in her narration, together with her shifting uses of active and passive voice, frame the key events leading to her departure as a loss of control in the wake of the principled position she had adopted. Thus, Bola articulates a sense of growing powerlessness in relation to broader constellations and processes that in the end rendered departure as seemingly the only reasonable choice. Also intertwined with the historical processes that have shaped the fortunes of his country was Émile's refusal to

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become embroiled in Burundi's decades-long conflict over economic stakes and political dominance. He explains:

> If you are Hutu, they are breaking everything. If you are Tutsi, they do the same thing. Then you must be in the political, and I refused … I refused myself to cut the blood for someone … I told [my parents]: If this war is carry on like this, it is better I must go (26.11.08).

In this account, the socio-political dynamics at work in Burundi are shown to have limited – but not completely thwarted – Émile's range of options. Similar to the effects of Bola's narrative, his use of the imperative 'must' alongside the indicative 'refuse' frame his decision not to participate in the civil war as an expression of his moral core. And like Bola, Émile describes this stance as having given rise to a course of events which pushed him to leave.

In terms of Crocker & Robeyns (2009), the choice to engage in a particular survival strategy would constitute an exercise of agency only to the extent that the person would not have chosen otherwise had circumstances allowed. While one cannot claim an absence of choice for either Bola (the 'voluntary' migrant) or Émile (the refugee), the above quotes suggest that neither would have elected to leave had they felt that circumstances provided them with a reasonable alternative. Instead, both imply that it was their initial decisions to make positive changes in their respective life worlds that set in motion courses of events the main feature of which became the diminishing of alternative options. In both cases therefore, the dividing line between 'choosing' and 'being forced' to migrate operated independently of the dividing lines created by the 'refugee-versus-migrant' discourse. This binary is therefore unlikely to do justice to the complex ways in which many migrants may have experienced a loss of agency within their countries of origin – experiences that sometimes culminate in a decision to leave.

7.3.2 Taking Action to Survive

Caroline Kihato (2004:6) is one of several observers who note that since the end of apartheid, South Africa has come to be 'perceived as relatively peaceful' and 'one of the wealthiest [countries] on the continent', contributing to its position as a key destination and transit point for cross-border migrants, including refugees (cf. Black *et al.* 2006; Crush 2011; UNHCR 2013a). Apart from Léocadie who – traumatised by Eastern DRC's protracted civil wars – says

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that, 'We didn't plan to come here; we were lucky to … go very far' (29.11.08), all participants confirm this observation. Sébastien, also a refugee, explains:

> I loved South Africa … A friend … told me that there is no difference from … European countries … He [told me about] the ATM system ... the transport … [and] the credit … The country is advanced in development (09.08.08).

How such perceptions can inform individual life choices, is well expressed by Émile:

> When you are watching a TV, you [think that South Africa] … is a nice country in Africa, you can work and studying and can do our life' (26.11.08).

Replicating general trends (see Landau *et al.*, 2011; UNHR 2015), all five research participants settled in one of South Africa's main urban centres. These rapidly growing metropolises have been described as places where 'ethnic heterogeneity, economic marginalisation and pastiche are the empirical norm, not the exception' (Landau 2007:5), and where the 'pursuit of individual aspirations largely depends on what kinds of connections residents can put together between the diverse infrastructures, spaces, populations, institutions and economic activities of the city' (Simone 2004:3-4). Taking root in such a context can be difficult. The following quotes illustrate the two survival challenges narrated by all five participants: hunger and homelessness.

> I got to a point where I was penniless … I started sleeping … in the harbour … I will sleep in the guard house without a blanket, without nothing, just sleep (Lance, 02.06.09).

> Things were really very difficult because we could hardly eat … There was a day that the [children] would eat just dry bread … We just drank water (Bola, 27.11.08).

Michael Denning (2010:80) reminds us that 'capitalism begins not with the offer of work, but with the imperative to earn a living'. It is at precisely this point that the participants' hopes and aspirations gave way to necessity as choice was replaced by the need to offer labour on whichever market was accessible. Bola targeted the knowledge industry. However, she competed unsuccessfully for positions she thought herself well qualified for and felt that at times, she was side-lined deliberately. Adjusting her expectations accordingly, Bola decided to settle for less than her qualification and previous work experience had prepared her for:

> I wasn't going to get the … position I had assumed I would … The *post doc* became a thing for survival: just to earn the money rather than doing the research itself … [But] even a *post doc* was a mission to get (10.12.08).

Meanwhile, Lance's attempts to access the construction industry yielded only temporary success:

> I went to [a recruitment agency] … I just signed … I was standing for somebody … so it just lasted two weeks … And then the job market just dried up (02.06.09).

In spite of possessing scarce skills, Sébastien's options were constrained by the boundaries of the Congolese niche market (compare Amisi & Ballard, 2006):

> I did not have a choice on what I am going to do as a work … When … you are a newcomer … those who welcome you are maybe car guards … they will be obliged to put you … on the track where also they are working. Though it's difficult … you will find yourself in that obligation to work, to get a way of surviving; because if you reject, they will also reject you (28.06.08).

Car guarding, however, is an as yet unregulated economic sector – with tangible consequences in the lives of the people it employs. Sébastien narrates:

> We … have a manager … This lady goes in a [shopping] centre, she said 'I as a company, I will put my car guard in your centre to protect cars …'. And if the owner of the centre accepts … you will be called … For that reason … we pay her … And the uniform that we are wearing … we pay for that … We don't have a month end, nothing … Every day, standing from [8am] to [7pm] … we are under rain, we are under heat … We are just living by donations … You are not sure of what you will get at the end of the day, but you must pay first before you start (28.06.08).

Léocadie, finally, had hoped that her strategy of vending and selling home-made products would enable her husband's return to his former occupation in the aviation industry but found that the financial odds were stacked too highly against her:

> LC I was making bead work, selling shoes … I was trying … to put the money to the bank because papa was supposed to go to learn … the training for pilot.
>
> D   That never happened?
>
> LC The money …
>
> F   … It was too much (29.11.08).

In short, in pursuit of livelihoods, this study's participants engaged those openings that were available – and survived. At the same time, their testimonies suggest that circumstances in South Africa profoundly limited their respective abilities to 'effectively shape their own destiny' (Sen 1999:11). What was the nature of the blockages? Scholars trying to come to terms with the changing living conditions in cities of the Global South have re-developed an interest in the Marxist conceptualisation of *relative surplus populations* (Bernstein 2010; Denning 2010). Whereas previously, both welfare and developmental ideologies framed such

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populations as temporarily redundant, it seems increasingly that they are considered permanently superfluous and their welfare of little interest to capital and possibly the state (Bauman 2004). Indeed, in the wake of post-apartheid South Africa's large-scale economic restructuring and in the face of the country's persistently high unemployment rate (Bernstein 2010), many of the migrants arriving in its cities have to sustain themselves outside of regulated labour markets (Crush 2011). And given the surplus of labour, those who are engaged in waged work often find it highly precarious and exploitative (Barchiesi 2011).

Authors in the neoliberal tradition have done much to normalise and valorise the economic activity of 'the poor' as expressions of self-reliance (Samson 2009; Denning 2010). Yet the above quotes suggest that self-reliance need not only signify a virtue but also powerlessness, futility and even destitution; these are some of the effects of structural violence in the lives of those who find themselves either marginalised or excluded from a given society's mainstream (Mullaly 2010). Thus, while it is appropriate to interpret the self-reliance of poor people as expressions of some level of agency, it also reflects an absence of possibilities and choice in the lives of those who have been rendered surplus by macro-economic and political processes well beyond their control. In this respect, South Africa's diverse but poor urban residents share an important commonality.

7.3.3 Facing Obstacles

Interpreting experiences of poverty, marginalisation and lack of choice as functions of being surplus and hence a result of the socio-economic ordering of South African society, leaves as yet unresolved questions concerning the relevance of cross-border mobility for the socio-economic positioning of particular groups or persons. I begin my reflections on this with a less than clear-cut case. Léocadie suggests that she and other foreigners living off the city's markets were, possibly deliberately, side-lined to make space for competing South Africans traders:

L   They closed the flea market … This flea market was helping too many people. Now the people don't have space to go to sell … When you go to ask for licence to sell *they don't want to* give you.

D   Before, there was no licence?

L   The licence started when they moved [the flea market] to another site … *The South Africans* selling there got licence. Now *us* here, we do not have licence … Too much people cry (29.11.08).

One source from the municipality recalls the changes in municipal policy and practices referred to by Léocadie as follows:

From the many interviews I had with refugees and asylum seekers at the time, [the re-allocation of trading spaces together with the introduction of trading licenses] was a particularly significant curtailment of livelihoods in [the city] … On paper, [the] application procedure [for trading licenses is] … non-discriminatory, [but it is] widely perceived that in practice, locals are favoured; however, I have also heard that locals perceive foreigners to be favoured (personal communication, 30.07.13).

In short, foreigners may or may not have been treated unfairly. Importantly however, both accounts point to competition between differently positioned groups for a scarce resource, that is, access to the city's markets. In its course, South African citizenship emerged as an asset that provided those in its possession with a sense of moral entitlement to privileged access even in the absence of a concomitant legal claim, while those lacking citizenship felt unfairly prevented from access, even in the absence of any direct proof. Yet, why would trading space have become scarce when both Léocadie and the municipal official indicate that initially, this had not been so? Kihato (2004:7-8) claims that street traders in Johannesburg –

… Were [regarded as] an 'eyesore' … [Moreover] the city could not control them … The … solution was to set up formal … markets where all traders would have to register … For a while, the hawkers refused to use the new market. When they finally [did] … many … said that they had lost business … Sales dropped for [those] who were unable to obtain prime positions … The added pressure of having to pay [rent] made it impossible for some to eke out a living.

She explains these developments with what she sees as a bias in South African law towards 'world class companies … big investors and global entrepreneurs' (Kihato 2004:4). This, ultimately, obliterates 'households whose unregulated economic strategies from below are lost' (Kihato 2004:5), irrespective of the citizenship status of the people thus marginalised.

Beyond Léocadie's case however, do the stories considered in this article give an indication of whether, and if so, in what ways, the citizenship discourse had tangible consequences in their lives? To make my point, I use the example of how Émile lost his employment as a security guard. In 2001, South Africa's security industry became regulated in terms of the *Private Security Industry Regulation Act.* The Act stipulates that remunerated security officers must be registered with the Security Officers Board (SOB). Only permanent residents and

citizens are eligible for registration (Section 23.1.a), unless the SOB decides to accredit a particular applicant 'on good cause' (Section 23.6). The progressive tightening of access to this form of livelihood played itself out in Émile's story as follows:

> [In 1999] I starting to work, security job … No certificates, nothing. Just: 'I need a job,' 'Yes!' They just … take you …
>
> [In 2004], I was study to get the certificate … And I applied the SOB [licence] … My receipt … came out … After three months … they say, they are not allowed to give foreigner the SOB … I never got the SOB.
>
> [At] the end of 2005 [the company was sold] … The new manager … told us: '… All the foreigners, I must remove them in the company.' Us, we was thinking, 'Maybe he is joking' … He was serious! Then he was starting saying: 'Eh, bring your SOB! Bring your papers!' (26.11.08).

Much has been written about the circulation of nationalist-exclusionary discourses in South Africa that frame black African migrants as dangerous, a drain on resources and therefore in need of being kept out of South Africa generally and its urban centres specifically (cf. Crush 2000; Crush *et al.* 2008; Neocosmos 2008; Misago *et al.* 2010; Hölscher & Bozalek 2012). In addition, there is a growing body of evidence documenting how these discourses have translated into a myriad of exclusionary practices. Some of these undermine, others are in keeping with the country's constitutional framework and rule of law (cf. Landau, 2006; Vigneswaran 2011; Makhema 2009; Hölscher 2014). Either way, they exclude people from accessing essential opportunities and resources – not because access is illegal, but because as foreign nationals, they are framed as outside 'the universe of those entitled to consideration' (Fraser 2008a:19).

When read in conjunction therefore, Léocadie's story of marginalisation from the city's markets and Émile's eventual exclusion from the security business signify the intersectionality (Pease 2010) of different modes of structural violence operating in South Africa's urban centres. Where authorities – purposefully or unintentionally – fall short of recognising and facilitating poor people's claims to the city's economic opportunities, and when this couples with a nationalist-exclusionary discourse, the resultant injustices become mutually reinforcing. Poor people find themselves pitted against each other as they compete for resources that need not be scarce, and in this context, cross-border migrants find themselves additionally disadvantaged. In spite of important class-based commonalities then, the

obstacles that 'the poor' need to navigate in their quest for survival are, in the case of cross-border migrants, likely include additional layers.

Image 7.1: Police Searching Inner City Accommodation (Zail Singh, IOL News)

7.3.4 Losing Hope, Losing Dignity, Claiming Agency

Being surplus to the formal economy and peripheral to mainstream concern gives the excluded little other option than to engage in such counter-discourses and practices and to develop such alternative identities, forms of belonging and moral points of reference as would make life on the margins liveable. Consequently, commentators on the lived realities in the Global South have urged recognition of the ways in which the agency that lies in the survival strategies of ordinary people provides them with a degree of dignity and hope (cf. Appadurai 2004; Simone 2004, 2010, 2011). Thus, it may be helpful at this point to explore the relationship between agency, dignity and hope in the lives of those who have arrived in South Africa's cities in search of livelihoods and protection. Sen (1999:11) proposes that the extent

to which people are afforded the opportunity to 'shape their own destiny' should be evaluated 'in terms of [their] own values and objectives'. By the time we met, all five participants found it difficult to retain a positive outlook on their lives' accomplishments. Émile's sense of bleakness is typical:

> The security guard is someone who … failed to do something to his life … Security guard is the *nothing* … I was suffering how many years? Struggling, studying hard to think, 'Tomorrow I'm gonna be a 'someone' … I'm gonna have a better life' … Today, I'm still a security guard … My head is getting upset … Why I have this problem for my heart? I'm thinking *too* much! Everything I am doing is *bad*! What's wrong? Ten years, yah, ten years [Pause] No hope (26.11.08).

Following her intricate account of hope's central importance to human survival, Margaret Urban Walker (2006:42) suggests that hope is 'an individual and social necessity'. The reason for her claim is hope's dialectic connection to human agency:

> Its nature is to engage our desire and agency … It will steer thoughts and talk … stir other feelings … press us to actions that further the likelihood of what we hope for and … strengthen those attitudes and patterns of attention that fortify our sense that the object of hope is attainable (Walker, 2006:44-45).

It is through hoping that human beings are able to imagine themselves and the world around them as 'better than now'; and this imagining enables them to work towards social realities that are yet to be. If on the other hand a person's sense of agency is thwarted continuously in the face of perpetual hardship and diminishing possibilities, hope – as illustrated by Émile – can run out; and with that will fail the sense of agency hope requires to succeed (Walker 2006).

Nussbaum (2000:71-72) recalls that 'we judge frequently enough that a life has been so impoverished that it is not worthy of the dignity of a human being', and asserts consequently that the 'intuitive idea' behind her approach to justice is 'the human being as a dignified … being who shapes his or her life in co-operation and reciprocity with others'. Yet contrary to the more optimistic interpretations offered, for example, by Arjun Appadurai (2004), Filip De Boeck (2011) and AbdouMaliq Simone (2004, 2010, 2011), precisely this was missing from all five life stories. As such, car guarding provided Sébastien with some degree of agency, yet its defining moment was *in*dignity:

> This work has a lot of humiliation … Sometimes a customer treats you like a 'good-for-nothing' ... but you are called to support and accept that … because if you don't do that you will be sent off … [We] don't have a word to say … We are brought to the lowest level (28.06.08).

Meanwhile, Bola's experienced daily living in South Africa was characterised less by reciprocity than by a sense of being completely 'misrecognised' (Fraser 2008a:16). And this drained her of precisely those emotional resources she required for her continued exercise of agency:

> Being a foreigner is one thing, and being a black foreigner is another … Being a Nigerian foreigner is another thing again … We experience racism, we experience xenophobia … We get a measure of everything … It is very tiring … It's exhausting … and I am afraid for my kids (10.12.08).

Finally, finding himself destitute, Lance turned to a refugee services provider for emergency support. As is unfortunately a common feature in formal welfare services (Bozalek 2012), recognition and co-operation were notably absent from the ensuing relationships:

> Their way of questioning … sort of degrades you; it humiliates you … You say your story, and somebody … says, 'I don't think you are telling the truth' … People don't take time … and you are also dealing with people who don't know poverty … When you tell them that you were sleeping in the harbour with no blanket, nothing, they don't understand (13.06.09).

Andrew Hartnack (2009:374) describes his research participants' agency as the 'conscious actions of displaced people', who use that 'room for manoeuvre' which remains beyond 'the constraints imposed … by their post-displacement situations'. I made similar observations in this study. Bola, Léocadie and Sébastien tried to attain the best possible outcomes from making existing rules work: they remained within the framework provided by dominant discourses, practices and the law. However, when 'you look out onto the world and see few prospects [and] doing the right thing doesn't get you anywhere anymore', you may end up cobbling together strategies that are 'impervious to collective justification' (Simone 2010:144-145). Lance provides us with one such example. I learnt subsequent to the study that around the time of the interview, he was preparing to defraud a construction company. His narration reveals that ahead of the crime, Lance had arrived at a reasoned choice to set himself apart from mainstream morality (and its concomitant penal code) which he felt had failed him:

> The whole idea of coming in to beg … it was a last resort. But now I need my dignity back … I learnt how to pick up the pieces and continue … I have adjusted my thinking capacity … When you are in control there is a bit of unfairness [but] I don't care ... I don't care whether I'm in your country … because I'm calling the shots … I'm running the show (13.06.09).

Structural violence has a tendency to reproduce itself in the lives of its victims. Often, this reaction features as interpersonal, lateral violence (Mullaly 2010), thus remaining within the confines of society's margins and those intimate spheres of life where, if nowhere else, a residual sense of power and control, if not agency, may have survived. In the end, Émile says:

> I was go to kill myself … Not to live again for this world … When she make me angry … I remember *all* those things that used to happen for me, it is like I am *crazy*! I used to *beat* her! [Pause] … I *hit* her! [Pause] After that, I just calm down myself, and I … calling her [pause] and I say, 'I am so sorry' (26.11.08).

As an illustration of the extent to which structural violence works to undermine people's dignity and hope, always with the attendant possibility of mutation and replication in ways that turn victims into perpetrators in yet another spiral of violation, blocked opportunities and destruction, Lance's insinuations and Émile's testimony give rise to additional concern. For they illustrate that counter discourses and practices on the margins need be neither silent and invisible, nor take the form of organised, progressive political practice; they can also be clandestine and destructive, producing yet more victims in their wake. Importantly, both men's actions may be seen as an extension of the kinds of indignity and hopelessness that displacement – especially if followed by continued exposure to structural violence at supposed points of refuge and sustenance – can cause.

7.4   Conclusion

This article explored the implications of the life stories told by five cross-border migrants for social work and social service provision in response to displacement, cross-border migration, and structural violence in urban South Africa. To this end, I developed a genealogy of the different forms of agency the participants had acquired by the time we met – important for the practical application of Sen's (1999, 2009) notion of justice. I found that their categorisation as either 'refugees' or 'migrants' did not correspond well with their substantive experiences, and that they are better characterised as members of South Africa's large pool of surplus people. Yet as cross-border migrants, they also faced additional, citizenship-based, discourses and practices of exclusion. All in all, they presented what may be termed *cumulative agency constraints*. As a result, they experienced themselves as vulnerable, even

though they were, by and large, self-reliant. This can be considered unjust in that their vulnerabilities were due to circumstances over which they had little control, caused considerable hardship and hindered their ability to become and achieve what they would have well had the capability to be and to do. Political resentment between cross-border migrants and citizens was evident when an important resource for survival was rendered scare as a result of macroeconomic interventions. Finally, a reading of displacement, exclusion and poverty as structural violence allowed for an interpretation of the fact that two of the five study participants spoke about perpetrating violence themselves as their particular attempts to re-gain a sense of autonomy in the absence of the kinds of agency which Sen (1999, 2009) regards as a hallmark of justice. Arguably, it was at a point at which these two men regarded themselves as isolated, unsupported and disjointed from meaningful relationships and ceased to hope for a meaningful future, that both – self-reliant to the extreme – became active participants in the spiralling injustices characterising much of the social realities in South Africa today.

These findings suggest that even when people appear to be economically self-reliant, it does not follow that social services are unnecessary, or that interventions should be limited to those unable to survive autonomously. And while I support the view that receiving refugee status might not be a good indicator of a person's welfare needs, being displaced, being foreign and being surplus probably is. Thus, I agree with Kathleen Valtonen (2008), Richard Hugman (2010a) and Uma Segal (2012) who all argue towards improving, not reducing, social service provision in the field of social work with cross-border migrants. A conceptual linking of the concepts of agency and vulnerability may provide a useful basis for critiquing the goals, methods and emphases of existing interventions. In this regard, Fiona Robinson's (2010:132) calls for 'practices … that sustain not just "bare life" but all social life', and for 'an ontology … that accepts … relationality and interdependence, and … the existence of vulnerability without reifying particular individuals [or] groups … as 'victims' or 'guardians'. Whether the current, limited provision of refugee-centred services contributes to existing tensions between South Africa's local and foreign populations, remains an open empirical question. However, rather than this becoming an argument against existing provisions, I propose that any such resentment be integrated into the range of social work's interventions in this field. Based on this study's findings, I would like to make the following recommendations:

- There is an array of areas in which policy intervention and advocacy are required. Whatever the chosen emphasis, there should be a balance between contributing to wider civil society initiatives that intervene in the structural, socio-economic challenges afflicting South Africa as a whole and targeting those exclusionary discourses, attitudes, rules and practices that affect cross-border migrants more specifically.

- Interventions at the levels of communities and groups should respond both to the challenges facing migrant communities as a whole and to the apparent presence of inter-group conflict. This article has highlighted resentments between migrant and resident communities but social workers also need to be mindful of those conflicts that different groups of migrants may have imported from their societies of origin.

- The interventions I would recommend for social work at the levels of individuals and families flow from the participants' narrations of displacement, trauma and loss, and the problematic outcomes these can have for people's personal well-being and relationships. These seem to be significant themes not just for refugees but other cross-border migrants as well, so the latter groups should also be eligible for such services.

Importantly, however, interventions must be aligned with the needs articulated by intended beneficiaries themselves, rather than being based primarily on aggregate assessments. Social work interventions and services could then contribute to the expansion of agency among cross-border migrants in ways that not only encompass but transcend the economic dimensions foregrounded previously in this debate.

Chapter 8 – Encountering the *Other* across the Divides

Re-grounding Social Justice as a Guiding Principle for Social Work with Refugees and other Vulnerable Groups

Details of Publication

Key Words

South Africa, Social Justice, Social Work with Refugees, Xenophobia

Abstract

This article is based on an ethnographic study conducted in a South African church following the May 2008 xenophobic violence and subsequent displacement of over 100 000 foreigners. It explores the relationships between a group of established, privileged members of the church and a group of displaced refugees, who had found shelter in the church. Our aim is to contribute to an enriched conceptualisation of social justice for social work with refugees and other vulnerable groups, within the context of South Africa's unequal and polarized society. The study's theoretical framework comprises feminist and relational approaches to social justice. The data was analysed using a combination of critical discourse analysis and grounded theory. Our findings depict a deepening web of relationships, in which antagonistic ways of relating affirmed pre-existing hierarchies of race, socio-economic status, and citizenship working at cross-purposes with respectful and dignifying forms of mutual engagement between the two groups. We conclude by re-asserting the need for social workers to engage continuously and critically with those expressions of injustice specific to the particular contexts in which we may find ourselves. This involves a reflexive engagement with our own implication in these structural and relational constellations.

Acknowledgement

8.1 Introduction

Social work with asylum seekers and refugees is one of the profession's more recent specialisations. Yet, academic papers published in this field have tended to focus more on refugee-receiving countries of the global North, with considerably fewer publications concerned with social work's role in the reception, protection, and integration of refugees in countries of the global South (Hugman 2010a). In South Africa, social work with refugees emerged as a distinct field of practice with the advent of democracy. There remains a dearth of local academic publications in this field of service.

South Africa has aligned its post-apartheid legislation with key international statutes, namely the UNHCR (1951) and the African Union (1969) Refugee Conventions. Its current policy framework provides for urban self-settlement (Makhema 2009). At the same time, the government does not provide specialist social services to this group, having adopted instead a *laissez-faire* approach to their protection, integration, and care (Landau 2006). Refugee social services are provided by a small number of NGOs. These comprise emergency relief to particularly vulnerable individuals and families, limited psycho-social counselling, as well as community development interventions aimed mainly at achieving 'economic self-reliance' (UNHCR 2011).

Since 1994, South Africa has received an increasing flow of asylum applications and currently hosts more than 470 000 asylum seekers and refugees. Only a fraction of this group (approximately 3-4% per annum) benefit from direct services thus provided (UNHCR 2011). In other words, across the country's large urban centres – already a magnet for unprecedented rural-urban and cross-border migrations – half a million people compete for access to increasingly scarce jobs, housing, and public services with other migrants and South Africans, who are themselves trying to claim those socio-economic rights afforded by their constitution for the first time in history. It is within this context that violence against foreigners, having erupted into wide-spread pogroms in May 2008, has become a regular feature of South Africa's urban landscape (UNHCR 2011).

Against this background, we respond to the IFSW/IASSW's (2004:1) call for 'social workers across the world to reflect on the challenges and dilemmas that face them ... [taking as a]

starting point the definition of social work ... [which] stresses principles of human rights and social justice'. For us, the above scenario raises the following question: towards achieving *what kind* of social justice should social workers in the business of receiving, protecting, integrating, and caring for refugees, be directed?

This article is based on qualitative data collected by one of the authors (Dorothee) as part of an ethnographic study conducted in a South African church during the eighteen months following the 2008 outburst of xenophobic violence. The church had hosted a number of refugees displaced by the violence, presenting a unique opportunity for studying the intricate challenges facing the two groups – locals and foreigners – as they tried to engage justly with one another. We pursued the above question by asking more specifically:

- What was the quality of relationships between members of the two groups so differently positioned?
- And how does a better understanding of their unfolding engagement enrich social work's conceptualisation of social justice in the context of the profound differences characteristic of contemporary, migrant-receiving societies in the global South, such as South Africa?

We begin by providing a working definition of social justice so as to root the paper conceptually, and by situating the encounters within the socio-economic and political context of a democratic South Africa. This is followed by an outline of the design, methodologies, and ethical considerations of the study. The data is presented and discussed thereafter, organised and interpreted as two broad groups of themes: on the one hand, there is a set of encounters that highlights the difficulties of engaging one another across the depth of socio-economic and citizenship divides that we experienced in the context of this study. On the other hand, this is balanced by a number of themes, which suggest that respectful encounters between people as vastly divided as they were in this study, are possible; that at different points, alternative spaces and counter-practices of mutual engagement did open up, to the benefit of all who were involved.

For this article to contribute to enhancing social work's ability to contribute meaningfully to the furtherance of social justice, it is imperative that we understand which material, social, and relational contexts make encounters between un-equals – such as social workers and their various *Others* – difficult, and what kinds of contextual conditions facilitate respectful encounters. We conclude by re-asserting the need for social workers to engage continuously and critically with those expressions of injustice as are specific to the particular contexts in

which we may find ourselves. This involves a reflexive engagement with our own implication in these structural and relational constellations, guided by our listening to *Others*.

8.2 Rooting the Study Conceptually: Social Justice … What Social Justice?

Theories of Social Justice have been traditionally concerned with how rights, opportunities, and resources are distributed in society (Rawls 1971). Starting from the abstract notion of a *generalised Other* about whose circumstances nothing is known, this tradition seeks to develop principles for the construction of *just* societies. Its contractarian, principle-based, and distributional focus has been expanded by relational and feminist approaches to the topic made during the past two decades. Central to the arguments of this paper is Iris Marion Young's (1990:3) contention that,

> A conception of justice should begin with the concepts of domination and oppression. Such a shift brings out … the importance of social group difference in structuring social relations and oppression … Where group differences exist and some groups are privileged while others are oppressed, social justice requires explicitly acknowledging and attending to these group differences in order to undermine oppression …

The human capabilities approach, mainstreamed by Martha Nussbaum (2006) and Amartya Sen (2009), insists that *particularity and context* are important in understanding what it is that human beings require to flourish, and refers to their ability to do valuable things and not be constrained into a particular form of life. This, according to Nancy Fraser (2008a), requires that everybody is able to participate equitably, as full partners in interaction with others and as fully recognised members of society (*participatory parity*), which is therefore a central goal of social justice. Achieving participatory parity requires a just *distribution* of rights, opportunities, and resources, as well as equal *recognition* of status and just *framing*, that is, the fair awarding of membership and political voice (Fraser 2008a). The latter are awarded through processes and structures of inclusion and work primarily (though not exclusively) through citizenship. People unjustly excluded are either not heard or formally denied the right to make claims for recognition and redistribution in the first place - even though they are subjected to the same structures and processes as others who enjoy these rights.

Equal *recognition* is about regarding people as having equal moral worth, instead of ascribing distinctly negative attributes to certain persons, based on, for example, race, class, gender, or citizenship. Importantly, the *political ethics of care* (Tronto 2011), asserts that at the heart of contemporary moral theory must be the question of *Otherness*. Our attention is drawn, *inter alia*, to the hidden and intricate ways in which such labelled groups, albeit implicitly, are defined by the more privileged members of society as being outside the ambit of moral concern. Consequently, *recognition* requires us to identify, resist and counteract those processes and social structures that serve to disadvantage people, based on their membership in particular, marked groups.

Together, these above approaches can enhance social workers' understanding of people's life circumstances and the implications thereof for their ability to flourish, and to live well in the world (Tronto 2011), thereby improving our capacity to contribute to the furtherance of social justice when engaging with refugees and their host communities.

8.3 Mapping the Context: Refugees, Structural Injustice, and Xenophobic Violence in South Africa

In 2010, South Africa received 180,600 applications for asylum – the highest number in the world for the fourth consecutive year. The applicants form part of mixed migration systems from Zimbabwe, the Great Lakes Region, and the Horn of Africa (UNHCR 2011). Inspired by the experience of many amongst South Africa's new political elite who had themselves been granted asylum during the apartheid years, the country's Refugees Act (RSA 1998) affords refugees extensive constitutional rights. This has since been translated into the right to study, to work, to have access to basic health services and basic education, as well as to a restricted number of social grants.

However, South Africa remains one of the most unequal societies in the world, with poverty having in fact increased since the end of apartheid (Hoogeveen and Özler 2005) and the passing of the Refugees Act. As a result, deep contradictions have developed between the formal provisions of the Act and a range of efforts in ring-fencing precious resources. For example, regulations to formalise previously unregulated economies such as street trading,

the security and hospitality industries, (all of which once provided important employment opportunities for refugees) have since created major barriers against their continued ability to find work. Private banks do not accept refugee IDs, making it now almost impossible for refugees to open bank accounts. This is in addition to extensive evidence documenting how widespread xenophobic attitudes prevent many refugees from accessing public services. In their totality, these formal rules and informal practices make it very hard for refugees to translate their legal rights into actual entitlements (Landau 2006; Makhema 2009).

South Africa's traditionally high levels of xenophobia (Crush, McDonald, Williams, Lefko-Everett, Dorey, Taylor, and Sablonniere 2008) are intrinsically related to the country's deeply entrenched race-based discourses and practices – themselves the result of history in the course of which successive colonial and apartheid rulers instilled an ideology that framed black people as *Others*, thereby justifying, *inter alia*, the withholding, withdrawing, and/or undermining of the substance of the latter's citizenship, and hence institutionalising their exclusion (CRAI 2009). Imposed on this was South Africa's post-apartheid nation-building process in which efforts to develop an internal sense of unity in the face of the country's inequalities and unjust distribution of resources included (as it always does) attempts to generate a spirit of national identity amongst its citizens. Mechanisms employed to this end have been manifold, but importantly comprised an insistence at once on the exclusivity and superiority of South Africa's citizenship, especially in relation to the rest of Africa (Neocosmos 2008). In this context, a xenophobic discourse serves the interests of both South Africa's emerging black and its pre-existing white colonial elites, in that it has allowed for redirecting an entrenched imagination of *Blackness as Otherness* towards a new end, that is, the framing of black foreign nationals as *South Africa's New Others*. This in turn has permitted the scapegoating of the latter as apparently responsible for those social and economic ills which South Africa's elites, under the current global neo-liberal, ideological and material conditions have not been prepared, or felt able, to address (Neocosmos 2008).

Unsurprisingly in view of the above, xenophobic sentiments, discourses and practices have translated increasingly into violence, with the number of xenophobic attacks rising from three major incidents recorded between December 1994 and October 2000, to ten such incidents in the period January to April 2008 (Misago, Monson, Polzer and Landau 2010). But it was not until May 11, 2008, that the violence developed into actual pogroms. Nineteen days later,

at least 61 persons had been killed, around 670 wounded, dozens of women raped, and over 100 0000 people displaced. Property worth millions of Rand was looted, destroyed, or appropriated by ordinary South Africans (Misago, Monson, Polzer and Landau 2010:20). As such, the South African post-apartheid period, with its powerful exclusionary discourses and practices, pre-structured the encounters of the South Africans and refugees, which form the empirical base of this article.

Image 8.1: Crowd of Displaced Foreigners – South Africa, May 2008
(Daily News, 23 May 2008:1)

8.4   Research Design and Process: Methodological and Ethical Considerations

On 27 May 2008, the US Consulate together with the Council of Churches referred several families, displaced by the said upheavals, to one of the local churches for emergency shelter. The group, which comprised refugees from Burundi, Rwanda and the DRC, grew over the next

couple of days into some twelve families of 48 adults and children. This led to a prolonged encounter between the established members of the church and members of the refugee group at the centre of this paper's interest.

The church leadership were aware that I (Dorothee) had just commenced an ethnographic study in the field of social work with cross-border migrants. I was therefore asked to become involved in the church's response to the crisis of displacement. In addition, it soon became clear that the displaced persons' 'reintegration into the community' as it became officially known (Misago, Monson, Polzer and Landau 2010), was to be more complex than some had anticipated and that intervening at a crisis level alone would be an inadequate response. Against this background, the leadership's request for me (Dorothee) to become temporarily involved as a social worker in the church led to discussions, as a result of which I was able to include the church as a convenience sample in above research (Gobo 2008). Section 5 presents and discusses some of the data collected at this site.

From June 2008 to October 2009, I (Dorothee) recorded in the form of field notes what Gobo (2008:99) calls interactive units, that is, any practice, speech act, or reflection which seemed relevant to the above research aim. In addition, two types of recorded interviews were conducted. Depth individual interviews (Kelly 2006a) were held at the end of 2008 with one pastor, who participated as a key informant because of his position as overseer in relation to the unfolding encounters. Secondly, I (Dorothee) approached members of the refugee group with the request to conduct life story interviews (Miller 2000). This interview type afforded participants maximum choice in determining content and emphasis of the interview. Between November 2008 and June 2009, eight interviews were conducted with four persons, who represented the diversity within the group in terms of gender, age, family status, ethnic and national origin, educational background, and household income.

The data was analysed using a combination of Constructivist Grounded Theory (Charmaz 2003) and Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough 2001). We commenced the analysis by subjecting the actions and interactions and my (Dorothee's) internal reflections to what we would like to term a *subject-object analysis*. We asked:

- Who acted towards, or spoke to whom in relation to, or about, whom or what, and how? By the end of this *Open Coding* phase, five categories of initial codes had emerged, grouping different styles of perceiving, and relating to, one another.

- By means of *Axial Coding*, we considered how *developments in contextual conditions* appeared to give rise to *changes in* such *practices and speech acts* and the *meanings* they conveyed. A significant factor was the time line along which the crisis of xenophobic displacement began to dissipate, giving way to a renewed sense of normality.

- Finally, during the stage of *Selective Coding*, the notion, *Encountering the Other*, emerged as a *Core Category*, able to organise the process by which this renewed normality unfolded: The 'story' told in this article is one of a deepening web of relationships, weaving established members of the church and refugees together as constructive forms of mutual engagement were beginning to blend – if uneasily – with antagonistic ways of relating across pre-existing hierarchies along racial, socio-economic, and citizenship lines.

The quotations from the original data in Section 5 have been selected to illustrate different aspects of the above analysis.

Formal ethical clearance for the study was sought from and granted by the relevant Ethics Committee at the local university. In line with the Committee's stipulations, standard ethical principles were built into the study's design at the onset. However, on account of my (Dorothee) triple role of church member/social worker/researcher, and on account of the extreme vulnerability of the refugees which had prompted this study in the first place, meeting formal ethical requirements was insufficient to ensure that the research was conducted in an ethically sound manner (Hugman, Pittaway and Bartolomei 2011). Thus, to mitigate possible – even if not openly articulated - feelings of coercion; to lessen power differentials within the unfolding relationships, as well as to introduce notions of reciprocity into the research process (Gobo 2008; Hugman, Pittaway and Bartolomei 2011), the following were observed:

- Framing consent giving as an iterative process and building it as integral part into the overall research process;

- Sharing diary entries and reflections regularly during focus group discussions with a view to inviting discussion and input;

- Facilitating the disengagement of individual research participants from the data collection process if and when there appeared to be such a desire;

- Finding consensus around and including the participants' expressed interests as desired outcomes of both research and practice. This meant in particular, acting on the felt need to attain a more audible, political voice.

Objectivity, trustworthiness and validity of the study have been ensured, *inter alia*, through triangulation at the stages of sampling, data collection, and analysis; the use of member checks; constructing an audit trail; and analysis of selected data by an independent researcher (Kelly 2006c). From the research design as a localised, ethnographic study and this paper's

stated aim of contributing to social work's theorising around social justice, flow two main limitations: findings are neither generalisable, nor have they – in the context of this paper - been applied to extrapolate explicit policy recommendations. Instead, the following presentation and discussion of findings are intended to make a conceptual contribution to the profession's need to continuously re-ground its commitment to social justice as it seeks to respond to changing local and global conditions, and to integrate evolving political and theoretical discourses.

8.5 Presentation and Discussion of Findings: Engaging (Un)justly Across the Divides

This section narrates some of the findings of the above-described study. Based on demographic similarities and differences, as well as concomitant material conditions of our lives, the protagonists in this 'story' are labelled as *Us* and *Them. We* were from amongst the roughly 800-member strong church who formed the core group of locals engaging around efforts to integrate the displaced refugees within our community. *We* were white women and men, and all of us were leading professional lives in the city's suburbs. In other words, we were *established, privileged members of the church* (Pease 2010). *They* were members of the group of displaced refugees sheltered by *Us*. Many of these 24 black men and women (the remainder were children) had professional qualifications and yet, *all* were surviving in the inner city ghetto at the bottom rung of the economic ladder, intermittently experiencing abject poverty. As such, *They* were *very different* from *Us*; they were our *Others* (compare Dominelli 2002; Tronto 2011).

8.5.1 Responding to the Injustice of Interpersonal Violence: On Social Connection and Local Hospitality

When asked at a later stage to comment on the role of the church during and after the crisis of displacement, one of its pastors, Robert, referred to the particular suitability of *communities* as sites for the promotion of social justice (Ife and Tesoriero 2006):

> It was precisely *the decentralized, localised response* like what we were able to offer ... that ... *provided ... the best option in terms making a meaningful intervention* (Recorded Interview 01.12.08; emphasis added).

The church's specific response to the arrival of the displaced refugees was, however, not the only available option: it would have been considered reasonable to restrict ourselves to providing emergency shelter without making any further commitment. And yet, the church leadership appeared to feel that there was not really a choice in the matter. My diary notes reflect this initial decision as follows:

> *Being* a relatively *affluent and privileged* congregation, [we] would have to acknowledge [our] *potential to integrate the refugees in a way that it could not be reasonably asked of the poor communities from where the refugees were ejected* ... This would include assisting with securing jobs and shelter ... We found consensus around trying this approach out, although everyone had the sense that it might well not work. After all, *these were steep demands* that we were going to make. *But what else could we do*? (Diary Record 24.06.08; emphasis added).

This sense of compulsion resonates with arguments of Zygmunt Bauman (1993), who, drawing on Lévinas, engages with the seeming impossibility – upon recognition of a shared humanity - of refusing help to a person in need. He claims that the mere instance of coming *face-to-face* with *another* being can invoke an overwhelming *moral impulse* to respond. Emmanuel Lévinas (cited in Bauman 1993:85-86) expresses this most basic of all human encounters as follows, '*The face of the neighbour* signifies for me an unexceptionable responsibility, preceding every free consent, every pact, every contract' (emphasis added). Thus, Robert later suggested that our actions embodied –

> A *desire to understand what it means to be human* ... *in a way that is humanising for others* ... (Recorded Interview 25.11.08; emphasis added).

Léocadie, one of the refugees, experienced this episode as follows:

> They said, 'The South Africans, they want to kill us ...' So I said, 'No, let's go ...' I lost ... three [children] already, and I was not again gonna lose another [child] ... I didn't have friends ... Now for xenophobia I go to this one church and ... I find a sister, I find a brother … I found everybody there ... All the members for the committee, they helped us, they were always greeting us. We are family now, and they greet all of us (Recorded Interview 17.12.08).

At the same time, the face-to-face encounter is not the only source from which *recognition of Otherness as humanness*, the *moral impulse* to help another in need and to seek lasting caring relationships, can arise. It may also be derived from an appreciation of our human interdependency (Tronto 2011). Because of the complexity of modern and modernising

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societies such as South Africa, Young (2011) asserts that individual action and its consequences might not be traceable through clear causal pathways. The moral demand to respond to social injustice arises instead out of the recognition of our inherent embeddedness within economic, political, social, cultural and historic structures and processes that implicate us in unjust constellations, even when is not very tangible, and irrespective of whether we might feature as perpetrators, witnesses or even as victims:

> People have certain responsibilities by virtue of their social roles or positions ... [which derive] from belonging together with others in a system of interdependent processes ... All of us who dwell within [these] structures must take responsibility for remedying the injustices they cause, [even if we are not] specifically liable for the harm in a legal sense (Young 2011:104-105).

In other words, because some of *Us* violently uprooted the refugees living in our midst, others amongst *Us*, because we had the capacity to do so, earned the moral responsibility to provide protection, shelter, and sought to build caring relationships with the people thus displaced. This appreciation of interconnectedness and its attendant responsibilities is also felt intuitively as a moral impulse – much like the responses prompted by an *actual* face-to-face encounter. Speaking about the immediate aftermath of pogroms, Robert recalled that,

> There was a huge ground-swell of responses from even the general public ... it was an amazing moment ... *There* [*was*] ... *a real desire* for people *to be involved* (Recorded Interview 01.12.08; emphasis added).

His recollection is mirrored by one of the refugees, Michelle, who described how –

> A lady ... came through to me. She said to me, '... Check the things I brought here. There is food and clothes. There is one Bible ... [that] I brought ... for someone' (Recorded Interview 12.12.08).

These quotes illuminate how we may sometimes be called upon, and respond well, when social injustice erupts into a crisis of interpersonal violence. And yet, recognising and acting upon our moral impulse at a point of disaster is but one requirement for a *just* social work practice.

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8.5.2 Responding to Others in the Face of Maldistribution and Structural Violence: On Misrecognition

We noted above that refugees in South Africa face profound barriers to their socio-economic integration, which make survival in South Africa's urban context very difficult, as well as pre-shaping and seemingly legitimising the xenophobic pogroms that gave rise to this study. And indeed, once the immediate crisis of displacement was over, it was these kinds of deeper injustices that began to surface – this time *as part* of the evolving relationships between *Us* and *Them*.

Jonathan Crush, David McDonald, Vincent Williams, Kate Lefko-Everett, David Dorey, Don Taylor and Roxanne la Sablonniere (2008) document senior politicians' responses to the upheavals, which ranged from being completely perplexed, to blaming 'a third force', or trying to wish the violence away by simply declaring it 'over'. And Jean Pierre Misago, Tamlyn Monson, Tara Polzer and Loren Landau (2010) provide a detailed account of interventions by various local authorities and government departments, qualifying them as sometimes tolerant and even passively supportive of the violence, but generally chaotic, ambiguous, and reluctant; failing to adequately engage the displacees in finding solutions. Consequently, the refugees had to accept that no matter how traumatic the xenophobic violence had been, and no matter how challenging day-to-day living in South Africa was, they had no alternative but to return to the very places they had hoped to leave behind.

Between July and October 2008, all refugees moved out again, but there remained strong ties with the church. A support group had been formed, in addition to most group members continuing to attend worship services and a variety of other activities, hence returning to the church up to two or three times per week. These changing circumstances shifted the basis upon which our encounters were founded: The established members of the church realised that beyond the recent crisis, threats to personal safety were not the only, or even the main, challenges in the refugees' lives. *We* now had to confront choices of how to respond to the multiple exclusions and deprivations, insecurities and anxieties that characterise the lives of poor people in general, and refugees in particular.

As indicated above, the church executive did recognise unemployment and poverty as concerns clamouring for an urgent response. This, however, caused indignation amongst

some to whom these calls for help were directed. For example, in anticipation of a congregational meeting in which different means of extending such support was to be discussed, Patrick, one of the established church members, pointed out that,

> People are not happy with what is going on … There is a recession brewing in this country. *People are taking their money out of South Africa, and you are asking them to employ refugees!* (Diary Record 07.07.08; emphasis added).

True, the year 2008 witnessed a global recession of sorts, even though people on the economic margins experienced this rather differently from the more privileged amongst us. As Émile, a refugee and father of one child, reflected,

> I was … struggling, studying hard … To think, 'tomorrow, I'm gonna be someone … And today? Imagine … The woman, the child … Who's gonna support them? You know what, I have to go up and down to get for them how to eat … Lights and electricity, to pay rent, to survive, all those things … My life is troubling me (Recorded Interview 26.11.08).

But even where support was gladly provided, this appeared increasingly to generate a kind of resentment that had not been noticeable at first. For example, following a particularly invigorating meeting around how to improve the financial viability of the various informal businesses the refugees were involved in, Justin, another established congregant, expressed concern that,

> *There are* some *grumblings about how much we are doing for the refugees*. If whatever we do for [them] works, we must also do it for the South African members of the congregation … *We will be measured against how much we do for the South Africans, too* (Diary Record 4 September 2008; emphasis added).

These two examples articulate two interlinked distinctions that began to surface once the crisis had peaked and the novelty surrounding our mutual engagement worn off: Firstly, some of the privileged members of the church began to discern a difference between what they felt *We* could *reasonably* do for *Them* and what should be regarded as *unreasonable*. In the process, sacrifices that could interfere with, or raise questions around *Our* level of privilege began to appear unreasonable. Secondly, a distinction began to emerge between *Our Poor* (citizens) and *Other Poor* (foreigners). As a result, it appeared increasingly unreasonable for *Us* to prioritise *Other Poor* over *Our Poor*, inasmuch as it did not follow that *We* would necessarily prioritise *Our Poor* over *Us*. In other words, the moral impulse we had felt initially in the face of a human disaster began to make way for the complex weaving of explicit arguments and implicit assumptions: a hallmark of ideology (Fairclough 2001), which in our

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case was rooted in a misframing of the refugees as outside the ambit of *Our* moral concern and employed to justify existing maldistributive and exclusionary social and economic arrangements.

Consequently, hierarchies between *Them* (that is, the *Other Poor*) and *Us* (that is, those *White* members of the church who, due to our capacity to respond to apparent needs, were imbued with the power to define these needs, extract priorities, allocate social positions and draw boundaries around them) emerged rather seamlessly. The transition from the one stage to the next might have come about so effortlessly because we were able to follow well established relationship patterns between *Us* and *Our Poor* (see Section 8.3 above). Consider the following quote in the context of Fraser's (2008a) contention that equal distribution of economic resources is not enough for social justice to prevail:

> I [help entertain a] group of American visitors ... [*The refugees*] *have cooked* ... The food is great, and *the group take their task of entertaining* and sharing their experience *seriously.* They know that ... as a result, there might be some financial support coming our way ... [I join] the de-briefing meeting after lunch ... *The refugees remain behind to clean the kitchen* (Diary Record 22.09.08; emphasis added).

Social justice requires an enabling – across whatever our differences may be – of everyone's 'equal standing as partner in social interaction' (Fraser 2008a:32). What this *kitchen incident* then signifies is the enactment of a status order in which the *black*, poor refugees were beginning to be systematically denied the opportunity to participate on par with their *white*, well-to-do counterparts. In other words, as soon as the interactions and social arrangements between *Us* and *Them* began to solidify into normality, *We* became active perpetrators of the injustice of misrecognition, even if unconsciously so. But this misrecognition did not just surface as xenophobia. Instead, it mirrored pre-existing cultural scripts concerning relationships between *blacks* and *whites* in South Africa. Hence, once the crisis was over, the overall quality of relationships, and the nature of what divided *Us* and *Them* seemed to shift. On *Our* part, antagonistic feelings began to emerge where sentiments of responsibility and care had once been dominant.

8.5.3 Responding to Misrecognition: From Acceptance to Resistance

On account of having been assigned to the social group of *black foreigners*, members of the refugee group became exposed to misrecognition within the church while continuing to suffer maldistribution in the respective socio-economic environments to which they had since returned. Given that the quality of *Our* relationships with *Them* changed over time, and given that the refugees comprised 24 adults who brought with them a multitude of life experiences, interpretative preferences and habitual responses to the world around them, there was a range of responses to *Us*. Lena Dominelli (2002:8) reminds us that oppressed people –

> Do *not* engage in social relations solely on the terms set by those in dominant positions. They also act in ways that reflect their own interests and endeavours (emphasis added).

It appears, however, that there was a great deal of acceptance of *Our* dominance as *White*, economically empowered citizens of South Africa. This seemed to translate largely into an acceptance of *Their* role as victims, passively hoping and praying to be rescued – at least through *Our* assisting *Them* in accessing fairly remunerated employment and affordable housing. After all, this was what *We* had promised to try. But in view of the structural and systematic nature of their exclusions, such hopes were generally disappointed. Michelle described how she resigned from a job offered to her through the church network because as a single mother of three, she was not able to make ends meet on the salary earned:

> M   Justin helped me a lot...
>
> D   Do you regret having left Justin's job?
>
> M   Sometimes I can say yes ... because ... that person was very kind to me ... The wife was very kind to me ... [But] you know ... *the problem is on Justin's side*. What I can say, *the money ... was not enough because at that time I had to pay rent, R1500. When I [earn] R1500 ... what am I going to eat?* (Recorded Interview 09.06.11; emphasis added).

We interpret Michelle's account not as one of the inevitable disappointments of the many day-to-day expectations we ordinarily have of one another. Much rather, her statement implies that a *normative* expectation was disappointed; one that had been affirmed by our earlier commitment that *We* would seek to ameliorate at least some of the structural, socio-economic hardships in the lives of the refugees. In this regard, Margaret Urban Walker (2006:24-25) reminds us that,

> *A normative expectation ... always embodies a demand* for that form of behaviour we think we've a right to. *The basis for our sense of entitlement is our trust ... in others' responsiveness ...* The expression of our sense of entitlement is our readiness to be aroused angrily at one whose noncompliant behaviour threatens the authority of a norm by defying it (emphasis added).

Moreover, in as far as they did accept their own positioning as one of passivity, some of the refugees may have contributed to the inferiorising and un-dignifying effects of the already described misrecognitions. Indignity can cause resentment that may turn into anger, dividing us, as a result, even more deeply. Thus, on my late arrival at a support group meeting, I found one of its members, Noël, talking animatedly to a number of people around him:

> How he, as a trained high school teacher ... works as a security guard. How after paying his rent, he is left with R200.00 per month ... *'How do they think we must live? Must we live like animals?'* Much agreement from the people around him: *'South Africans think "we" must live like animals'* ... Slowly, people are becoming aware of my presence, and *Noël says, turning to me ... 'God's people were refugees.' The group falls silent* (Diary Record 18.09.08; emphasis added).

This quote illustrates a further destructive effect of accepting the allocation of an inferior social position: it can contribute to rendering our respective identities fixed, and our differences unbridgeable. But if the aim was to develop some *common interpretations* and *joint responses* to these challenges, people on both sides of the divide needed to engage together around the structural injustices that had already separated us. Then again, given the vested interest that tends to inform the non-acknowledgement of structural injustice on the side of privilege (Pease 2010), the burden of instigating such change often lies with the oppressed.

And indeed, we can find that parallel to, and overlapping with, the acceptance/resentment-type of responses described above, seeds of resistance were germinating, opening opportunities for mutual recognition across our socio-economic and citizenship divides. Such alternative responses appeared to comprise a double movement. The first step was for some of *Them* to return to *Our* initial offer of integration while at the same time rejecting the label of *victim.* For example, at the last congregational meeting of the year, one of the refugees engaged the established members of the church as follows:

> Estelle makes it a point of stating decidedly that, *'I am Estelle, and I am a member of [this] church'* ... Definitely, it is noticed by the others in the meeting, and ... somebody ... asks ... *'Do you still think of the violence often?'* Estelle says, *'No ... I don't think of it often unless I am reminded of it, like now'* (Diary Record 04.11.08; emphasis added).

Accepting the membership once offered, but now on *her* terms, signified an assertion of agency allowing Estelle, in a second step, to claim an opportunity for re-interpreting the terms

of her engagement in the church. And a year on, the group of refugees put in writing what it now meant for *Them* to relate to *Us* in the face of social injustice:

> We ... realise how deeply *poverty, inequality and our apparent inability to speak about it with honesty and humility can bind us together in ... dysfunctional ways...*
>
> We ... feel that *it will never be acceptable for one person to pray on a full stomach while sitting next to another person who is praying on an empty stomach* (Letter from the refugee group to the pastor, 30.10.09; emphasis added).

While misrecognition, maldistribution, and xenophobia certainly prevail, this offer of engagement points to possibilities of connection between the privileged and their *Others* (or: between the under-privileged and their *Others*) in a respecting and dignifying, yet critical mode. It affords the privileged an opportunity to hear voices *We* might have otherwise found in-audible; and to explore avenues of making amends with regard to those structures of maldistribution that benefit *Us* but which cause harm to *Others*. Figure 2 illustrates the interplay between structures and dynamics surrounding and impacting the encounters between *Us* and *Them.*
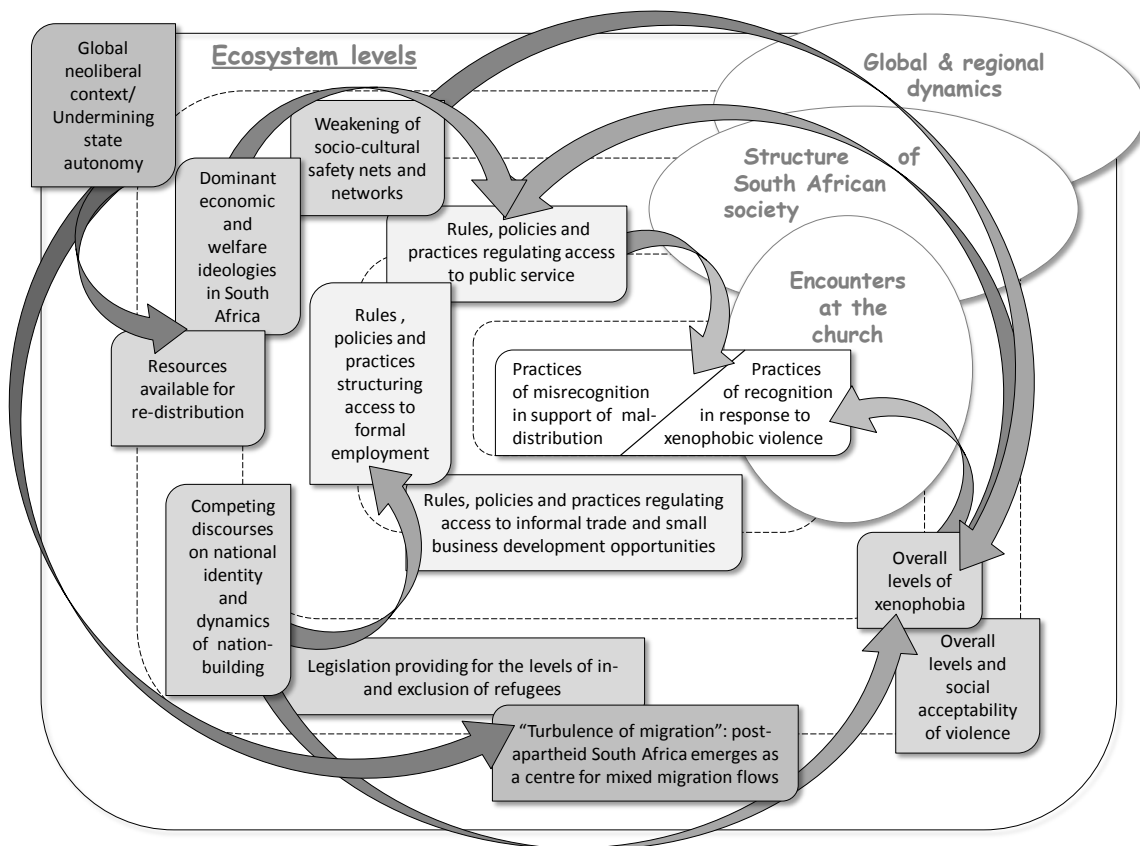
Figure 8.1: Socio-economic structures and dynamics surrounding and impacting the encounters between Us *and* Them

8.6 Conclusion: Towards an Enriched Conceptualisation of Social Justice for Social Work with Refugees and other Vulnerable Groups

In response to IFSW/IASSW's (2004) call for social workers to reflect on the challenges and dilemmas facing them, this article discussed findings from an ethnographic study conducted in a South African church over eighteen months following the 2008 pogroms against foreigners. Exploring the changing nature of relationships between the local members of the church and the refugees living amongst them after being displaced by the violence, we asked: toward achieving *what kind* of social justice should social work with refugees be directed if situated in the context of such profound differences and violations?

Our explorations were guided by approaches to social justice, which draw out attention to people's particular life circumstances. The historical context surrounding our study comprised a society highly polarised along racial and socio-economic lines, with fierce levels of competition over limited resources, and, related to this, a myriad of exclusionary rules and practices directed at refugees, as well as a propensity towards exclusionary discourses, which manifest as increasingly high levels of xenophobic violence.

The 'story' told in the preceding section is one of a deepening web of relationships, in which antagonistic ways of relating across pre-existing hierarchies of race, socio-economic status and citizenship worked at cross-purposes with constructive forms of mutual engagement between *Us* and *Them*. As far as *the privileged* were concerned, our findings show that –

- We responded with care at the point of disaster when a shared moral impulse prompted us; but –
- As soon as our relationships attained a sense of normality, this gave way increasingly to a mis-framing of the refugees as outside our moral concern, and a display of arguments intended to justify existing maldistributive socio- economic arrangements.

On the part of *the refugees*, our findings evidence –

- A high level of acceptance of our dominance as white, economically empowered citizens of South Africa, together with the hope of being 'rescued' from the socio-economic hardships experienced;
- Such hopes attained a quality of normative expectation, which were by and large disappointed, leading to feelings of anger and resentment;

- In spite of this, some of the refugees made offers of relating in a respecting and dignifying, yet critical mode, thereby opening new opportunities of engaging across our divides.

Several lessons can be drawn from the above for a re-grounding of social work's justice orientation in working with refugees and other vulnerable groups in contexts as the one described in this article: community development work – including local populations – remains indeed an important component of responding to the challenges in the field. For such a practice to be guided by an orientation towards social justice, we have three broad suggestions.

Firstly, in spite of the additional challenges of xenophobia and citizenship-based forms of exclusion faced by refugees, practitioners must be mindful that the struggles for survival fought on the margins of society by locals *and* refugees are real and structured by global and national constellations. Injustices originating at a macro level clamour for structural solutions. At the same time, we need to direct our efforts towards promoting respectful co-existence between people – in spite of, and in opposition to, these broader structures – seeking to facilitate a joint search for responses to the challenges faced.

Secondly, communities can always be defined so as to include some 'better-off' members. Social workers must not overlook the role of privilege in relation to the plight of refugees and other vulnerable groups. As complex a phenomenon as it may itself be, privilege capacitates greatly, enabling its holders to offer much needed ameliorative and reparative action when atrocities have been committed (Walker 2006). But there is also the implication of people as beneficiaries of structurally entrenched maldistributions and exclusions, and the often habitual perpetration of the injustice of misrecognition in their support. These are a seedbed for the kinds of atrocities that gave rise to this study, and the privileged will require help in becoming conscientised about them (Pease 2010). As such, the privileged members of a given community need to be included in any response to social injustice that wishes to be sustainable.

Finally social workers are in more respects than not, members of the established and privileged strata of society. It follows that we, too, are implicated in different forms of injustice and violations of *Others*, and hence, have a continuous need to reflexively engage with our own positioning in relation to structures and dynamics of injustice of which we may not be aware. In view of this, we would like to end this article with Iris Marion Young's

(1990:5) reminder that, 'reflective discourse about justice … arises from listening … One speaks only inasmuch as one listens, that is, one speaks as a listener and not as an author'.

Chapter 9 – Considering Nancy Fraser's Notion of Social Justice for Social Work:

Reflections on *Misframing* and the Lives of Refugees in South Africa

Details of Publication

Keywords

Abstract

This article explores the implications of cross-border migration for social work's normative commitment to social justice. Specifically, it interrogates Nancy Fraser's conceptualisation of social justice in guiding social work practice with refugees. The paper is grounded in an ethnographic study conducted from 2008 to 2009 in a South African church which had provided shelter to a group of refugees following their displacement by an outbreak of xenophobic violence. The study's findings reveal that various kinds of misframing created multiple forms of voicelessness amongst its foreign participants. These filtered out to justify, perpetuate and deepen other types of injustice, particularly misrecognition and maldistribution. There was some evidence of resistance, solidarity, recognition and small acts of redistribution. However, such positive practices proved difficult to sustain. The paper confirms the central importance of the notion of misframing for conceptualising and responding to social injustice in the absence of citizenship*as required of practitioners in the field of social work with refugees and indeed other groups rendered vulnerable within current economic, social, political and cultural constellations. In this regard, Fraser's contribution looks set to enrich social work's commitment to social justice both in normative and practical terms.

9.1   Introduction

Social work derives its sense of professional identity to a considerable extent from positioning itself in normative terms (Banks 2004; Hugman 2010a). Accordingly, the Definition of Social Work (IFSW/IASSW 2000:1) declares that, 'principles of human rights and social justice are fundamental to social work'. The starting point for this article is the understanding that in order to provide the profession with purpose and direction, such principles need continuous interrogation vis-à-vis social work's changing economic, social, political, and cultural contexts. In the following, I critically reflect on social justice as a normative framework for social work. My arguments are grounded in reflections on the lives of refugees[7] in South Africa.

A number of writers have cautioned that in spite of its apparent centrality to the profession, the notion of social justice has remained somewhat under-theorised (Mullaly 2002) and ambiguous (Humphries 2008). However some recent contributions, such as Paul Michael Garrett (2010) and Vivienne Bozalek (2012), offered critical introductions of the work of one leading contemporary theorist of justice, Nancy Fraser, to mainstream social work discourse, which this article seeks to extend. Beyond Garrett's (2010) detailed critique of Fraser's two-dimensional notion of justice, I provide an interrogation of her recently expanded, multi-level, three-dimensional approach (Fraser 2008a; Thompson 2009). And while Garrett's (2010) and

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[7] I believe that in the context of this paper, it is important to venture beyond dualisms according to which a refugee is understood in opposition to an internally displaced person, an asylum seeker, or another kind of migrant. Instead, my view is that taking refuge and seeking asylum are but one form of cross-border migration, which overlap and intersect with others (compare the definition of *mixed migration* put forward by the Danish Refugee Council, 2008). Moreover, within their country of refuge or residence, cross-border migrants can be displaced further, for example as a result of xenophobic violence. Thus deviating from mainstream conceptualisations (compare for example, UNHCR, *n.d.*), I speak of persons affected by *misframing* legislation, discourses and practices (Fraser, 2008a) as follows:

When referring to *foreigners, foreign nationals, cross-border migrants,* or *non-citizens* (which I do interchangeably, depending on context), I am making a point of general relevance for all persons implied in the Danish Refugee Council's (2008) definition of *mixed migration*, including undocumented migrants, refugees, asylum seekers, and temporary work permit holders.

When speaking about *refugees*, I refer to *both* certified refugees *and* asylum seekers, for the latter are persons who claim to be refugees, which is what matters in the context of my arguments. However, *asylum seekers* do enjoy considerably fewer rights and experience considerably more status insecurities than do recognised refugees, and at certain points of the argument, I use the term to make this distinction explicit.

Finally, when speaking of *displacees* or *displaced refugees*, I refer to the fact that *all the foreign participants in my study had been internally displaced* during South Africa's May 2008 xenophobic pogroms.

Simon Thompson's (2009) are theoretical discussions, I add an empirical component to considerations of Fraser's (2008a) relevance for social work.

Sarah Banks (2004) contends that ethical principles in social work are generally treated as middle-level principles because – rather than being regarded as foundational in a deontological or utilitarian sense – they are derived from dialogue and agreement around which values are shared by social workers sufficiently to be able to underpin professional practice. Some such principles can be considered primary values in that they are applicable and able to provide guidance to social workers in varied contexts, whereas secondary values are more context-specific (Hugman 2010a). This article is based on the understanding that while *social justice* is a primary value of overarching relevance to social work across cultural, social, economic, and political contexts – *just* practice requires us to consider the particularity of our work. It is through our efforts to understand people's life circumstances, how these interact with their ability to live well in the world (Nussbaum 2000) and how social work might contribute to their flourishing that we become able to extend the concept of social justice further – describing, explicating, and critically interrogating its evolving meaning, scope, and implications for practice (Hölscher, Sathiparsad and Mujawamariya 2012).

According to Fraser (Fraser, cited in Nash and Bell 2007; Fraser 2008a; Fraser in Bozalek 2012), the socio-economic and political exclusion of non-citizens must be considered a pivotal form of injustice in the current phase of globalisation – a result of its attendant rise in global interconnectedness, growing socio-economic, cultural, and political polarisations within and across countries, and thus, the increasingly turbulent and complex movements of people across international borders. At its most general therefore, this article explores the implications of cross-border migration for social work's normative commitment to social justice. However, based on the data in which its arguments are grounded, the paper asks quite specifically to what extent Fraser's (2008a) expanded model of justice might be helpful in guiding the sense-making endeavours and practices of social workers who have to respond to citizenship-based exclusions and intersecting forms of social injustice in the field of social work with refugees.

The data used in this article are derived from an ethnographic study conducted during the eighteen months following a wave of xenophobic violence that swept through South Africa in May 2008 displacing over 100 000 foreign nationals. The study was situated in a church that

had offered shelter to a group of displaced refugees, and which later implemented a project towards their integration within, and through, its community.

I begin my arguments by summarising key points from Fraser's expanded conceptualisation of justice, drawing on her essay, *Re-framing Justice in a Globalising World*, which is published, amongst other places, in her recent monograph, *Scales of Justice* (Fraser 2008a). As part of this review I engage with a selection of Fraser's critics. Next, I present an illustration of how her notion of social justice might be applied to making sense of social work practice by outlining the study's context, explicating its methodologies, and presenting some of its findings.

The paper is able to demonstrate the capacity of Fraser's (2008a) expanded framework to illuminate the complex structures and dynamics of social (in)justice in the project under investigation. It finds further that *misframing* (2008) constitutes a significant factor in contemporary constellations of social injustice, revealed particularly starkly in the lives of refugees. Concerning our commitment to social justice more generally, I conclude therefore that social work should routinely consider misframing as the framework in which other, substantive injustices unfold – affecting the lives of people who lack citizenship, be it refugees or other groups rendered vulnerable within current economic, political, social, and cultural constellations. While the practice implications flowing from the study are less clear, this article ends with a call towards the creation of *enclaves of just practice*: spaces in which the structural roots of social injustice are carefully considered, practice goals set accordingly, the injustices which we may find ourselves unable to address articulated, and their corresponding hardships acknowledged.

9.2   Considering Nancy Fraser: Social (In)justice, *(Mis)framing* and Social Work

Nancy Fraser is a feminist political philosopher and critical theorist. Over the past two decades, she has developed a normative framework of social justice that has much to offer for social work. This is because writing in the critical theory tradition always also seeks to make a transformative contribution to society. Fraser's theorising on social justice builds on

her understanding that *participatory parity* constitutes the central norm against which to evaluate how just, or unjust, particular social arrangements are. She contends that,

> Social arrangements are just if, and only if, they ... institutionalise the possibility for people to participate on a par with one another in all aspects of social life. This means that social arrangements are unjust if they entrench obstacles that prevent ... people from the possibility of parity of participation (in Bozalek 2012:147).

Obstacles to social justice are constituted, for example, by economic inequities and patterns of social positions and power relations privileging some groups of people, while excluding, marginalising and disadvantaging others (Fraser 1989, 1997, 2000, 2003). Thus, inequalities of participation in social life are at once the source and the result of substantive injustices – just as the presence of equal participation both ensures and indicates the absence of such substantive injustices. In other words, we find at the centre of Fraser's arguments the notion of circularity between the causes and effects of social (in)justice.

The first level of Fraser's (2008a) framework engages with *first order, substantive issues*, or what she calls *claims concerning the 'what'* of social justice. There are three inter-related dimensions within which social injustices may occur – or with respect to which social justice may be advanced. Within the *economic dimension*, social justice concerns the *(mal)distribution* of rights, opportunities, and resources along a society's particular class structure. Issues of *(mis)recognition* unfold in the form of internal status hierarchies (especially along lines of race and gender) within the *cultural and legal dimensions* of social justice. These hierarchies serve to place members of specific groups in (dis)advantaged positions, thereby (dis)enabling their access to principally existing rights, opportunities, and resources in a given society. The *ordinary-political dimension* of social justice regards questions of *(mis)representation* – for example, the impact of alternative electoral systems, affirmative action rules, and terms of engagement in public discourse and decision taking on people's access to rights, opportunities and resources.

Garrett (2010) has provided a detailed analysis of Fraser's work on (mis)recognition and the ways it intersects with the dimension of (mal)distribution. Responding to his multifaceted concerns about the dangers of a de-politicised and reductionist reading of recognition theory exceeds the scope of this paper. Importantly however, he asserts that,

> One of the chief difficulties with most ... theories of recognition (including Nancy Fraser's ...) is that they fail to acknowledge that the state ... can be a substantial source of oppression and

hardship ... The state ... is a formation that is seemingly 'lost' as an object of analysis, critique and comment (Garrett 2010:1529-30; brackets in original).

The claim that Fraser does not consider the role of the state in causing and perpetuating human suffering appears unfounded when examining her original work (Fraser 1989, 1997, 2000, 2003; Fraser in Bozalek 2012). However, by introducing into her model a *second level of (in)justice* together with the notion of *(mis)framing*, Fraser does move beyond her prior arguments. She suggests that as the impact of globalisation is increasingly and disturbingly felt, the appropriateness of the nation state as the primary context within which to conceptualise and effect social justice needs to be critiqued in and of itself (Fraser 2008a; Fraser in Bozalek 2012). Constituting the *grammar* of social justice, framing issues are *issues of scope* and pertain to the *question of 'who'* does, and '*who'* does not, count as subject of justice. Located within the *political dimension* of social justice, (mis)framing operates through admission criteria, procedures, and the denial of membership, for example, to non-citizens in their country of residence. Fraser (2008a:19) asserts that,

> Far from being of marginal significance, frame setting is amongst the most consequential of political decisions. Constituting both members and non-members in a single stroke, this decision effectively excludes the latter from the universe of those entitled to consideration within the community in matters of distribution, recognition and ordinary-political justice. The result can be a serious injustice. When questions of justice are framed in a way that wrongly excludes some from consideration, the consequence is a special kind of meta-injustice, in which one is denied the chance to press first order claims in a given community. The injustice remains ... as long as the effect of the political division is to put some relevant aspects of justice beyond [the] reach [of those who have been excluded].

Situated on yet another level, that is operating as *third order (in)justices*, are issues of *process*, which pertain to *the 'how' of social justice'*. These, too, concern the question of what makes for a fair and equitable *grammar* of social justice. Like framing, process issues are located within the *political dimension* of social justice. They revolve around the effects that contemporary frame and boundary setting mechanisms have on the scope of social justice. It is here that Fraser introduces the notion of *transformative politics of framing* by which she means those discourses and practices directed at changing –

> The deep grammar of frame-setting in a globalising world ... The aim is to overcome the injustices of misframing by changing the boundaries of the 'who' of justice [and] the mode of their constitution, hence the way in which they are drawn (Fraser 2008a:23-24).

In other words, Fraser (2008a) implies that those wishing to resist dominant forms of social injustice at the current historical juncture may need to begin by demanding political voice. This suggestion is consistent with the centrality of the norm of participatory parity in her understanding of justice. But who should be the ones to resist social injustice at this level? Which social agents have a voice audible enough to intercept? Should those who are excluded, marginalised, and disadvantaged speak for themselves? Should they also be spoken for, and if so, by whom and how? What should be the terms of engagement? Thompson (2009:1084-85) notes with Fraser that,

> 'Those who ... [lack] political voice ... are unable to articulate and defend their interest with respect to distribution and recognition, which in turn exacerbates their misrepresentation ...' The same analysis can be extended to excluded outsiders ... 'The result is a vicious circle in which the three [dimensions] of injustice reinforce one another ...'

Fraser (cited in Nash and Bell 2007) argues that in order to turn this *vicious circle of injustice* into a *virtuous circle of justice*, members who already enjoy parity of voice will need to engage in critical reflection and dialogue regarding the boundaries around, and processes of, deliberation within the community or association concerned. Such reflexivity might lead to reforms towards greater inclusivity, parity, and eventually translate into more just distribution and recognition as well. However, this is to assume that such privileged members have the ability and the will to critically engage with the exclusion and/or voicelessness of *Others*. And it is to assume that they also have the capacity for redress should their reflections lead them both to seeing the need, and developing the desire, for change – assumptions which Thompson (2009) cautions us cannot just be made.

Fraser also places her hopes for change in what Thompson (2009:1088) calls 'counter-public spheres'. Noting that under current conditions of globalisation, there is a widening cleavage between 'civil society processes of contestation and state centred processes of legislation and administration', she believes that 'non-state centred public spheres [might] become spaces for contesting state-centred frames' (cited in Nash and Bell:82). Thompson (2009:1089) retorts that,

> While ... [counter-public] spheres may be able to articulate well-founded critiques of existing political boundaries, they will be unable to exert effective influence over the bodies that establish and maintain such boundaries ... [After all], it is precisely because the excluded and voiceless are excluded and voiceless that they will be unable to join in a democratic debate about the decision rules and boundaries of [the associations concerned].

Insofar as Fraser's model constitutes a normative framework, its validity must be established in terms of its ability to help us understand the nature of social (in)justice inherent in particular constellations, or situations, and the ethical demands this places on social work. However, insofar as her model intends to inform transformative politics, the extent to which it can translate into effective counter-discourses and counter-practices is indeed of concern. These two interrelated aspects of her work – that is, the normative and its transformative components of social justice – are explored further in Section 9.4. To augment the argument, Figure 9.1 presents a flowchart of Fraser's conceptualisation of social (in)justice, including the multi-layered and dynamic interactions between the concept's constitutive levels and dimensions. Following my interpretation of the study's findings through Fraser's model, Figure 9.2 develops this flowchart further, so as to depict the vicious circle of social injustice at work in the study.
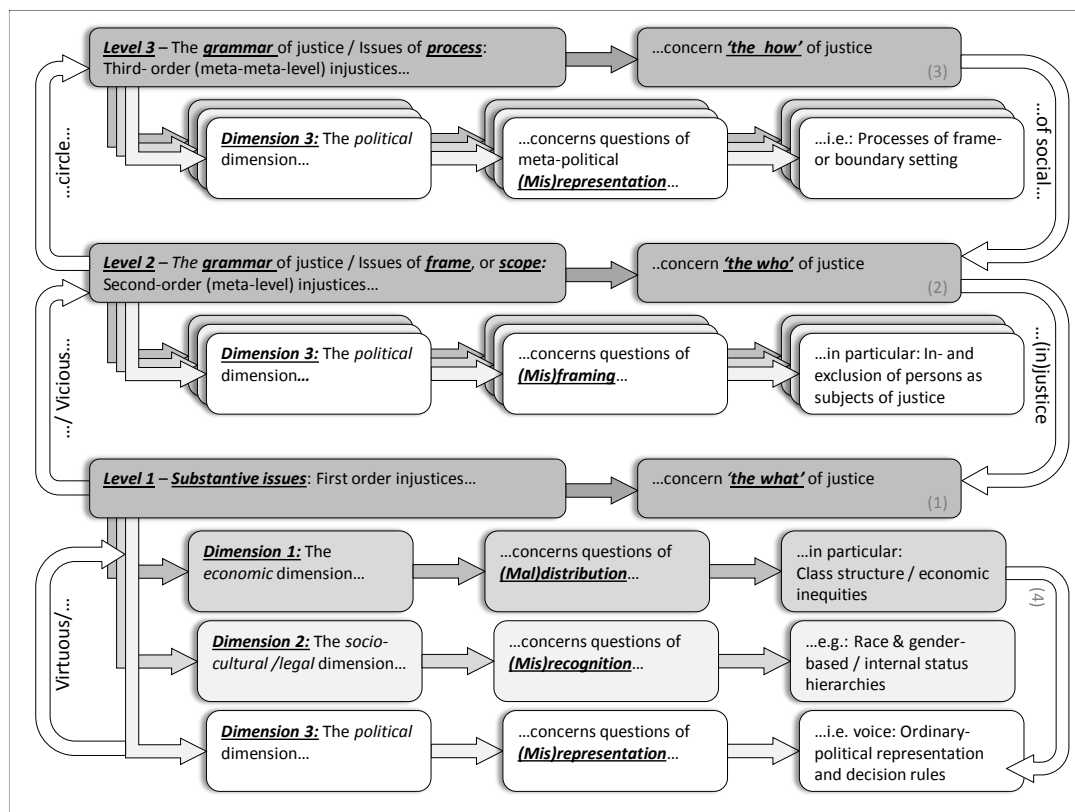
Figure 9.1: Conceptual Grid for Understanding Nancy Fraser's Notion of Social (In)justice

9.3   Situating the Study: Context and Research Methodologies

Having discussed the theoretical framework that lies at the centre of this paper, the context, methodologies, and findings of the study to which this framework relates are explicated briefly. A more comprehensive discussion of both the study's context and methodology is available in Hölscher and Bozalek (2012).

For the fifth consecutive year in 2011, South Africa received the world's highest number of asylum applications (UNHCR 2012). The country's Refugees Act (RSA 1998) affords asylum seekers some, and refugees extensive, constitutional rights. At the same time, South Africa remains one of the most unequal societies in the world (Hoogeveen and Özler 2005). As a result, profound contradictions have developed between the formal provisions of the Act and a range of ring-fencing efforts that make it difficult for its subjects to claim their socio-economic entitlements (Makhema 2009).

South Africa's traditionally high levels of xenophobia (Crush, McDonald, Williams, Lefko-Everett, Dorey, Taylor and Sablonniere 2008) are intrinsically related to the country's deeply entrenched race-based discourses and practices that framed black people as *Others* (CRAI 2009). Imposed on this was South Africa's post-apartheid nation building process in which attempts to generate a spirit of national identity included an insistence on the exclusivity and superiority of South Africa's citizenship (Neocosmos 2008). In this context, a xenophobic discourse has allowed for redirecting the imagination of *Blackness as Otherness* towards black foreigners as *South Africa's New Others*. This in turn has permitted the scapegoating of the latter as being responsible for those social and economic ills that the South African state, under the current global conditions has failed to address (Chikanga 2012). From 1994 onward, these xenophobic discourses and practices have translated increasingly into violence which on 11 May 2008, escalated into actual pogroms killing over 61, wounding around 670, displacing over 100 000 persons and leaving dozens of women raped (Misago, Monson, Polzer and Landau 2010).

With the government's response to the pogroms initially patchy and slow, civil society organisations stepped in to alleviate the crisis (Misago, Monson, Polzer and Landau 2010). One of them, a local church, offered emergency shelter to a group of twelve families

comprising 48 adults and children, all refugees from Burundi, Rwanda, and the DRC, who had been referred by the US Consulate and the Council of Churches. At the time, the church had just over 800 members, with its culture somewhat dominated by members belonging to South Africa's white middle classes. Having just commenced an ethnographic study in the field of social work with refugees, I was approached by the church leadership to assist in this response. However, in view of the multiple socio-economic problems experienced by the group members over and above the crisis of displacement, I was soon asked to remain involved for a prolonged period of time. As a result, I was able to negotiate inclusion of the church as a convenience sample in my research (Gobo 2008).

This paper draws on the following data sources. From June 2008 to October 2009, I kept a diary, recording those practices, speech acts and personal reflections that seemed relevant to my study. Group members began holding support group meetings in June 2008. Until October 2008, this support group served intermittently as a focus group. Life story interviews (Miller 2000) were conducted between November 2008 and June 2009 with four of the displacees, purposefully selected to represent the group's diversity along the lines of gender, national and ethnic origin, education, household composition, and income (Kelly 2006a). Because the data quoted in Section IV features different voices alongside one another, I offset the voices of other participants (that is, their direct speech acts) from my own voice (that is, my descriptions, interpretations, and reflections) by highlighting the former in italic.

The data was processed using a combination of Constructivist Grounded Theory (Charmaz 2003) and Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough 2001). Interpreting the transcribed actions, interactions, and reflections vis-à-vis the changing contextual conditions of the study, the analysis proceeded along the stages of open, axial, and selective coding. The notions of *(mis)framing* and *voice* were introduced as the emergent core categories were developed further in relation to literature on social justice. The findings presented below have been extracted from the broader study to meet one of this paper's key purposes, which is to interrogate the relevance of Fraser's (2008a) expanded notion of social justice for social work.

In keeping with the University of KwaZulu Natal's ethical clearance requirements, standard research ethical principles were built into the study's design. However, on account of my overlapping roles as church member/social worker/researcher, the extreme vulnerability of the displaced refugees at the church, and to counteract the resultant power differential

between me and the research participants (Hugman 2010b), I frequently problematised my positioning in relation to the members of the refugee group. Likewise, consent giving was structured as an iterative process throughout the data collection period. This afforded the participants repeated opportunities to withdraw from the study, as well as to impact its course and practice outcomes (Hugman, Pittaway and Bartolomei 2011).

Trustworthiness and validity of the study have been ensured through triangulation at the stages of sampling, data collection, and analysis; as well as through construction of an audit trail (Kelly 2006c). I sought regular feedback from the support group with regard to my observations and field notes. All interview participants had the opportunity to read and verify the transcripts. The initial codes and categories of the Open Coding phase were confirmed against the coding of selected diary entries and interviews by an independent researcher. Two participants (one refugee and one pastor) agreed to read initial drafts of the data analysis and write-up. Their feedback has been considered in this publication as well as those that followed.

From the ethnographic design of the study, flow those limitations common to qualitative research, in particular a lack of generalisability. This, however, does not prevent the data from being used to critically reflect on, or seek to ground, claims made by writers in the field of social justice and which forms part of the remaining two sections of this paper.

Image 9.1: Cartoon depicting the South African Flag following the 2008 Xenophobic Violence (Zapiro)

9.4 Presentation of Findings: Refugees and the Vicious Circle of Social Injustice in South Africa

In the following, some of the study's findings are presented and discussed within the framework provided by Fraser's (2008a) notion of social justice. Her claims regarding the significance of frame setting as a source of injustice in the contemporary global order (Fraser 2008a), draws our interest to the extent to which the refugee participants in the study were able to have their voices heard and make substantive justice claims, as well as to the obstacles they faced in this regard. In other words, focusing on the interaction and mutual impact of the political, cultural/legal and economic dimensions on the first and second levels of Fraser's (2008a) conceptualisation, my analysis highlights the impact of framing decisions, that is, the inclusion and exclusion of support group members as subjects of social justice in South Africa. It is shown how, through misframing, a situation of voicelessness had been created among the refugees concerned vis-à-vis South African citizens and institutions of the South African state. This voicelessness then filtered out to justify, deepen and reproduce other substantive

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injustices, namely, maldistribution and misrecognition, thus undermining the church's initial attempts of engaging in transformative framing practices, and illuminating pertinent aspects of the vicious circularity of social injustice (Fraser, cited in Thompson 2009).

9.4.1   The Grammar of Justice: Misframing and the Construction of Voicelessness

During the first support group meeting held at the church, one of the group members, Émile, spoke of his experiences of displacement:

> '*Men* [were] *singing, Hamba, amakwerekwere, hamba!* [Go home aliens, go home!]' [Émile describes how] neighbours pointed out the foreigners. [The men] kicked in the door. At four in the morning, [the foreigners] were given one hour to pack their belongings. Émile [says that he] suffered flashbacks to the civil war in Burundi [and that] his heart started racing … He says, almost shouting: *'I am feeling angry! But what can I do? This is not my country'* (Diary Record 17.06.08; emphasis added).

This quote illustrates Michael Neocosmos' (2008) and Jean Pierre Misago, Tamlyn Monson, Tara Polzer and Loren Landau's (2010) contention that the 2008 pogroms constituted an attempt by some citizens to enforce a nationalist-territorial frame around their home country when, in their assessment, the state had failed to do so: that is, to rid South Africa of those foreigners whom the government did not prevent from entering in the first place. Émile's story also expresses the sense of powerlessness and social redundancy experienced by a person who feels voiceless on account of being a non-citizen. Finally, Émile's account demonstrates that his inherited citizenship – Burundian – is a rather worthless political asset in view of his home country's decades-long civil war from which he fled.

On the same occasion, another group member, Noémie, referred to an incident which occurred two weeks after the xenophobic violence had been declared officially to be over (Misago, Monson, Polzer and Landau 2010) and related that –

> She had sent her 12 year-old son to buy tomatoes at the … market. [She says that] they threatened him. They asked his name, to which he replied, *'Isaac'* … They wanted to know his surname, to which he replied, *'Mkhize'*. Then, they said to him, *'Run!'*, and he ran (Diary Record 17.06.08; emphasis added).

The attempts of Noémie's son to misrepresent himself by using a common South African name might have failed on account of his Congolese accent. Another example of misframing

of the popular kind, her story illustrates how the violent boundary setting of the pogroms developed a momentum that required little subsequent effort to maintain. As Émile and Noémie – albeit on behalf of her son – articulate, the sense of fear and voicelessness generated in a situation when people's apparent lack of membership and belonging is, rather explicitly, expressed by the 'owners' of the territory they, too, are trying to inhabit.

Three months on, the support group had shifted its attention from the experience of interpersonal violence to structural exclusion. In the following quote, I reflect on the role of the Department of Home Affairs in the lives of the group members. The Department is South Africa's (mis-)framing institution *par excellence*, for it is here where residence permits, including asylum seeker and refugee permits are awarded, withheld, or withdrawn.

> Christian ... doesn't want to ... talk about the past: *'It will ... make me sick ...'* And having said that, he cannot stop talking about home … [Following a stream of indeed sickening accounts of genocide and civil war] I am beginning to appreciate … that talking ... about the past is not something that everybody would want to do …

> [But] how do you convert a truth which is too painful to narrate into one which is exact enough to … legitimise your claim to living [as a refugee] in this … country? ... Christian elaborates … *'After ten years, you are treated like a newcomer. [Every two years,] you ... are asked to re-tell your story. And if you forget some parts, you may have your refugee status revoked … All we ask is to be treated fairly'.*

> The fear of having your refugee status revoked arbitrarily is an experience … more creeping, silent, and pervasive than the violent outbursts that occurred in May … All the knowledge of how Home Affairs functions, decides, and implements its decisions in individual lives … is passed on through … rumours. The institution that can make or break people's existences is not well known, it is only murmured about (Diary Record 25.09.08; emphasis added).

Add to this another group member's account:

> Jules ... is ... in South Africa since 2002 ..., had seven interviews [at Home Affairs and] remains on an asylum seeker permit [with] two-monthly extensions, awaiting appeal ... During each of his first four interviews, a *'big lady'* ... asked him to pay a bribe ... He says that ... he cannot pay for what is his right. He says that several people who were interviewed at the same time as him and who agreed to paying the bribe, are now on refugee permits ... Jules [says], *'Some of us ... cannot go home ... I cannot go home' (*Diary Record 06.10.08; emphasis added).

In the interactions between the Department of Home Affairs and the study's participants, several types of social injustice seem to blend into one another, with practices of misrecognition emerging as entrenched part of an institutionalised (mis)framing process around the allocation of refugee permits – creating in their wake situations of profound voicelessness amongst the refugees. There is firstly the bureaucratic imposition of an assumption that people's lives are reducible to stories against which to measure (and enforce)

decisions concerning their future life courses. This imposition may be rooted in a further assumption that all refugees are potential liars who can be 'caught out' by being compelled repeatedly to re-tell their respective life stories. Finally, this system appears to have produced a breed of predator civil servants who award refugee permits in return for bribes; cynically (and criminally) endorsing, policing, and subverting at once the very rules they were employed to uphold (compare Human Rights Watch 1998, 2005).

Ultimately, Christian and Jules remind us that social injustice is a reality that undermines and curtails people's choices and life chances arbitrarily and as such, is experienced as threatening and dehumanising. Christian's and Jules' stories also contain an interpretation of the nature and location of injustices to which they object, demanding fairness and voice: Aware that their life stories may at any point be used to justify the withholding, or withdrawal, of their residence permits, Christian and Jules indicate two obvious modes of resistance. First, real life stories can be adjusted, changed, and told strategically in accordance with known criteria for the award, or renewal, of refugee status. Second, money can buy what truth cannot afford. No longer voicing the truths of the lives they are meant to represent, such stories metamorphose into mirror images of the framing rules that have created them. These two accounts thus substantiate Zygmunt Bauman's (1993) warning that rules (especially those of the oppressive and exclusionary type) cannot escape being undermined and broken by those towards (or against) whom they are directed.

9.4.2 The Vicious Circle of Social Injustice: Framing Decisions and the Dialectics of Maldistribution and Misrecognition

At the church concerned, we took a decision to replace the citizenship frame with an alternative, apparently more accepting and inclusive (or differently divisive) type of membership; that is, membership based on faith (compare Sen 2009, on the exclusionary structure of *all* membership frames). We agreed that having sought refuge at the church, the members of the group had, by default, also become its members. In a staff meeting soon after the group's arrival, we asked ourselves,

> Why [should] our lives continue unaltered when [the refugees] have had such major disruptions to theirs ...? How did the early Christians deal with ... refugees? ... They would have been fully integrated (Diary Record 24.06.08).

Our initial attitude of solidarity and inclusivity translated into forms of recognition that had a healing and hope-giving effect, as one refugee, Michelle, recalled:

> *When we* [arrived] *there* [at the church] *… I saw a … lady … She came through to me … She said …, '… There is one Bible … I bought for someone … Maybe, that someone, it is you' … From that day, I was strong. I was going to force myself to be strong …* (Recorded Interview 12.12.08; emphasis added).

But embedded in our decision, there was also an acknowledgement that the violence which had brought the refugees to the church was not just interpersonal but structural as well (Mullaly 2007). Four weeks after their arrival, it had become obvious that poverty and deprivation were part of the reality from which people had fled: They were suffering an injustice of maldistribution (Fraser 1997, 2003) in their country of refuge. Much effort went into trying to solicit funding for material support, as well as trying to facilitate access to employment opportunities and affordable housing through our church networks. Émile, speaking of the dignifying way in which he had received material and practical help at a point of desperate need, suggested that,

> *Maybe it was my time … and for this assistance, I don't say 'thank you' … Because everything have got their time …* [One day], *it's going to be my time … to help those children of Dorothee …* (Recorded Interview 17.12.08; emphasis added).

In other words, our initial decision towards an inclusive construction of membership enabled small acts of recognition and redistribution that in turn helped to mend some of the injuries inflicted during the xenophobic violence. But as time went on, it emerged that our efforts, including those of trying to secure sufficiently well-paid jobs and helping to enhance the performance of survivalist businesses remained inadequate, considering the extent of the group members' economic marginalisation. In the following, the group member Léocadie illustrates some of these challenges:

> L   *To get a job is not easy … because all companies ask for … papers* [that is, certification of previous qualifications, lost during flight]…
>
> *I was making bead work, selling shoes …* [Then] *they closed the Flea Market … This Flea Market was helping too many people. Now the people don't have space to go to sell … When you go to ask for license to sell they don't want to give you.*
>
> D   Before, there was no license?
>
> L   *The license started when they moved* [the Flea Market] *to another site … The South Africans selling there got license. Now us here, we do not have license … Too much people cry* (Recorded Interview 29.11.08; emphasis added).

From August 2008 onwards, we tried to access support from several small business development institutions in South Africa. However, we remained unsuccessful. I noted at the time that,

> Umsobomvu [a national development institution] refuses to give any answer to our written requests and weekly follow-up calls … Other agencies either state on their websites that their services are for citizens only, or tell us so when we make telephonic contact …

> Each time we stumble against another closed door, I become angry and Estelle [a group member] responds by saying that, *'If they don't want to help us, leave them …'* And when I argue towards being more assertive, pro-active, and demanding of services ..., her view is supported, not mine (Diary Record 13.10.09; emphasis added).

According to Bob Mullaly (2007:278), Estelle's 'cautious, low profile conservatism' is a response typical of internalised oppression: its aim is to decrease 'visibility and social penalties' in the face of structural violence and to compensate 'for a disfavoured identity'. But as established members of the church, we didn't fully appreciate the type of social injustices we were dealing with either. Efforts remained at a charitable and ameliorative level, with little time spent reflecting on the dimension, causes, nature, and dynamics at the root of the refugees' marginalisation. At the time, the concept of misframing was unknown to us. Unsurprisingly as time went on, there was a growing sense of shared powerlessness amongst those of us who had committed to assisting the group members beyond the crisis.

This sense had two main forms of expression. On the one hand, there emerged a tendency to take recourse in an imaginary well-established welfare discourse: *the deserving versus the undeserving poor*. For example, one pensioner, Irene had given a sewing machine (a cherished item that she had used through many of her working years) to one of the refugees, Juliette, in the expectation that the latter would use it to make and sell clothing. Juliette was excited as she had never been able to buy her own machine. But she failed to set up the anticipated sewing business; Juliette did not know how to sew as well as she might have led Irene to believe. Irene was disappointed, demanding that Juliette return the machine so that it could be given to somebody more deserving. Juliette refused, saying: *'But she gave it to me, and it is mine! How can she claim it back?'* (Diary Record 30.01.09; emphasis added). Irene concluded:

> *This means that Juliette is not a good person ... The problem is that she cannot sew. She is untidy. And she is lazy, too* (Diary Record 30.01.09; emphasis added).

Irene did not succeed in retrieving the sewing machine; both women withdrew from one another feeling disappointed and hurt. Some of Irene's family wound up with a categorical

extension of the lessons seemingly learnt from the incident, towards all those carrying the same identity markers as Juliette; that is, to 'never help a refugee again' (Diary Record 30.01.09). In retrospect, it looks as though participants and onlookers on both sides were unable to appreciate how deeper, structural issues had impacted the course of events. Consequently, the two women were effectively left alone in trying (without succeeding) to resolve their dispute. In the process, negative labels and stereotypes came to crowd out opportunities for more in-depth engagement and thus, a just resolution of the conflict. As such, this episode clearly falls within Fraser's (2000, 2003) notion of misrecognition.

On the other hand was a reaction borne out of our *witnessing* (Zembylas 2007) how unyielding the exclusionary and marginalising structures in the lives of the refugees really were. Akin to the internalised form of oppression discussed above, we directed our responses inward. Group members left the shelter at the church without ceasing to call on their newly acquired membership for remedy of their day-to-day hardships. This led to a growing sense of exhaustion on our part. For example, one of the ministers, Robert, began –

> Feeling increasingly drained by this weekly string of interviews (Diary Record 29.09.08).

As time went on, exhaustion began to infiltrate perceptions. Below, I use a rather bleak metaphor to describe the sum total of misframings, misrecognitions, and maldistributions we seemed unable to overcome:

> There seems to be one ... barrier closing in on another – a piece of legislation, an unaffordable fee, a quota here, an exclusionary mission or vision statement there – forming a skin around society to prevent refugees from accessing the resources that they, [as] desperately [as] others, need to survive (Diary Record 30.01.09).

And some two months later, I recorded how –

> The church has run out of money. I have run out of time. The group members have not run out of problems ... People are starving ... Even recognising people ... and responding to them empathetically – if nothing else - takes time. And time I do not have (Diary Record 11.03.09).

With hindsight, it appears that our efforts were characterised by a lack of awareness regarding the distinctly political dimension of the problems we were responding to; that is, the pervasiveness of misframing in its ability to pre-configure and increase the refugees' vulnerability to such substantive issues of social injustice as maldistribution. Comparatively privileged, the established members of the church did not recognise the extent to which the refugees' vulnerabilities were outgrowths from structural forms of injustice which, being

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structural – a grammar - could have been addressed sustainably only through structural rather than through charitable or ameliorative responses, as important as these were in the aftermath of the xenophobic crisis. Such lack in critical awareness eventually undermined what had started so well, that is recognising the members of the refugee group as fully human. At times, we invoked essentialist images of 'the refugee as such' whom we began to label as undeserving of our help – when we could have explored more deeply the nature of the hardships that we were unable to ameliorate. At other times, we directed our feelings of helplessness and powerlessness inward rather than outward – which would have required us to frame the problem in political terms. And yet, both our project's failings and gains illuminate the workings of social (in)justice in an age of globalisation, large-scale migration, and implications thereof for social work. Figure 9.2 presents a flow chart for these processes and dynamics.
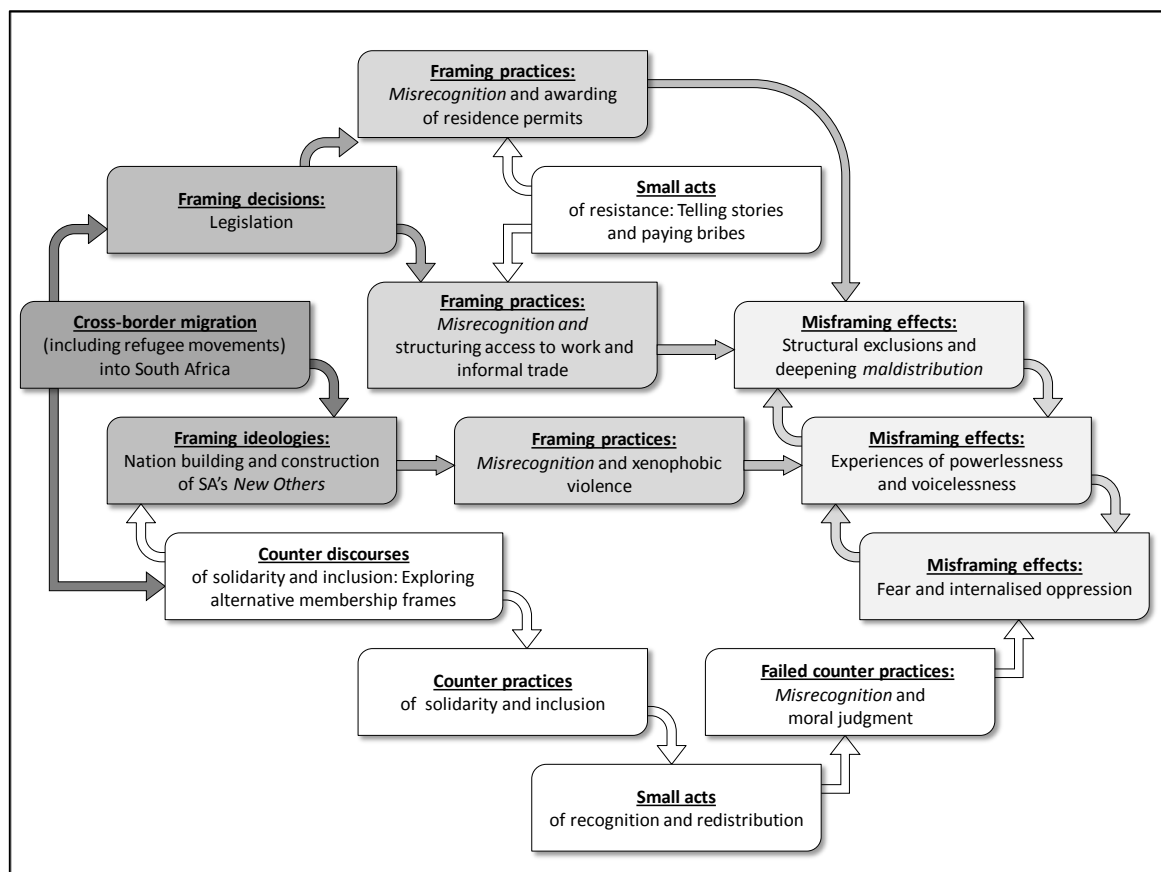
Figure 9.2: Circle of Social Injustice at Work in the Study

9.5 Conclusions and Implications: Towards Creating Enclaves of Just Practice in Social Work with Refugees and Beyond

This article set out to critically interrogate the meaning of *social justice* vis-à-vis recent experiences of refugees in South Africa. Its specific concern was the helpfulness of Fraser's (2008a) recent conceptualisation of justice for social workers in this field. The arguments of this paper were grounded in findings from an ethnographic study that over eighteen months, investigated the relationships between local members of a South African church and a group of refugees living amongst them after being displaced by the 2008 xenophobic pogroms. The findings illustrate how the injustice of misframing translated from South Africa's legal and policy frameworks and public discourse of nation-building via exclusionary and misrecognition practices into the way the study's participants regarded themselves and one another. On the other hand, there were counter discourses and practices that translated into small acts of resistance, recognition, and redistribution, mainly on the level of encounters between individuals and groups. Such counter discourses and practices, however, proved unsustainable in the face of the dominance of exclusionary structures, processes, and discourses in which they were embedded. Moreover, lacking political understanding on the part of all research participants reinforced both internalised forms of oppression and essentialising discourses amongst the privileged about the oppressed, while preventing the development of more organised, better targeted, and more collective counter practices.

Against the background of these findings, we can now return to the two lines of criticism of Fraser's work, discussed in Section II. Contrary to the claim that Fraser fails to consider the role of the state sufficiently (Garrett 2010), the study applied the notions of misframing, misrecognition, maldistribution, and voice to illuminate the oppressive and exclusionary functions of the South African state in a context of cross-border migration. Of greater concern is the challenge posed by Thompson (2009) that Fraser's model does not help us to overcome the injustices it allows us to diagnose. The lack of sustainability of those counter-discourses and practices our project intermittently brought to life can, to an extent, be attributed to a lack of critical reflexivity amongst us, the project's participants.

With regard to the normative component of Fraser's work we may conclude the following: the fact that the study could isolate misframing as a primary dynamic behind the multiple and

intersecting exclusionary processes experienced by the participant refugees, suggests that we may be dealing with a concept that social workers should consider routinely as the framework in which occur the more substantive injustices of maldistribution and misrecognition. As such, understanding the workings of social injustice in the lives of refugees can model how we might conceptualise the injustice of misframing in other cases where citizenship is either absent or lacking.

With regard to Fraser's transformative intentions, the conclusions flowing from the study are less straightforward. In view of the stage of globalisation in which we find ourselves at present, we must assume that some of the contradictions social workers are confronted with in their daily practice will remain unresolved no matter how aptly they are analysed, and no matter what we do in response. This is the likely scenario for social work with refugees, and for social work with other groups rendered vulnerable in the current economic, social, political, and cultural constellations.

However, one of the purposes of normative frameworks such as Fraser's is to inform and enable us to evaluate our practices in relation to the ideals they formulate, no matter how elusive these may seem. It is these kinds of ideals that inspire the reflexivity, critical discourse, counter practices, and growth of the counter-public spheres which Fraser envisages – even if the practice outcomes in individual instances appear modest at first. For the time being, justice-oriented social work may at least produce *enclaves of just practice* within an overall context that in the foreseeable future is likely to remain unjust. And yet, even the limited ambition of creating such enclaves will require social workers to –

- Understand the structural roots of the particular injustices we are confronted with; and target our response at the appropriate level;
- Set attainable goals for intervention, including: supporting individuals, families, and communities in their efforts to cope with the effects of social injustice in their daily lives; seeking to redress those causes of injustice within our reach, articulating those injustices we cannot address and acknowledging their corresponding hardships;
- Participate in public discourse around the nature, causes, and possible resolution of contemporary forms of injustices.

As part of an overall political process then, projects such as the one presented in this paper can play an important role.

Chapter 10 – Assuming *Responsibility for Justice* in the Context of South Africa's Refugee Receiving Regime

Details of Publication

Key words

Abstract

This paper explores Iris Marion Young's social connection model of responsibility for justice. Its purpose is to contribute to the development of an *ethics of responsibility* for social work and other caring professions. Our arguments are grounded in an auto-ethnographic study conducted in 2008 by one of the authors while practicing as a social worker with a South African refugee services provider. We ask: what did it mean for the care workers to respond justly to refugees in the light of the complex structural and other constraints that circumscribed their work? What constituted the relationship between individual and collective responsibility in this response? We propose that developing an ethics of responsibility requires us to pay attention to the intricate processes that translate structural injustices into social care settings, and to the dynamics that cause them to be either reproduced or resisted. Our explorations show how Young's social connection model can make a valuable contribution to conceptualisations into what *responsibility for justice* means, and what actions this implies. We conclude that such an approach could be helpful whenever care workers seek to promote social justice in responses to the very structural injustices within which they are implicated.

Acknowledgement

10.1 Introduction

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in the question of what would constitute responsibility in different realities of structural injustice. To guide contemplation through such concerns, Iris Marion Young proposed in 2006 a *social connection model of responsibility for justice* (Young 2006), which holds that social relations place both individuals and institutions across boundaries of place and space in positions of responsibility for structural (in)justices. She contrasts this with a liability model that regards people and institutions as individually responsible, and assigns blame for deeds leading to injustice (Young 2011). This paper explores Young's work on social connection and responsibility in relation to the experiences of a social worker in a South African refugee services organisation. Our intention is to contribute to an ethics of responsibility for social work and other caring professions.

Iris Marion Young (2007:170) contends that structural injustice exists when 'social processes put large categories of persons under systematic threat of domination or deprivation of the means to develop their capacities, at the same time as they enable others to dominate or have a wide range of opportunities for developing and exercising capacities … Structural injustice occurs as a consequence of many individuals and institutions acting … within given institutional rules and acceptable norms'. Obligations of justice exist thus for all of us who – through our social positioning, relationships, daily practices, and the assumptions on which our practices are based – are woven into structural processes of injustice. Increasingly, such processes extend across the political boundaries of nation state and citizenship. In view of such complexities, Nancy Fraser (2008a) expresses concern that the notion of social connection to structural injustice lacks precision, thus creating difficulties in distinguishing those kinds of connection that give rise to moral responsibility from those that do not. We agree that work is required to establish more precisely how Young's model might be applied in social work and other care practices to further the ends of social justice. This paper intends to make one such contribution.

Our arguments are grounded in an auto-ethnographic study conducted in 2008 by one of the authors (Dorothee) while practicing as a social worker with a South African refugee services provider, mainly with service users from Rwanda, Burundi, and the eastern Democratic

Republic of Congo (DRC) – part of what is often referred to as Africa's Great Lakes region. We ask:

- What did it mean for the care workers[8] in the study to respond justly to refugees and asylum seekers[9] in the light of the complex structural and other constraints that circumscribed their work?
- What constituted the relationship between individual and collective responsibility in this response?

We begin by explicating the theoretical starting point of our arguments in relation to the historical, socio-political, and economic context of Dorothee's study. Thereafter, we provide an overview of the study's ethical and methodological considerations, which is followed by our presentation and discussion of findings. In a first step, Dorothee presents the case study using a narrative style. Staying close to her experiences as a social worker in the field, she explores the contextual structures and constraints leading to different kinds of responses on her and her colleague's part to the organisation's service users, and the challenges faced by the latter. In a second, more distantiated layer of analysis, we apply Young's (2006, 2007, 2011) work on social connection and responsibility for justice in order to make sense of the dynamics of the case. We find that Young's social connection model can make a valuable contribution to explorations into what *responsibility for justice* means, and what actions this implies. We conclude that such an approach could be helpful whenever social workers and other care practitioners seek to promote social justice in response to the very structural injustices within which they are implicated.

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[8] The organisation in which the case study was conducted employed practitioners with different kinds of qualifications, including social workers. However, their responsibilities overlapped. In the argument therefore, we use the term *care*, or *social care*, whenever we refer to the work done by *social workers and other practitioners in caring professions*.

[9] In the following, we use *refugees* as a collective term to denote *both* refugees *and* asylum seekers. Our rationale is that the latter also claim to be refugees, inasmuch as their claims have yet to be validated. In South Africa, both groups receive services from the same care providers, which is what matters most in the context of our arguments. However, asylum seekers enjoy considerably fewer rights and experience considerably more status insecurities than do recognised refugees, and where necessary for the argument, we make this distinction explicit.

10.2 Establishing a Basis for *Responsibility*: Points of Connection

In his elaborate monograph on Africa's history, John Reader (1998) unravels the intricate injustices that are rooted in the continent's colonial past, and which profoundly unsettled its social, cultural, and political economies and thus prefigured much of its contemporary migration systems. Yet, while migration has been a long-standing survival strategy of ordinary people, Richard Black, Jonathan Crush and Sally Peberdy (2006:80) point out that 'in the last two decades' – as deep changes in global economic and political constellations continue to undermine and disrupt political economies and livelihoods in post-colonial Africa – its 'forms and dynamics have undergone major restructuring'. In their wake, South Africa has emerged as a key destination and transit stop for increasingly diverse and growing numbers of migrants, including refugees. Since 2007, the country has received more asylum applications per annum than any other country in the world and presently counts close to 500 000 registered asylum seekers and refugees, mainly of sub-Saharan origin (UNHCR 2013b).

When in 1994, South Africa's first democratic elections ended centuries of colonial and decades of apartheid rule, the country was able to re-enter the global political and economic arena as a legitimate state. Thus, the new administration was swift to ratify a whole range of United Nations and African Union statutes, including the 1951 UNHCR Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, and the 1969 OAU Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa. National legislation aligned with these conventions followed, prominently amongst them the South African Refugees Act No.130 of 1998 (Vignewaran 2008; Segatti 2011). South Africa's current policy framework provides for refugee self-settlement (Makhema 2009). The Refugees Act affords asylum seekers some, and refugees extensive, constitutional rights, including progressive access to important socio-economic rights. Yet, South Africa remains a highly unequal society, with unemployment and poverty having increased since the end of apartheid, the passing of the Refugees Act, and the onset of the current global recession (Terreblanche 2012). Consequently, the country has experienced unprecedented levels of rural-urban migration contributing to overcrowding, competition, and tensions among the residents in those urban centres where most refugees try to make their home (Landau, Segatti, and Misago 2011; UNHCR 2013b). Intertwined with these developments is the persistent circulation of nationalist-exclusionary discourses that

finds expression in a myriad of practices to undermine refugees' access to public provisions and economic opportunities (Landau 2006; Makhema 2009; Vigneswaran 2011; Hölscher, forthcoming) and which routinely erupts into xenophobic violence (Crush, McDonald, Williams, Lefko-Everett, Dorey, Taylor and la Sablonniere 2008; Hölscher and Bozalek 2012; Patel 2013). Indeed, in May 2008 – just prior to this study – nationwide pogroms killed dozens, wounded hundreds and displaced more than 100,000 foreigners (Misago, Monson, Polzer, and Landau 2010).

In short, South Africa's legal obligations towards refugees are founded in a network of historical and contemporary, global and regional, connections. As a result of longstanding political and economic constellations and broadly established strategies of survival – many of which are rooted in injustices of historical and global scale – the country now finds itself in the position of having to meet these obligations, albeit at an unanticipated scale. Thus, beyond the harsh socio-economic realities which citizens, too, have to contend with, refugees in South Africa experience additional forms of structural exclusion and interpersonal violence. It is in this context that the South African state has delegated much of its responsibility for the welfare of refugees to the UNHCR (Landau 2006; Landau and Duponchel 2011), who in turn devolved the service-rendering function of its mandate to less than ten 'implementing partners'. These NGOs are located in South Africa's urban centres and refugee reception points (UNHCR 2011b) and provide the main source of employment for social workers practicing in this field.

While there exists very little local literature on social work with refugees, empirical studies from elsewhere paint a picture of practitioners who are often caught up, at times actively participating, in unjust institutional regimes and problematic practices of refugee reception and care (see for example, Humphries 2004; Zorn 2007; Al-Makhamreh, Spaneas and Neocleus 2012). Linda Briskman, Deborah Zion and Bebe Loff's (2012) study among care workers in Australian refugee detention centres found that in the face of systematic injustices and glaring human rights abuses, the only forms of resistance evident among their participants consisted of private acts of defiance, some rule-bending, and provision of a little empathetic care. Most of the carers concerned objected to the inhumane conditions, rules, and practices in the detention centres; yet they did not participate in any kind of public opposition. The authors explain this by pointing out that broader societal discourses and

organisational settings, condition and constrain the activities of employees. However, they do not provide details of exactly *how* public discourses, organisational rules, and processes converged to condition and constrain care or prevent open criticism of the injustices thus observed. Briskman, Zion and Loff (2012:52) conclude that we should develop 'an ethics of responsibility where we locate ourselves in relation to others, including strangers' – without elaborating what such an ethics of responsibility might entail. We would like to take this debate forward.

10.3 Ethical and Methodological Considerations

This paper forms part of a multi-site ethnographic study (Clarke 2005) on migration and social justice (Hölscher 2007). It is grounded in a case study (Gobo 2008) of one of the UNHCR's implementing partners in South Africa. The data considered below consists of field notes collected by Dorothee between 4 August and 31 October 2008 while practicing as a social worker in the organisation. The study's ethnographic design gives rise to a particular ethical dilemma at this point of publishing our findings: to the extent that these implicate care workers in structural processes of injustice, we might not be able to prevent harm – in the form of blame – from coming to our colleagues.

The challenge was predictable (Hölscher 2007), and for this reason, Dorothee sought to ensure that when the organisation's staff gave consent to participate, they had considered the difficulties of maintaining confidentiality in the context of a case study. As the study unfolded, opportunities to reconsider such consent were provided, and indeed, one colleague made use of the opportunity to withdraw (Hugman 2010b). One means of mitigating the risk of harm was to design the investigation as an auto-ethnography. Carolyn Ellis and Arthur Bochner (2003, p.209) contend that in auto-ethnographic research,

> Concrete action, dialogue, emotion, embodiment, spirituality and self-consciousness are featured … as relational and institutional stories [that are] affected by history, social structure and culture, which themselves are dialectically revealed through action, feeling, thought and language.

This approach enables us now to foreground Dorothee's experiences and encounters while allowing her colleagues to recede somewhat into the background of the study. Yet, part of

the dilemma remains. Insofar as Dorothee was one of several care workers who participated in the 'normal' organisational discourses and practices, she experienced, did and said in many ways what was commonly experienced, done and said in her host organisation and beyond: such is the nature of structural processes. Following Young (2011:170) therefore, we suggest that the injustices at the heart of this article should not be interpreted along the logic of 'guilt, blame, or fault'. Instead, we would like this paper to be read as something which is 'recognisable as our own … and … as [revealing] aspects of moral social consciousness that are almost unavoidable' (Young 2011:170).

During the data collection period, Dorothee used a range of note-taking techniques to meet her different observational interests (Ellis and Bochner 2003; Gobo 2008). She disengaged from the site after data saturation was reached. Her data analysis combined methods of Constructivist Grounded Theory (Charmaz 2003) with Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough 2001), which resulted in a number of themes concerning her (and other care workers') evolving perceptions of, and relationships with, service users. This paper draws on two interrelated themes: *Responding to Service Users* and *Setting Parameters for Responding*. The qualitative changes of both the *Responses* and the *Parameters* in the months following the 2008 xenophobic violence can be conceptualised in terms of two overlapping episodes: the *Immediate Post-pogrom Period* and a period of *Responding Strategically to the Post-pogrom Challenges*. These can be distinguished firstly by how Dorothee (and colleagues) *interpreted* their service users' predicaments and struggles at different points in time, and secondly, by how she (and others) *related to* their service users. From these two themes and episodes, we selected a number of critical incidents to ground our reflections on Young's social connection and how it might be applied in social work and other care practices to further the ends of social justice. Two staff members of the host organisation offered critical feedback on the first draft of this paper, which has been considered in subsequent drafts. In the following, we present some of the findings that emerged from this process.

10.4 Presentation and Discussion of Findings

We present the case study in three sections. The first two sections highlight the contextual, relational, and intra-personal aspects of Dorothee's experience in the form of a situated, narrative account. This is followed by a more distantiated layer of interpretation, which we developed in dialogue around Iris Marion Young's work on *responsibility*.

10.4.1 On Disconnecting

The organisation concerned in this paper, an implementing partner of the UNHCR in South Africa, is located in one of the country's main urban centres. At the time of data collection, it employed eight professional care workers, including several social workers, and six support staff. When I (Dorothee) negotiated entry, the director explained that the service's primary intention was to promote refugees' 'self-reliant integration into South African society' (Hölscher 2007:19). Prior to the May 2008 pogroms, the active caseload counted just over 400 individuals and families, with the majority receiving services on a short-term basis. However, following the pogroms, this number increased dramatically. For example, on 02.09.08, over 100 people called for assistance on a single day, and on 05.09.08, the director informed her staff that just five months into the financial year, the annual emergency budget was almost depleted. Yet on 19.09.08, the list for people calling for emergency relief was still so long that the waiting period prior to seeing a person, was seven to eight weeks. Hence, the common thread throughout the study was the agency staff's struggle to respond to the scale of the humanitarian crisis that presented itself in the aftermath of the xenophobic violence.

Our struggle played itself out on several interrelated levels. For example, during my first week, I described an early morning scene which occurring just shortly after the front door had been opened to service users:

> I develop the distinct sense that someone has opened the floodgates … One lady … is trying to squeeze past me. My stress levels rise: I am beginning to feel claustrophobic and overwhelmed by the noise … 'I am … hungry', she says and rubs her stomach …

> Another person squeezes past the inter-leading door [separating the reception area from the social workers' offices] … I am physically cornered … He informs me … that … he needs to bury

his mother who has just passed away, that he has no money, so we need to help … and his hands are sticky and sweaty (Diary Record 08.08.08).

Finding myself in a position in which I was confronted with a surplus of moral demands, thus fearing to be drawn emotionally into a relationship with the *Other* in which I felt unable to do any justice, I responded defensively. I resented the situation but projected this feeling, here in the form of repulsion, onto a feature of the *Other* which I could then resent in its place. My diary contains many such scenes: at different points of feeling overwhelmed, I found myself responding with resentment – towards a service user's particular behaviour; of her seeming tone of voice; or his apparent attitude. The outcome was consistent: in the context of feeling unable to do justice to the scale of human need I was facing, I ended up trying to split off my sense of responsibility towards the person concerned.

Steep rises in the number of service users were experienced in UNHCR-affiliated NGOs across the country, prompting the UNHCR to offer funding towards *crowd management*. This was discussed during a staff meeting on 05.09.08, and the following conversation unfolded:

A   People can't even answer the receptionist's questions because there are so many people around.

B   You walk in, and five people want to talk to you at the same time.

C   We need queue management …

B   Please let's not call him security. If you call him security [under her breath:] with a gun, [louder again:] and you render refugee services, it doesn't match. It doesn't sound nice …

D   He will be a security but we will call him a queue manager (Diary Record 05.09.08).

Based on sheer numbers alone, the refugees became tainted as dangerous: a threat to be managed, controlled, and warded off. While the quoted interchange evidences our discomfort with such reframing of our service users, this did not lead to us critically engaging with our own discourses and practices. Under the prevailing conditions, there seemed to be little time to think matters through carefully. Instead, we took recourse in employing euphemisms so as to render the contradictions less glaring and hence, less uncomfortable to ourselves.

As a UNHCR partner, the organisation was bound by a number of predetermined eligibility criteria, first and foremost amongst them the requirement to that they service only *bona fide* asylum seekers and refugees. The UNHCR (*n.d.*) states unambiguously that, 'migrants are fundamentally different from refugees … Migrants … choose to move in order to improve

their lives. Refugees are forced to flee to save their lives or preserve their freedom'. Yet the causes forcing people to leave, for example, Africa's Great Lakes region, are protracted and intertwined, rendering such a definitive distinction between who is a refugee, and who is not, a somewhat simplistic, and thus inaccurate, reading of the complexities on the ground. Unsurprisingly, it proved difficult in practice to distinguish a *bona fide* (that is, deserving of services) from a *bogus* refugee (that is, undeserving of services). This difficulty is illustrated by an interview I conducted on 02.09.08. My client, Marguerite, had come to South Africa from the DRC some months ago together with her son who was in urgent need of medical care. I noted with reference to the first part of our encounter that,

> I [am] so exhausted … and saturated with my clients' stories … that I feel … completely unable to empathise. I go to consult … F … pages through the file and declares, 'This is not a *bona fide* refugee' (Diary Record 02.09.08).

As a result of our framing of eligibility for services, Marguerite was defined as residing outside of our responsibility and subsequently denied the opportunity to feature as the subject of a moral encounter:

> Instead of assessing how to match [Marguerite's] need with the resources I have, I must now assess her travel route and reasons for leaving the DRC! (Diary Record 02.09.08).

Indeed, the end of my diary entry suggests that there *was* no moral encounter:

> I re-interview [Marguerite] … [Eventually, she] leaves, and I still don't have a sense of who she was. If I met her tomorrow, I would not even remember her face (Diary Record 02.09.13).

Once accepted as *bona fide*, refugees wanting to access support from the organisation's largest (though fast depleting) fund towards short-term rental and groceries assistance, still had to prove that indeed, they were experiencing an emergency. In other words, having determined a service applicant's *in-principle eligibility*, we proceeded to assess their level of *specific need* – this, too, being a precondition to any caring form of engagement on our part. However, we conducted this needs definition irrespective of, and often contrary to, the service users' own understanding of their circumstances – a common practice in welfare services (Bozalek 2012). Consequently, the organisation faced a further set of contradictions: whereas this second layer of eligibility criteria stipulated the presence of an emergency, the socio-economic exclusion, and poverty of refugees was, as noted above, structural.

The sudden influx of requests for services in aftermath of the xenophobic crisis necessitated an institutional response, which my hosts formalised during a string of meetings held in the course of September 2008. During one such meeting on 05.09.08, C noted that generally, 'It's a challenge trying to survive in this country'. She outlined the implications thereof during a meeting held two weeks later: 'It is difficult to tell emergencies apart from ordinary, day-to-day difficulties.' Therefore, and in view of the fact that the UNHCR emergency budget had been almost spent, E concluded that,

> 'We need stricter criteria for prioritisation ... The purpose of the budget line for emergencies ... is to assist bona fide refugees; the most vulnerable amongst them; [and] those who are at risk.' E asks, 'How do we determine risk?'
>
> D   A person could die.
>
> E   [rhetorically] Will a person die if they are evicted? (Diary Record 19.09.08).

The relational fallout from the tightening of our eligibility frame and our unilateral imposition of needs definition on service users is illustrated in the following: Geneviève, a Congolese mother of four, was declined her request for rental support and instead offered referral to a shelter for destitute women. Our rationale was that she could not account (convincingly enough for our purposes) for the absence and apparent failure of her husband to pay the rent himself. I informed Geneviève of our decision. I wrote:

> Intuitively I feel the decision to be wrong ... At the same time, I cannot deny that ... we have to be extremely conservative ... with ... spending. So uncomfortable do I feel that I hide: '... I have been instructed; it is not my responsibility; there is nothing I can do' ...
>
> Tears run down [Geneviève's] motionless cheeks ... Suddenly, I feel completely estranged from her, from myself, from my office cubicle, from the scene, as though I was just watching, not participating (Diary Record 21.08.08).

In this incident of profound alienation, I went beyond just splitting off my sense of responsibility to Geneviève. I severed entire aspects of my being, that is, my morality and emotionality which would have required and at once enabled me to connect with the *Other* – had I not felt unable, and therefore been unwilling, to transgress the rules that we had erected to prevent ourselves from doing exactly that.

10.4.2 On Connecting

Zygmunt Bauman (1993) reminds us that our sense of moral responsibility can resurface unexpectedly, often working at cross-purposes with such rules as are intended to circumscribe and structure the ethics of service user/service provider interactions. Trying to make moral sense of my complicity in denying resources to people who, I was convinced, desperately needed them, I discovered a surprising point of connection:

> Why do I have flashbacks of Singer's novel on the Warsaw Ghetto each time my eyes wander up the blocks of flats lining St Martin's Street and each time my imagination transplants the stories I heard in the office during the day into the flats behind these dirty, broken windows? (Diary Record 13.08.08).

> I am thinking of my grandfather whom I only know from stories … Did he not know that people [in the Warsaw Ghetto] were [apart from everything else] starved to death? Did he not try to help [some Jewish friends] to get out but [felt] powerless to stem the tide? I am not intentionally linking the Inner City and the ... grocery vouchers we distribute to the [Nazi] food administration … I am well aware of the differences ... I did not invite these images. Why do they come? (Diary Record 14.08.08).

We create links between our outer worlds and the encounters we have in them, and our inner worlds in which we establish our sense of who we are across space and time, in order to give meaning to, and locate ourselves as actors in, the world (Clifford and Burke 2009). The situation under discussion speaks to a range of political and moral conflicts, but my imagination did not tap into any of these. I *am* German: the holocaust was my most readily available image.

The two quotes then, represent a double movement. First, I imaginatively expanded the context within which I regarded my experience. This enabled me to see the deprivation of an entire population as a consequence of their systematic definition as *surplus* (Bauman 2004) – and to understand *sur*plus as akin to the notion of *sub*human in that both served to place their definitional targets outside the realm of *Our* responsibility. This imaginative expansion enabled me, in a second step, to re-interpret my own role. Not only was I able to view myself as a bystander to structures of injustice, I could also see that I had power in relation to it: I was able to allocate relief. Instrumental in this regard was my assessment of where individual service users should be placed along a scale stretching from *most deserving* to *most undeserving*. But it was precisely this act of assessing for eligibility that constituted my crossing that line separating a bystander from a perpetrator: with each decision to give relief

to somebody, I contributed to the depletion of our emergency fund, ultimately delivering the legitimation for withholding relief from somebody else. I felt agonised by this; a small measure of how I imagined my grandfather to have felt about his role as civil servant in war-torn Europe.

However, there were also times when connecting with the *Other* was more straightforward, immediate, and direct than this. The final incident discussed in this paper pertains to a young Congolese women; a single mother of two. In my diary, I classified her matter as 'one of the few unambiguous cases that we have been dealing with in a while' (Diary Record 16.09.08). As she fitted within our eligibility frame, a moral encounter was possible, and I found myself able to relate on caring terms. I recorded:

> I do not remember her name, but I … remember her face…
>
> She is [not] earning … enough to live and not enough to die … She says … that she is very tired. Tired of working so hard. Tired of things not getting better. Tired of crying in front of her children. Tired of not being able to go home. Tired of living in such a foreign and harsh land. Tired of life…
>
> I know that the burden she carries is too heavy. And I know that she shouldn't have to carry it alone … [This] seems so sickeningly unjust. She says, 'Look at my shoulders. I look like a man.' We talk. We keep quiet (Diary Record 16.09.08).

Rather than *me* questioning and assessing *her* account of her life, *we* engaged in dialogue. As a result, I was able to recognise the relevance and validity of the *Other*'s experience across all that which otherwise separated us, even if only for a while. Peter Leonard (1997) implores us to act upon such recognition, and to do so in solidarity, not with charity. However, in this interview and others like it, the only act of solidarity I could muster was to –

> Insist on continuing the encounter until I felt we had shared some hope, if for no other purpose than for her to be able to keep on going for another month (Diary Record 16.09.08).

In other words, in the midst of the multi-layered processes of denial and exclusion that, in the context of urban poverty and the aftermath of South Africa's xenophobic pogroms, characterised the refugee services under consideration, there were some 'small openings' (Zembylas 2008:77, 81) where moral connections between care workers and service users were formed, and where a sense of solidarity and response-ability could germinate.

Image 10.1: Window Front in an Inner City Area *(mkorayt, deviantART)*

10.4.3 On Responsibility

Beyond the immediate relational and intra-personal interpretations presented so far, Young's (2006, 2007, 2011) *social connection model of responsibility for justice* adds a political layer of understanding the case study, which enables us to explore alternatives. The social connection model comprises of four main pillars. We touched on one of these already, which is Young's proposition that agents should *desist from isolating* individuals as guilty, blameworthy, and punishable in relation to particular instances of injustice. Instead, Young asks agents to *critically evaluate* the *background conditions* of such situations. We begin this section with a discussion of this point. Thereafter, we consider some of the means by which agents manage to *avoid responsibility*, focusing on the processes of *reification* and *denying connection* (Young 2011). Thereafter we discuss one finding that contradicts Young (2011), arguing that in care practices, the *demands of immediacy* need not hinder, but can actually work as a catalysts for responsibility-taking. The third and fourth pillars of the social

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connection model – responsibility-taking as a *forward-looking* and *collective* activity – frame the final part of our analysis.

Young (2007:177) asserts that –

> When we judge that structural injustices exists, we mean that at least some of the normal … background conditions of action are not morally acceptable. Most of us contribute … to the production and reproduction of structural injustice precisely because we follow the accepted and expected rule and conventions … in a habitual way, without explicit reflection and deliberation on what we do.

Unjust background conditions to the practices considered in the case study are clearly discernible. At the policy level, we noted a disjuncture between the UNHCR's narrow definition of a refugee and the intricate interplay between long and short term, global and regional, push factors lying at the root of the large population movements away from Africa's Great Lakes region. We also noted that prevailing policies of promoting self-reliant self-settlement of refugees are at odds with South Africa's realities of poverty, inequality, and growing evidence of refugees' systematic exclusion from meaningful opportunities of sustenance.

The case study further illustrates some of the processes by which structural contradictions and impossible policy directives can be rendered 'normal', re-enacted, and reproduced in day-to-day care practices. From time to time, the staff at the organisation expressed awareness in this regard. Yet, such awareness did not translate into a questioning of the background conditions in which the organisation was embedded. Instead, care workers became embroiled in a vicious circle of deepening injustice. What might have prompted Dorothee and other staff at the organisation to implement unjust policies rather than trying to resist? Attempts to organise, 'criticise and pressure more powerful actors … to try and remedy injustice', and efforts to hold 'one another to account for what we are doing and not doing to undermine structural injustice', are often hampered by a tendency among agents to deny that they have a 'particular responsibility [in relation to] the harms that come to other people' (Young 2011:153). *Reification* is one of several processes that tend to have this effect:

> Reification consists in actors treating products of human action in particular social relations as though they are things or natural forces (Young 2011:154).

Distinct but interconnected forms of reification are evident in the case study. For example, C's matter-of-fact observation that 'it's a challenge trying to survive in this country' contains

the notion that poverty and unemployment are a constituent component of the South African way of life; but this need not be so. Dorothee's statement that 'as a UNHCR partner, the organisation was *bound* by a number of predetermined eligibility criteria' contains at least one debateable premise: strategies to expand the organisation's services beyond the UNHCR's narrow mandate and to broaden its scope for service user eligibility could be explored. Finally, Dorothee's complaint that 'I *must* … assess [Marguerite's] travel route and reasons for leaving the DRC' is factually incorrect; she could have refused. These examples demonstrate how shared but questionable assumptions about social, political, economic, organisational, and relational constraints can conjure up false feelings of powerlessness in relation to unjust circumstances.

Once unjust background conditions are rendered seemingly unchangeable, structural contradictions cannot but re-surface within relationships of care, in that many service user needs and requests are likely to appear impossible to meet. Consequently, care workers might shift their focus to managing these relationships by directing their efforts towards limiting service users' moral demands for attention and support. This they can achieve by *denying social connection*.

> Common forms … are to deny that we are connected with [others], or to attribute abilities to them which our actions deny … Denying connection and denying … vulnerability …, 'mask[s] what activity acknowledges and substitute[s] a distorted account of its presuppositions' (O'Neill, cited in Young 2011:160).

In the case study, social connections between care workers and service users were frequently prevented and undermined – sometimes inadvertently, sometimes deliberately. For instance, re-defining refugees as *crowds* and potential *threat* facilitated their being disregarded as unique persons who have their own life stories to tell. Moreover, Dorothee's account is awash with examples of defensive attempts to deny social connection (e.g. 'His hands were sticky and sweaty'), denying vulnerability (e.g. 'Will a person die if they are evicted?') and presupposing unrealistic levels of agency on the part of the refugees (e.g. the 'apparent failure of her husband to pay the rent himself').

Still, Dorothee's recognition that her refusal to assist Geneviève might be wrong, signifies a tipping point in the case study. The *demands of immediacy* contained in the situation became so strong that denying social connection to the *Other* became morally intolerable. Drawing

on Levinas, Young (2011:160-163) observes that demands of immediacy often undermine responsibility-taking in that there is a –

> Tension between the general responsibilities of justice and our more concrete responsibilities to particular persons in interactions … This is an irreducible, even tragic tension in moral life (Young 2011:161-163).

In the case study however, the *Other* had travelled thousands of kilometres and crossed several borders – now to *face the care workers directly* – undermining through proximity alone the latter's otherwise fairly successful strategies of denying responsibility. Contrary to Young's assessment therefore, tuning in to the demands of immediacy might be precisely what enables care workers to recognise the responsibilities placed on them by their positioning in relation to structural injustice. In other words, it is *by* attending to the *Other* that care practitioners can begin to meet their responsibility to justice. The question that arises is: what form of *attending* should take place when actors are woven as participants into structural processes of injustice? Dorothee relates how, temporarily and in the privacy of her office, she managed to respond in ways that felt more just. Young (2011:88) contends that in relation to structural injustice, individuals can, and should, engage in actions that help to avoid guilt or prevent harm. However, insofar as such actions remain silent, they are 'moral rather than political'. Contrary to this,

> Political responsibility is strictly collective … To be political, actions must be public and aimed at the possibility or goal of collective action to respond to and intervene in historic events and processes (Young 2011:89).

Dorothee's, then, was a moral, not a political response. At the same time, Young (2011:92) sees an important connection between the two types of responses, both in conceptual and practical terms:

> Political responsibility falls on members of a society by virtue of the fact that they are aware moral agents … We are in a condition of having such political responsibility, and the fact of having it implies an imperative to take political responsibility.

The case study attends at several points to the relationship between individual morality and political responsibility. For example, when Dorothee reflects that at a crucial point, she 'felt unable and therefore [was] unwilling' to transgress her organisation's rules, she articulates an implicit sense that her resolve to resist – alone – had been eroded by the fact that the injustices to which she wished to respond were structural. Another example is Dorothee's

imagination of her grandfather's sense of powerlessness during the holocaust. This became a metaphor for her growing awareness concerning the structural injustices of her time: Agents ought to respond morally, but when viewed against their broader context, individual actions might look insignificant indeed; and the lines separating those who manage to prevent harm, from those who merely stand by, and those who actually cause harm, are easily crossed. Thus, both instances suggest that moral awareness may well include knowing that in a context of structural injustice, political responses are necessary.

If we assume therefore that the organisation's care workers were morally aware, then we must ask: why does the case study contain so many incidents of collusion, and of allowing the surrounding structural injustices to penetrate the agency's work? Why – as in Briskman, Zion and Loff's (2012) study – was there such lack of collective, critical, and reflexive engagement? Because the social service organisation is an important hinge, mediating between societal structures and individual actions, this would have been a precondition for political action:

> Individual … combined with collective actions and policies do make some difference to some people, and occasionally … initiate or complement wider organisational or social change. But this is only likely … if practitioners individually and collectively ask themselves … questions [which] … query the way organisations impinge on and construct … issues … The end-result should aim for … a conducive context for ethical action (Clifford and Burke 2009:206).

It appears that in the case study, the organisational context was not conducive to moral and political practice. When the South African state passed much of its responsibility for refugees on to the UNHCR, who in turn delegated it down to a small group of NGOs, deeply hierarchical relationships ensued in the field. The result is a chain of practice with a bottom end where refugees serve as the somewhat faceless, voiceless and powerless care receivers, and a top end where the South African state, having 'taken care of the problem', has disappeared from sight. According to Tronto (2010), these kinds of disjunctures prevent precisely those structural conditions that should be the focal points of political responsibility, from being seen as constitutive components of care. In other words, if care workers are to take responsibility for justice, a good starting point might be to reflect critically upon the disjunctions, hierarchies, and dependencies that often provide the institutional context for practice in the field of social work with refugees and beyond.

10.5 Conclusion: Towards an Ethics of Responsibility for Justice

This paper explored the notion of *responsibility for justice* in the context of South Africa's regime of refugee reception and care. We explicated the ways in which this context is structurally unjust. A key concern was to show *how* in such a context, public discourses, organisational rules, processes and individual practices converge to enable or disable the activities of care workers. The case study illustrates some of the ways in which structural injustices can set up individual carers in positions where they may find it difficult to avoid responding in morally wrong ways to particular *Others*. While in specific instances, opportunities to avoid or withdraw from such situations may exist, Young (2006, 2007, 2011) argues that the same does not hold true for agents' broader – political – responsibility concerning the structural injustices which give rise to these morally compromising situations in the first place.

We find therefore that for an *ethics of responsibility* to be developed for justice in social and other care work, it is necessary to move beyond merely recording a presence of structural injustice; beyond noting that somebody who ought to do something about it failed to do so; and beyond responding with a normative statement to the effect that in future, they should do so. An ethics of responsibility requires us to pay attention to the intricate processes that translate structural injustices into social care settings, and to the dynamics that cause them to be either reproduced or resisted by those who work at the 'coal face' of, for example, asylum seeker and refugee reception and care. This ought to enable us – rather than blaming practitioners for failing to resist, or worse, for actively promoting structural injustices – to provide a more detailed analysis of the workings of social injustice in everyday life. It is on this basis that we can then make practical suggestions about how social and other care workers could respond to promote more just and caring societies.

Young's social connection model offers promising ways to explore caring professions' responsibility for social justice. This model is more forward than backward looking, making it suitable for instances where the goal is to act upon injustices rather than merely apportioning blame to certain parties. In the case under consideration, it would be necessary for the social and other care workers, together with the refugees and others who are in some way associated with the issue – such as public interest lawyers – to act collectively to change the

socially unjust conditions to which refugees in South Africa are subjected. Professional organisations and practitioners working with refugees and other vulnerable people can invoke their individual and collective responsibility across spatial and political boundaries so as to rearticulate their moral sensibilities critically and in ways that subvert policies and practices that perpetuate structural injustice.

Young's model highlights the need for collective action against the consequences of subjugation, oppression, and structural disadvantage, underscoring that – given the structural nature of these realities – no one individual or group can assume exclusion from their ethical and political responsibility. This means that all implicated in this responsibility need to reflect upon their habitual following of accepted rules and conventions which are assumed to be normal background conditions, but which have been illustrated in this article to be complicit in structural injustices. Young's model and its implementation in the context of this study can inspire social workers, educators, and researchers to develop creative and contextually sensitive practices that facilitate care, support, and solidarity by virtue of the fact that social actors are inevitably interdependent. Further articulation of social workers' moral and political agency in other contexts will offer the potential to enrich the prospects of empowerment, resistance, and hope, in social work and other care practices.

Chapter 11
Summary of Findings, Conclusions & Recommendations

This study set out to explore the implications of displacement and cross-border migration in South Africa for social work's commitment to social justice. To this end, I implemented a multisite ethnographic/autoethnographic study: for the three months of August to October 2008, I worked as a social work practitioner and participant observer with a refugee services provider in Durban, rendering direct line, short term services for individuals and families, mainly from the DRC, Burundi and Rwanda. The implementation of my study coincided with South Africa's first xenophobic pogroms, which displaced large numbers of foreign residents in the country. Twelve families thus displaced, all refugees from the DRC, Burundi and Rwanda, were hosted by a local church, which I was able to add as second site to the research. From June 2008 to October 2009, I participated in, and observed the church's response to the displacement, studying the unfolding relationships between members of the displaced group and members of the receiving community, including myself and other practitioners of care. In both sites, I collected field notes and kept a reflexive diary. I also conducted life story interviews with eight cross-border migrants from a diverse range of sites, and held depth individual interviews with practitioners of care at the church and the refugee services provider.

The empirical papers that emerged from the study have all been published as scholarly articles and were presented in Part 2 of the thesis. Two publications explored the perspectives and experiences of the cross-border migrants and were based upon seven of the life story interviews (Chapter 7: *Dreams*, and Chapter 8: *Subjectivities of Survival*). Two publications focused on the second research site and were based upon my field notes, life story interviews and my interviews with one practitioner of care at the church. Chapter 8: *Encountering the Other* explored the subject positions of, and relationships between, cross-border migrants and members of the receiving communities as they unfolded over time, and Chapter 9: *Reflections on Misframing* explored the impact of broader structures, processes and dynamics on the perspectives, subject positions and unfolding relationships between cross-border

migrants and members of the receiving community. The fifth publication, Chapter 10: *Assuming Responsibility for Justice*, foregrounded the perspectives of the practitioners of care working with the refugee services provider. It was based entirely on my diary records and focuses on the perspectives of the practitioners of care, their subject positions and relationships with their service users, and the impact thereupon of broader societal structures, processes and dynamics. I summarise these findings below in Sections 11.1.1 to 11.1.3. While in Chapters 6 to 9, I gave implicit attention to the ways in which responses offered by social workers, other practitioners of care and members of the receiving community may be considered socially just or unjust, Chapter 10 dealt with this question explicitly, and begins to articulate the implications of cross-border migration for social work's responsibility for justice. I summarise these findings in Section 11.1.4.

On its own, Part 2 of the thesis revealed much about the nature, processes and dynamics of social injustice surrounding the lives of cross-border migrants in South Africa. However, it did not fully develop the implications thereof for social work's commitment to social justice. To achieve that end, I draw on Part 1 of the thesis, which I completed after all the articles contained in Part 2 had been submitted for publication. Chapter 2 dealt with the study's economic, political, social, cultural and ideological context, and Chapter 3 with the ethics of social work with cross-border migrants. Chapter 3 also critiqued the global definition and the profession's statement of ethical principles. Both documents insufficiently incorporate the interplay between being, knowing and doing social work, and the ways this dynamic interacts with the contextual conditions within which social work practice is situated. To close this gap, Chapter 4 explored a range of feminist relational, ethics of care and anti-oppressive debates regarding the nature of social injustice, its dynamics and effects on social workers and other practitioners of care, and the implications thereof for a conceptualisation of *just* practice. Finally, Chapter 5 provided an overview of the study's methodology and a reflection on the research process as a whole – including the impact of contextual conditions on my own role and social positioning as a researcher. Together, these chapters form the basis for Section 11.2, which serves to integrate the study's findings of into an overarching set of conclusions regarding social work's commitment to social justice. Lastly, Section 11.3 rounds off the thesis with some recommendations for social work practice and the formulation of aspirational statements, social work education and training, and further research.

11.1 Summary of Findings

The study was designed to meet four sets of research objectives, which I had formulated in relation to its three participant groups. These four sets of objectives were presented in Chapter 1 and pertain to: the particular perspectives articulated by members of the different participant groups (Objectives 1.1 and 1.2); the subject positions and unfolding relationships between members of the three participant groups (Objectives 2.2 and 2.2); the impact of broader structures, processes and dynamics on the perspectives, social positioning and unfolding relationships between members of the different participant groups (Objectives 3.1 and 3.2); and the conceptual and ethical implications of the study's empirical findings (Objectives 4.1 and 4.2). However, in the following, I denote the study's three participant groups more flexibly than set out in the study's aim and objectives: I refer to the *cross-border migrants* at times simply as *migrants*, use the terms *members of the receiving community* and *community members* interchangeably, and employ the term *practitioners* to incorporate both *social workers* and *other practitioners of care* – unless I make a point that pertains specifically to the profession of social work. This is to aid the flow of this chapter's arguments. Furthermore, in the course of this study, I occupied multiple roles: community member, practitioner at the church and at the refugee services organisation, participant, observer, and author. Nonetheless in this chapter, I reserve the first person account to refer to my roles as author and practitioner and use the third person in connection with the migrants and community members. This deviates from the style used in Part 2 of the study, but assists with the clarity of my concluding arguments.

11.1.1 Findings Concerning Research Objectives 1.1 and 1.2

The first set of objectives pertained to how the *cross-border migrants* experienced the economic, political, social, cultural, and ideological contexts in which they lived (Objective 1.1), and how *members of the receiving community, social workers* and *other practitioners of care* perceived both the migrants they encountered and the economic, political, social, cultural, and ideological contexts in which these encounters were situated (Objective 1.2).

I presented my findings regarding the experiences of the *cross-border migrants* in Chapters 6 to 9. Here, participants spoke of a web of structural and personal reasons for leaving their respective home countries, in which political, social, cultural, and economic factors interacted such as to a diminish their life choices so that fleeing, or migrating, came to appear as the most viable choice. Political violence and civil war played a role in the event preceding the migration of four participants, and gender was a factor that had further limited the choices available to at least two of the female migrants. Both men and women presented the reasons for their departure and journey to South Africa as traumatic, difficult to talk about and inflecting their experiences of the present, especially of the pogroms just prior to this study.

For several migrants, coming to South Africa had held the promise of a more peaceful and prosperous life, with opportunities to develop and do well. However, life in South Africa was characterised by economic deprivation, violence, systematic forms of exclusion, and gender-based forms of oppression. Formal work opportunities were described as difficult to access and exploitative, and informal opportunities as generally insufficient to cover basic needs such as food, shelter, and education. Meanwhile, the state appeared less as a resource and source of protection than as a source of exclusion, exploitation, violence, and neglect. Findings in this regard pertained to the role of the law and law enforcement agencies, the Department of Home Affairs, and parastatal agencies (such as the small business development institution Umsobomvu). Two participants spoke of their interactions with practitioners in formal welfare organisation in ways that revealed antagonistic relationships (see Section 11.1.2), with one stating that these were not people who could be trusted to understand or care.

Generally, the migrants I encountered in the course of this study experienced public discourse and practices in ways that revealed South Africa's deeply-entrenched culture of *Othering*. Such discourses and practices were linked to ideologies surrounding post-apartheid nation-building, the outsider status of foreign nationals, and the pogroms preceding the study. Participants framed these experiences as a source of trauma, or of re-traumatisation for those who were already traumatised, and as a source of both physical and mental anguish. Terms and phrases used to describe their emotional experiences included 'anger', 'tiredness', 'exhaustion', 'anxiety', 'fear', 'hopelessness', 'no longer being able to dream' about, and plan for, the future, and with that, a loss of a sense of 'being human'. Participants' narratives

revealed a widespread sense of entrapment, resignation and self-blame, feeling powerless, voiceless and out of control. Suicidal ideations were expressed by two participants. Only one participant emphasised her willingness to laugh and fight in the face of adversity, but this was an exception to the general pattern of strongly negative emotions.

In Chapters 8 and 9, I discussed the kinds of perceptions *members of the receiving community* had of the migrants, and of the contexts surrounding their encounters. I found that participants appreciated the moral wrong of the xenophobic violence, the displacements it had caused, and the poverty and economic deprivation experienced by the displaced. Community members also expressed an awareness of their own comparative affluence and privilege, together with a sense of might in relation to the challenges experienced by the migrants, which ultimately turned out to be inflated. By and large however, they did not regard themselves as directly implicated in the xenophobic discourses, anti-foreign violence, or the general social, political and economic exclusions experienced by the migrants. In its totality, the context surrounding their encounters seemed difficult indeed to appreciate. Instead, they attributed these phenomena to the actions of others, or to broader systems and structures which they tended to reify, for example, as a 'brewing recession' that forced 'people' to 'take their money out of the country'. Hence, community members did not seem to regard themselves as responsible for the hardships of the displaced beyond a certain point of discomfort or sacrifice. As a result, initial perceptions of the migrants as victims and deserving members of their faith community morphed into perceptions in which the displacees' *Otherness* placed them in seeming competition with local members of the church. Seen through this lens, the migrants appeared increasingly as blameworthy for at least some of their troubles and therefore, as undeserving of continued support. Accordingly, emotions shifted from 'a real desire to be involved' to indignation and resentment, with profound implications for the unfolding relationships (see Section 11.1.2).

The perceptions *practitioners at the church* had of the migrants and their surrounding contexts, also discussed in Chapters 8 and 9, overlapped with those of other community members. Our emotions shifted from that sense of responsibility and might which had dominated the initial mood in the receiving community at large, to feeling 'drained', 'exhausted', 'helpless', 'powerless', and 'angry'. These latter feelings mirrored the emotional experiences of the participating migrants more closely than did the former.

Compared to this, the perceptions articulated by *practitioners at the refugee services organisation* (presented in Chapter 10) were more consistent – and shaded by the organisation's high degree of formalisation. Here, encounters were circumscribed by well-established interpretative patterns, ways of relating, rules, and procedures (see Section 11.1.3). As practitioners at the refugee services provider, we tended to reify the contextual conditions of our work from the most general to the most immediate levels, including our understanding of service users' living conditions (hard), of the organisation's degree of independence (bound), major determinants of the organisational functioning (depleting budgets), and the practitioners' roles (assessors of eligibility). This rendered important contextual layers of our work as seemingly outside the ambit of professional intervention. In trying to reconcile the contradictions between these ostensibly unchangeable conditions, we repeatedly framed the nature of hardship afflicting our service users in ways that were out of sync with the experiences narrated by the migrants, and offered interventions irrespective of the needs articulated by our service users. This context constrained the ways in which we regarded the service users themselves. In the aftermath of the May 2008 pogroms, service users appeared in numbers that seemed far too large for us to cope with, and as 'floodgates opened', they caused, for example, 'claustrophobia' and 'resentment'. And because there was a perceived surplus of *Them*, migrants entered the moral ambit of our work primarily as members of two categories: either genuine and deserving or bogus and undeserving. Such perceptions deeply affected service user/service provider relationships, and this is the subject of Section 11.1.2.

11.1.2 Findings Concerning Research Objectives 2.1 and 2.2

The study's second set of objectives was concerned with how *cross-border migrants* positioned themselves in relation to social workers, other practitioners of care and members of the receiving community as they sought to access rights, opportunities and resources (Objective 2.1), as well as exploring how *practitioners of care* and *community members* positioned themselves in response to the migrants' quest for access to rights, opportunities and resources (Objective 2.2).

As discussed in the preceding section, the participating *migrants* appeared to relate from a general position of powerlessness. By the time they met the community members and practitioners in the context of the study, they had already been exposed to, for example, people in authority asking for bribes, not heeding calls for help, or first buying and then confiscating their wares (see Chapters 6 and 9). Descriptions of work and previously experienced social relations included such terms and phrases as having been 'brought to the lowest level', not having 'a word to say' (Chapter 7), and having been subjected to various forms of racist and xenophobic treatment. As far as formal welfare services were concerned, one participant described her experience with trying to accessing support in a way that resembled antagonistic rather than caring relationships (see Chapter 6). Her insistence on being provided with help in spite of these apparent antagonisms is mirrored in those of my field notes in which I reflected on feeling cornered, literally and figuratively, by my service users (see Chapter 10). Chapter 10 also revealed how, when all attempts at soliciting support failed, service users could be left in positions of helplessness and despair. As an alternative response, one participant reacted vengefully to what he described as 'degrading' and 'humiliating' interactions with practitioners at the refugee services provider: planning to defraud a construction company, he justified his anticipated actions by equating his entitlement to dignity with a renewed claim to control, while representing his expressed lack of care for the resultant 'bit of unfairness' as an unavoidable corollary (see Chapter 7).

A sense of helplessness, too, shone through *practitioners'* rendering of their relationship with migrants, both at the refugee service provider (see Chapter 10) and during the latter parts of their encounters at the church (see Chapters 8 and 9). If there was a palpable sense of helplessness, however, this did not imply powerlessness, and in Chapter 10, I described in detail how at the refugee services organisation, we used the power we had in relation to the service users to manage, control, and ward them off. In this set-up, migrants were treated as the sort of people who needed to be found out as they always potentially misrepresented themselves – for example, as bona fide refugees when in fact they were not, or as more vulnerable, more at risk, and more deserving than the depleting budgets seemed to allow. One important outcome of this rendering was an apparent breakdown in service user/service provider relationships, as signified in descriptive terms such as 'estranged', 'alienated', 'split off', and 'unable to empathise'. In these regards, the ways migrants and practitioners

described their relationships with members of the other group showed both similarities and complementarities, giving rise to what I consider to be vicious circles of suspicion, antagonism, and deteriorating relationships. Yet, there were also openings in which different perceptions surfaced. Thus, I discussed in Chapter 10 how, when individual faces became distinguishable from the mass, more dialogical forms of engagement were possible. This, in turn, enabled moments of recognition, both cognitively and emotionally, that what the *Other* was going through was indeed a grave injustice. However, at the refugee services organisation, such dialogical engagement and shared experiences were exceptional and generally did not translate into different relational routines.

Another exception to the generally antagonistic ways of relating surfaced at the church during the early encounters between migrants and *community members* (see Chapters 8 and 9). Even though the latter did not appear to perceive themselves as fully implicated in the hardships experienced by the displaced (see Section 11.1.1), congregants initially received the former as new members of their faith community, deserving of various forms practical support. In Chapters 8 and 9, I found that *migrants* tended to perceive this as having been recognised in ways that provided much needed respite from their generally harsh life circumstances. In response, one of the migrants spoke about wanting to reciprocate the help received rather than showing gratitude, thus asserting a desire to be treated as equal.

As indicated in Section 11.1.1 however, the initial show of solidarity and 'desire to be involved' wore off over time. In the eyes of *community members*, certain behaviours and actions eventually rendered the migrants blameworthy for at least some of their hardships (see Chapters 8 and 9). The growing sense of the displacees' *Otherness*, indignation and resentment among some community members was mirrored in *migrants*' increasing vocalisation of disappointment, disapproval and outrage about some of their unmet expectations of their hosts. As these differences emerged and became more pronounced over time, community members and migrants together re-enacted well established patterns of relating across South Africa's race, class and citizen groups. The contextual conditions that facilitated this kind of re-enactment form the subject of Section 11.1.3.

11.1.3 Findings Concerning Research Objectives 3.1 and 3.2

The study's third set of objectives was to explore how broader *structures, processes and dynamics circumscribed and conditioned encounters* between cross-border migrants on the one hand and social workers, other practitioners of care and members of the receiving community on the other (Objective 3.1), and how these encounters *enacted, reinforced or subverted* broader structures, processes and dynamics (Objective 3.2). The main argument of this section is that these broader structures, processes and dynamics circumscribed and conditioned the encounters at the heart of the study *by virtue* of participants enacting, reinforcing or subverting them. It was because of pre-existing interpretive, behavioural and relational patterns which members of all participant groups brought to their encounters that we tended to enact and reinforce some of the structural constraints surrounding us. These patterns were thus the means by which the study's economic, political, social, cultural, and ideological contexts worked to constrain our encounters, inasmuch as they were disrupted by important incidents of subversion.

All the chapters in Part 2 of the thesis contain accounts of the ways in which *broader structures, processes and dynamics of injustice were enacted and reinforced*. In Sections 11.1.1 and 11.1.2, I already dealt with *migrants*' experiences of the contexts in which they lived and suggested that the former tended to relate to practitioners and community members from a position of relative powerlessness. What the summative arguments of these two sections amount to is, firstly, that migrants experienced the economic, political, social, and cultural conditions impacting on their lives as deeply intertwined, and secondly, that their interpretations of these factors were inflected by broader ideologies, which rendered these contextual conditions even more damaging. This point is illustrated in particular by examples of internalised forms of oppression provided across Part 2 of the thesis, including a broad range of negative emotions and self-perceptions (Chapter 6 to 9); lateral violence (Chapters 6 and 7); and the display of a 'cautious, low profile conservatism' (Chapter 9). In addition, I highlighted the constraining effects of patriarchal ideologies on women's choices and possibilities for action (Chapter 6).

The summative arguments presented so far also suggest that the workings of ideology had a complementary effect on *community members* and *practitioners*. Thus, I noted in Sections

11.1.1 and 11.1.2 that community members tended not to regard themselves as directly implicated in the structural forms of exclusion, deprivation, and violent displacements of the migrants. Moreover, community members displayed an unrealistic sense of might in relation to the afflictions of the latter while at the same time tending to reify broader systems and structures within which their encounters and interactions were embedded (see Chapters 8 and 9). In short, there was a lack of critical awareness of how broader structural conditions were connected to their relative power and privilege, and to the relative powerlessness and disadvantage of the migrants. Then, as relationships grew more complex and as hopes to make a difference in the displacees' lives were disappointed, ideologies regarding the displacees' *Otherness* (Chapter 8), blameworthiness and lack of desert began to alter interactions (Chapter 9). Chapters 9 and 10 contain examples of a similar lack of critical awareness among practitioners, both at the church and at the refugee services organisation.

I would like to propose now that it was ultimately these kinds of internalised forms of oppression and lack of critical awareness that made those relationships and responses seem 'natural' and which re-created the unjust conditions surrounding us. They also rendered exceptional those ways of relating that intercepted, undermined, and subverted unjust historical – that is, economic, political, social and cultural – scripts of interpreting, behaving and relating under conditions of structural injustice. In this thesis, I presented three major examples of this dynamic. There are, firstly, the complementary roles assumed by members of the three participant groups at the church as we formed evolving, but persistently dyadic, *Us versus Them* relationships between the community members and practitioners (that is, a group of predominantly white, comparatively affluent South Africans) on the one hand, and the migrants (that is, a group of entirely poor, black foreigners) on the other. Whether we related as *victims and rescuers*, as *hosts and kitchen personnel* or as *locals and foreigners*, we kept enacting, and thereby reinforced, not just historical scripts concerning class and race relations inherited from colonial and apartheid South Africa, but also contemporary scripts of nation-building in post-apartheid South Africa (see Chapters 2, 8, and Section 11.2 below).

Secondly, I was able to show the ways in which these scripted relationships were structured further by a well-established welfare discourse of *the deserving versus the undeserving poor*, of which we merely created a locally specific version (see Chapters 3, 9, and Section 11.2). A third example is the relative ease with which we as practitioners at the refugee services

organisation, assumed the role of *gatekeepers*, seeking to control service users' seemingly uncontrollable demands on seemingly scarce resources (see Chapters 3, 10, and Section 11.2). Consequently, migrants appeared to perceive us as uncaring, and to act out an apparent conviction that to access resources, they would have to *appear in need according to the organisation's gatekeeping rules* rather than trusting that service providers would recognise their needs (see Chapters 3, 6, 7 and 10). While exacerbated by the crisis of displacement in the wake of South Africa's first xenophobic pogroms, these relational scripts are neither new, nor are they a local phenomenon.

Arguably, it is *because* in all of these dyadic relationships participants were able to draw on scripts that are so well established and readily available across space and time, that members of the relatively privileged and powerful groups in the study (that is, *community members* and *practitioners*), seemed to have little reason to critically interrogate the structural causes of displacement, cross-border migration, exclusion, deprivation, and interpersonal violence experienced by the migrants, or their own implication in any of these. Conversely, *migrants* expressed an acute awareness of these injustices, both in the life story interviews and in the recorded encounters with members of the other participant groups. At the same time, they consistently articulated experiences of voicelessness when it came to sharing their knowledge and understanding of these injustices with those whom they perceived as able to do something about it. Migrants spoke about feeling voiceless in the context of their encounters with community members (see Chapters 8 and 9), in relation to other institutions of the state (see Chapters 6, 7, and 9), and in connection with practitioners at the refugee services organisation (see Chapter 7 and 10). Against this background, it is probably unsurprising that throughout Chapters 6 to 9, I was able to demonstrate how vicious circles of migrants' perceived inability to meaningfully shape their own lives, negative emotions, self-blame, and lateral violence were exacerbated by each additional experience of voicelessness when trying unsuccessfully to relate to members of the other groups as equals, to articulate their experiences, or to assume greater control over the course of their lives.

Yet, there were also *incidents of subversion* of these dominant scripts, intercepting and disrupting the overall course of events at the church and the established ways of relating at the refugee services organisation – even if they did not amount to any structural change. At the church, I documented the initial use of an inclusive membership frame, which encouraged

small acts of recognition, solidarity, and redistribution from community members. This gave rise, in turn, to migrants expressing a desire to continue relating on a par, and to a normative expectation that such acts of inclusion, recognition, solidarity and redistribution should continue (see Chapters 8 and 9). At the refugee services organisation, I documented one incident where I found myself able to relate to one of my service users on caring terms, as a result of which I could, albeit fleetingly, engage in dialogue and feel more able to recognise her and the validity of her experiences, communicate some form of solidarity, and share a sense of hope. What this offer meant to its recipient is not known, however, as our relationship was too time-limited for her to give me any feedback as to what difference, if any, our encounter had made in her life (see Chapter 10).

These intermittent disruptions of the established scripts all emerged within particular situations, in which – based upon our *face-to-face encounters* – community members and practitioners had the opportunity to experience, and appreciate, a *social connection* (Chapter 10) and *interdependency* (Chapter 8) with the *Other*. This enabled us to bear *witness* to at least some of structural injustice experienced by the migrants (Chapters 9 and 10), which in turn allowed a *moral impulse* (Chapter 8) and certain *demands of immediacy* to surface (Chapter 10). What these incidents also have in common, however, is what I described in Part 2 of the study as a lack in our political understanding of the problems we were responding to (see Chapter 9), and which gave rise to moral responses at the individual and interpersonal levels rather than collective, and therefore political, action (see Chapter 10). In not one of these incidents did we appear to overcome what I would like to term, following the arguments in Chapter 4, the *constraints of* the *particularity* of the situations to which community members, and practitioners sought to respond.

There was one other, qualitatively different, example of subversion, which is the imaginative connection I made between my own positioning and actions in relation to the structural injustices surrounding my work at the refugee services organisation, with a comparable situation, however vastly removed in terms of space and time (see Chapter 10). In thought therefore, I was able to overcome the constraints of the particular situation in which I found myself. Still, this overcoming was an *internal* process, which broadened the historical and spatial horizons of *my* experience and as such opened important avenues for re-interpreting *my* role in relation to structural processes of injustice, and for re-defining *my* responsibilities

in relation to it. What was lacking was any kind of sharing, of jointly trying to make sense of this or other, similarly significant, incidents that other participants in the study might have experienced. In practice therefore, I remained isolated and unable to overcome the constraints of the particular injustices in which I had become embroiled. This isolation was really only overcome four years later when in writing the article, *Assuming Responsibility for Justice* (Chapter 10), my co-authors and I collectively interpreted the incident.

In other words, the thesis' only example of a more collective, political approach to cross-border migration and displacement was linked to the process aspect of the study, and occurred well after the lived events, as part of a theoretical analysis. If, however, political responses to unjust structures and processes are important yet difficult to develop under the limiting conditions of contemporary social work practice, then the obvious task at hand is to consider just what is required to inspire changes in relational routines, facilitate collective practices of reflection, and support joint struggles against prevailing forms of injustice. I return to the significance of the research process and to the ethical and practice implication of this particular set of findings in Section 11.2: Conclusions. First however, I summarise the findings that pertain to the study's fourth objective.

11.1.4 Findings Concerning Research Objectives 4.1 and 4.2

The study's fourth set of objectives served to explore the ways in which the *responses* that social workers, other practitioners of care and members of the receiving community offered to cross-border migrants might be considered socially just or unjust (Objective 4.1), and to articulate aspects of social work's *responsibility* for justice as they emerge from the above explorations (Objective 4.2). To determine some of the ways in which the responses of practitioners and community members might be considered socially just or unjust, and to articulate aspects of social work's responsibility for justice that flow from the study's findings, I draw on the theoretical approaches upon which Chapters 6 to 10 were based, and on these chapters' concluding sections, respectively.

In Chapter 6, my co-authors and I worked with Martha Nussbaum's (2000, 2006) list of ten *central capabilities*. Focusing on individual agents and what each person might require to lead a good life, Nussbaum (2000, 2006) asserts that these central capabilities can be used as a

'benchmark' against which to consider the extent to which particular economic, social, political, cultural and ideological arrangements are socially just or unjust. Chapter 7 was structured around Amartya Sen's (1999, 2009) argument that the question of *individual agency* is an important one to consider in any debate about social justice. This consideration must necessarily include questions regarding the extent to which societal arrangements enable people to choose between different valuable beings and doings. The contributions made to this study by the participating migrants leave little doubt that according to the standards proposed by both Nussbaum (2000, 2006) and Sen (1999, 2009), economic, political, social and cultural conditions in post-apartheid South Africa cannot be considered just. Additionally, the effects of ideologies concerning, for example, race, class, gender, and citizenship relations, obscured some of the ways in which these conditions are unjust. Interventions offered by practitioners and community members appear to have afforded temporary relief only. In this regard therefore, none of the documented responses can be considered socially just. Yet to the extent that the injustices at the centre of this study consisted of structural processes which entangled all participants – albeit in different ways – it is hardly surprising that individual interventions did not result, either directly or immediately, in an expansion of migrants' capabilities or sense of agency. Thus, while I found that the concepts of capability and agency helpfully informed my critique of economic, political, social and cultural arrangements, and of the workings of ideology in post-apartheid South Africa, a discussion of the ways in which the responses of practitioners and community members may be considered socially just or unjust should not rely on these concepts alone.

Theoretical approaches that focus on issues of process, human connection, relationality and interdependence (see Chapter 4) rather than regarding individuals separately and isolating the question of their agency, supported the data analysis of Chapters 8, 9, and 10. Chapter 8 was inspired by Iris Marion Young's (1990) discussion of group differences, and my co-author and I considered how these differences gave rise to processes of inter-group domination, oppression, and resistance among members of the three participant groups at the church. Chapter 9 served to demonstrate how the injustice of *misframing* (Fraser 2005, 2008a, 2008b) translated from South Africa's legal and policy frameworks and public discourse of nation-building via practices of exclusion and misrecognition, into the way the study's participants at the church related to one another. In Chapter 10, finally, my co-authors and I applied Iris

Marion Young's (2006, 2007, 2011) *social connection model of responsibility for justice*. We explored how participants' lack of criticality regarding the unjust background conditions of their work, practices of reification, a denial of social connection, and failure to take responsibility for justice in a forward-looking and collective manner, implicated practitioners of care at the refugee services organisation in broader processes and structures of social injustice. To the extent that responses from community members and practitioners , both at the church and the refugee services organisation, were impacted and shaped by unjust structures and processes and therefore formed part of their enactment and re-creation, they may be considered unjust. In this way, theoretical approaches that focus on the phenomena of human connection, relationality, and interdependence, assisted in highlighting the processes and dynamics by which members of these two participant groups became implicated in their surrounding structures of injustice.

By the same token, when looking at Chapters 8, 9, and 10 together, responses come to light which may be considered just in a number of ways. *Demands of immediacy* (Chapter 10) surfaced at several points and were felt as a *moral impulse* (Chapter 8). In both cases, this surfacing was linked to participants' *face-to-face encounters* (Chapter 8), and to a recognition of another's *face* (Chapter 10). The subsequent responses were mediated by being placed in relation to the *Other*: there was a movement from encounter through a felt connection and a sense of response-ability, to, finally, an action. Examples of such action provided in Chapters 8, 9, and 10 included: offering 'membership', engaging, expressing 'solidarity', 'witnessing', 'recognising', giving things, giving practical support, and giving 'hope'. Even if such movements did not translate into sustained, collective actions and virtuous circles of justice, there were signs of possibilities, I believe, each time that migrants expressed an appreciation of these efforts, articulated a desire to relate on a par, formulated a normative expectation based upon the promises that lay in these efforts, and made their resentment, consternation or moral outrage known when this expectation was not met. Conversely, refusing the demands of immediacy and keeping a moral impulse at bay appeared in Chapters 8, 9, and 10 to require community members and practitioners to mobilise and tap into available stocks of hostility: 'resenting', 'blaming', cutting loose, and warding off migrants and the demands that they made. Yet to the extent that these disconnecting experiences, feelings and actions

provided the substance for joint reflection, they, too, constituted the basis for important instances of just practice (see Chapter 4).

Several *responsibilities for justice* arise from this study's findings, as per the concluding sections of Chapters 6 to 10. At the end of each publication, my co-authors and I stressed the need for social workers to listen, and to allow their service provision to be informed by the experiences, perceptions, and needs expressed by their service users. This of course presupposes that service user/service provider relationships generally allow and encourage service users' expression of their experiences, perceptions, and needs, and that practitioners are normally able to impact organisational, and social policy. Against the background of the study's findings, however, these presuppositions can hardly be made, and I return to this concern in Section 11.2. Beyond this general point, we articulated a number of specific responsibilities, which I summarise in the next few paragraphs as *being mindful*, *targeting interventions*, and as developing an *ethics of responsibility for justice*.

All the arguments contained in Part 2 of this thesis imply that social workers should be mindful of the complex web of injustices rooted in broader, historical conditions at the global, regional and national levels, as these are easily enacted and re-created – but can also be subverted – in service user/service provider relationships. Each chapter illustrates the exclusionary functions of territorial borders and nation state membership, but in Chapters 6, 7, and 8, my co-authors and I also drew attention to some of the intersecting challenges emanating from unjust gender, class, and race relations. Then, in Chapters 8, 9, and 10, we stressed the importance of social workers and other practitioners of care being mindful about their own social positioning, and the value of engaging reflexively and critically with how this might inflect their experiences and perceptions, cause them to regard unjust rules as 'normal', and thus, burden their relationships with service users. Finally, we pointed out that while historically, social work has been pre-occupied with 'people in need' (see Chapter 3), privilege, too, requires attention. This was because firstly, 'privilege capacitates … its holders to offer much needed ameliorative and reparative action when atrocities have been committed', and secondly, because 'as beneficiaries of structurally entrenched maldistributions and exclusions', members of privileged groups often perpetrate 'the injustice of misrecognition in their support' (Chapter 8). In other words, social work's responsibility for justice requires the profession to reconsider carefully to whom and what its interventions need to be directed,

and to what ends. Moreover, when considered from the theoretical perspectives applied in this study, responsibility for justice requires attention to the complex and burdened relationships formed under structural conditions of injustice.

Part 2 of the thesis contains a number of specific suggestions regarding the kinds of interventions that flow from social work's responsibility for justice in the field of cross-border migration. To begin with, the South African debate has yet to resolve the question of specialisation. Dominating one extreme, are practices that single out certified refugees and asylum seekers for specialised services and which in turn are dominated by a focus on material relief. At the other extreme, it has been proposed that there should be no specialised services for cross-border migrants at all (see Chapter 7). Yet, the root causes of cross-border migration need to be appreciated as complex and intertwined, while citizenship-based forms of exclusion while pervasive, are by no means the only, or even the most important form of injustice. What is called for, therefore, is a multi-faceted approach that views social injustice as a complex of structural processes that marginalise entire groups of people along a range of identity markers, and then pits them against one another in competition for survival.

In Chapter 7, I proposed that interventions should transcend their economic focus and attend also to issues of 'displacement, trauma and loss, and the problematic outcomes these can have for people's personal well-being and relationships'. In addition, my co-authors and I recommended in Chapter 6 that the 'gendered nature of women's experiences and the ways in which these experiences influence their particular needs, and their particular ways of asserting agency in response to the challenges they face' should be considered routinely. At the levels of group and communities work practice, we suggested that interventions should be directed 'towards promoting respectful co-existence between people', as well as facilitating 'a joint search' for responses to the injustices they face (Chapter 8). Social work interventions at the level of policy should seek to strike 'a balance between contributing to wider civil society initiatives that intervene in the structural, socio-economic challenges afflicting South Africa as a whole' and targeting those exclusionary discourses and practices, rules and ideologies 'that affect cross-border migrants more specifically' (Chapter 7). This implies that social work also has a responsibility to advocate for a better resourcing of services in the field of cross-border migration so as to 'match the number of people and complexity' of their challenges (Chapter 6).

The view of social injustice as structural processes also has implications for the formulation of intervention goals. Given the structural nature and the pervasiveness of injustices in the field, I implied in Chapter 9 that social workers should avoid setting unattainable goals in terms of what individual service providers and service users can be expected to achieve. For example, the assumption that unjust structures will simply change as a result of social work interventions is unrealistic when such structures comprise intricate, historically grown weave of discourses and practices, rules and ideologies that criss-cross global, national, and local, economic, political, social and cultural spheres of life. Equally unrealistic is the expectation that service users become self-reliant in a context where self-reliance is extremely difficult to accomplish.

However, this is not to suggest that social workers should disregard people's desire for engaging in livelihoods that provide them with a sense of 'agency, dignity and hope' (Chapter 7), or that unjust discourses, practices, rules and ideologies should not be targeted for intervention. Instead, I proposed in Chapter 9 that social work should aim towards creating 'enclaves of just practice', while at the same time striving to be part of an overall political process that aims to render South African society more just. This proposition directs attention towards the organisational context in which much of social work is practiced. In this study, both the church and the refugee services organisation were shown to be contexts that were less than conducive to critically-reflexive practice, to collective political action, or to relationships in which inclusiveness, solidarity, recognition, redistribution, witnessing, and sharing hope could be sustained (see Chapters 8, 9, and 10). This, unfortunately, is a common feature of social work in the field of cross-border migration, across the globe (see Chapter 3). So where and how should practitioners create these 'enclaves'? Who or what could encourage practitioners to participate in political action? I return to this concern in Sections 11.2 and 11.3.

In Chapter 10, finally, my co-authors and I directed our attention specifically towards the idea of an *ethics of responsibility for justice* in social work. Integral to such an ethics, we suggested, would be to resist a tendency to attribute individual blame for the specific effects of structural processes of injustice. Instead, everyone's implication in processes that render social structures unjust, should be considered in a shared and forward-looking manner. To this effect, we proposed that practitioners and academics in the field of social work with cross-

border migrants and beyond should attend to 'the intricate processes that translate structural injustices into social care settings, and to the dynamics that cause them to be either reproduced or resisted'. Indeed, this was one of the key purposes of my study, and as the summary of findings demonstrate, a focus on the process and relational aspects of social injustice can generate rich and detailed insights.

Also in Chapter 10, we expressed a strongly felt need for an ethics of responsibility to attend to the concrete and the particular, contending that the aim of such an ethics should be to 'make practical suggestions about how social and other care workers could respond to promote more just and caring societies'. In this regard, we proposed that 'professional organisations and practitioners … associated with the issue of cross-border migration' should rearticulate 'their moral sensibilities critically and in ways that subvert policies and practices that perpetuate structural injustice'. The summary of this study's findings suggests, however, that this is the sticking point. For it has shown that it was precisely those conditions of injustice around which practitioners are to rearticulate their 'moral sensibilities' and that would need to be subverted through collective action, which rendered elusive the goals of articulating shared moral sensibilities and of engaging in collective action across all those divides that define a structurally unjust society. Such is the circular nature of social injustice.

To conclude this study, it is thus necessary to formulate at least some ideas as to how the vicious circles of injustice, presented in Part 2 of the thesis, might be interrupted more deeply, and how such interruptions could be rendered more sustainable. This requires further conceptualisation of the openings for just practice that the study has brought to light. The outcome should be concrete, tangible, and practicable understandings of social work's responsibility for social justice under conditions of structural injustice envisioned at the end of Chapter 10. This is the task of the next section.

11.2 Conclusions

To develop my concluding thoughts concerning the implications of displacement and cross-border migration for social work's commitment to social justice, it is important to draw on the study's overarching considerations, presented in Part 1 of this thesis. In Chapter 2, I discussed the complex of economic globalisation and its implications for nation states worldwide, including states' management of membership and access to rights, opportunities and resources; provided a historical overview of sub-Saharan migratory systems, including the development of South Africa's contemporary regime of migration governance; and considered xenophobia as a problem with both historical and more recent, global and local, dimensions. These discussions revealed that the contemporary phenomenon of displacement and the exclusion, exploitation, *Othering* and violation of cross-border migrants in South Africa result from historical processes, and bear the consecutive effects of South Africa's colonial, apartheid and post-apartheid history. Characterising the study's context as one in which these processes simultaneously cause social injustices and limit the South African state's capacity to respond to them, I concluded that practitioners in the field of cross-border migration could not but receive contradictory and unattainable mandates and could expect to face considerable ethical challenges in their work. Indeed, it is these continuities, contradictions and ethical challenges that provided the scripts, referred to in Section 11.1.3, for relationships formed by the study's participants, across divides of race, class, and citizenship. It is important therefore to stress at this point that the internalised forms of oppression and lack of criticality, highlighted in Sections 11.1.3 and 11.1.4, included a lack of awareness regarding, firstly, the historical depth of the scripts we enacted and thereby reinforced, and secondly, the global scale of the processes that rendered structural, the conditions surrounding our encounters.

Also in Section 11.1.3, I spoke of the apparent naturalness with which practitioners of care in the formalised context of the refugee services organisation, enacted and reinforced historical scripts concerning social work's gatekeeping role and function of categorising and managing service users as either deserving or undeserving of access to rights, opportunities and resources. The background to this claim can be found in Chapter 3, where I reviewed literature on social work in the field of cross-border migration, from a broad range of contexts. Contrary

to the dialogical and critically-reflexive engagement with cross-border migrants advocated in the literature on international social work, I found practices across these varied contexts that were remarkably similar to those uncovered in this study. Importantly, however, several of these studies depicted not just service users, but also practitioners, as vulnerable to contextual constraints on their work. These constraints circumscribed their radius for action such that subversive practices, including resistance to the exclusion and control of cross-border migrants, were sporadic and maverick rather than systematic and sustained. Feelings articulated by the practitioners participating in these studies resembled many of the emotions expressed in this study. Yet, akin to the findings presented here, desires for better boundaries between service providers and service users appeared to overshadow possibilities for joint engagement around the similar nature and roots of service users' and service providers' affective responses to one another, or to the contexts in which they met.

Against the background of the economic globalisation processes discussed in Chapter 2, the similarities between my findings and those of other studies on social work with cross-border migrants are not very surprising. Added to this, however, must be the insights gained from the research process, which concern the issue of voice. Not only did I find the experiences of voicelessness expressed by the cross-border migrants in this study to be comprehensive (see Sections 11.1.1 and 11.1.3), I also found that this pattern of voicelessness extended into the research process itself. On the one hand, I had designed the study to capture a variety of perspectives on 'how structural processes of social injustice worked their way from contextual conditions through relationships, encounters and interactions, into perceptions, interpretations and affective responses, and outwards again' (Chapter 5). On the other hand, in the wake of the 2008 global economic crisis, the study's context was characterised increasingly by a tightening managerial grip on academic pursuits, including growing resource and time constraints, which in turn affected, for example, my ability to return to the field for further engagement with some of those whose experiences and perspectives were at stake (see Chapter 5). This is suggestive of a neoliberal research dispensation in which more dialogical forms of research, such as that pursued in this study, might become increasingly difficult to implement. Using Nancy Fraser's yardstick of *participatory parity* as an indicator of justice (see Chapter 9) and considering her proposition that under conditions of *abnormal justice*, different perspectives on the effects of social injustice and the requirements of social

justice clamour for recognition (see Chapter 1), gives rise to additional concerns. These pertain to a systematic closing-down of spaces in which those who bear the greatest brunt of social injustices could be heard and listened to, have their views captured and propositions considered. For it would mean that under conditions of economic globalisation, an important effect of injustice, that is, the denial of voice to those who are most negatively affected, was, in fact, deepening, widening, affecting a growing range of sectors, and thus, becoming increasingly pervasive, and insidious.

Given that I found a lack of criticality, and internalised forms of oppression to be instrumental in entangling this study's participants within structural processes of injustices, I would like to consider these two phenomena in relation to Iris Marion Young's suggestion that an ethics of *responsibility for justice* is a shared and forward-looking endeavour (see Chapter 10 and Section 11.1.4). Together these ideas point to the possibility that with greater awareness of how current economic, political, social, and cultural constellations have emerged historically, individual actions could be recognised more easily as contextualised practices. This might facilitate an interpretation of such actions as a myriad of contributions rendering particular social injustices structural, thus forming part of comprehensive, historically grown, systems of oppression, rather than simply being judged as blameworthy. Such awareness, if shared, might lead to a greater appreciation of why it would be important to think about, relate to, and act differently in respect of, one's *Others* – a chief concern of Joan Tronto's *political*, and Fiona Robinson's *critical, ethics of care*. It could also lead to shared understandings that, while individual responses to injustice often arise from a moral impulse, prompted by a particular incident or a particular encounter, they can also express a collective consciousness around prevailing forms of social injustice and their historical roots. In this way, historical consciousness can contribute to more sustained forms of resistance and alternative forms of relating than the more short-lived acts of subversion that have dominated in this study and the reviewed literature alike.

An ethics of responsibility for justice that is expressed and experienced as a contextual practice and relational process contrasts quite sharply with the views of ethics as represented by the international definition of social work and the profession's statement of ethical principles. Both documents are informed, among other things, by recent and important developments in social justice debates emanating from anti-oppressive, anti-discriminatory,

and structural approaches in social work. At the same time, they remain strongly rooted within social work's principle-based, deontological, and utilitarian traditions. These traditions, however, could be shown to lead the ethical debate in a direction where writings on the topics of cross-border migration and social justice tend to vacillate between ethical prescription and ethical condemnation of practitioners and their interventions (see Chapter 3). Yet, similar to other empirical studies, the findings of this study demonstrate that this does little justice to the complexities of the work and the vulnerabilities of practitioners in the field of social work with cross-border migrants.

As argued by Derek Clifford, to simply appeal in this context to the virtues of practitioners implies that a key solution to the problem of social injustice lies in doing more of what seems to be the right thing to do, and assumes that consensus around what is right is attainable in structurally unjust societies (see Chapter 4.3). As with challenges emanating from an over-reliance on deontological and utilitarian traditions, this is unlikely to be helpful. To the extent that the ethical debate does this, it risks diverting attention away from the complexity of unjust structural conditions and how these are intertwined with individuals' social positions, experiences, perspectives, and thus, with their dispositions, attitudes, relationships and actions towards one another. It ultimately misrepresents the demands of justice as something that practitioners could attend to by focusing on themselves – as though it were possible to isolate any response to social injustice from the web of contextual conditions and structural processes that constitute it in the first place. The high potential for professional disappointment, despondency and victim-blaming that results from falsely simplifying the apparent demands of justice have been pointed out in Chapter 4 and are amply supported by the findings of this study.

The challenges that can flow from an uncritical, or inadvertent, reliance on virtue ethics is well illustrated by my discussion of two particular incident in Chapter 9. One concerns an unresolved dispute between a member of the receiving community, Irene, and one of the displaced refugees living at the church, Juliette. The issue at stake was a transaction in which Irene gave a cherished sewing machine to Juliette, who incorrectly, possibly mistakenly, had led Irene to believe that she could sew. In my discussion of the ensuing quarrel, I present a detailed critique of Irene's response, without subjecting Juliette's response, the dynamics of the relationship, or the contextual impact on the two women's mutual perceptions and

interactions to the same level of scrutiny. Implicit in my analysis is an assessment that Irene might have been less virtuous (that is, more judgemental and less caring) than she ought to have been. In the second incident, I describe one of the pastors' and my own sense of mental exhaustion and moral fatigue at the relentlessness of the hardships we were responding to. My discussion concludes with an implicit suggestion that had we, the providers of care, possessed greater awareness of the political nature of the problems concerned, we might have felt and responded differently. The subtext is that we might have been more virtuous than Irene (we appear to have been more caring and less judgemental), but we were still not virtuous enough (we lacked political awareness).

I still consider Nancy Fraser's concepts of misframing, maldistribution, misrepresentation, and misrecognition, which informed my discussion of the two incidents concerned, to be centrally important for an analysis of, and the development of response to, prevalent forms of injustice. Likewise, Martha Nussbaum's and Amartya Sen's notions of capabilities and agency have proved useful, particularly because of their ability to centre an analysis of injustice around the experiences and perspectives of those who have been rendered marginal and relatively voiceless within prevailing discourses and practices. Finally, I continue to regard the critical analysis of welfare ideologies (such as, for example, the distinction between the deserving and undeserving poor in the case of Irene and Juliette), and of race, class, gender, citizenship, and other forms of social division, to be relevant tools for an analysis of the kinds of injustices that can transpire between differently positioned people. Many of the authors cited in Part 2 of the thesis have argued convincingly just how the kinds of political awareness that flow from such analyses can enhance social work practice. Against the background of the findings presented in Chapters 6 to 10, the question of what kinds of virtues are called for under contemporary conditions, and how practitioners can be supported, and support one another, when trying to meet their responsibilities for justice, remains an important one to pursue. However, the conclusion of my deliberations can hardly be that community members and practitioners were simply not virtuous enough; for this would reproduce precisely the kind of vacillation between moral prescription and moral condemnation to which this thesis was intended to develop alternatives. What then might enable practitioners, who are caught up in complex ethical terrains, and the ethical analysis of such practices as emerge in these terrains, to remain critical without at the same time being judgemental?

In Chapter 4, I proposed that the political ethics of care and the work of affective turn theorists can assist both in reflecting critically and reflexively on existing practices, and in considering and developing alternatives. In that chapter, I highlighted two central characteristics of the political ethics of care. Firstly, this ethic places notions of relationality, interdependence, and vulnerability as an inevitable condition of being alive at the centre of attention (Robinson 2010; Tronto 1993, 2011, 2013; see Chapter 4.2). Within this perspective, the two incidents reconsidered here can be subjected to some re-interpretation: not only Juliette and the other refugees at the church should be considered vulnerable, but also Irene and indeed all of the study's participants, *as well as* the relationships of care that initially transpired between them. Attention is then drawn to the question of what might have enabled not just the community members and practitioners at the church, but also the displaced refugees, to care more, or differently, for their respective *Others*. Dispositions that then come to appear relevant and that people could helpfully nurture, encourage and support in one another would be of a relational nature, such as, for example, attentiveness, critical emotional reflexivity, responsibility, moral humility and critical generosity. And the conclusions drawn in the face of the multitude of disappointments, difficult-to-resolve conflicts, and failures to achieve cherished ends, all documented in this study, will be inspired less by a need to make a moral assessment or pass a political judgement. Instead, they will be driven by a desire, developed from a recognition of the tragedies with which these encounters were imbued, to find ways of protecting the kinds of relationships of care that participants were able, under the prevailing circumstances, to initiate.

In contexts comprising unjust structural processes that entangle both practitioners and service users, caring may well be considered a subversive practice. This is because, secondly, care substitutes some of the key conditions and processes that lie at the root of contemporary forms of injustice. As proposed by Joan Tronto, at the heart of many of the ways in which social workers and other practitioners of care become implicated in prevailing injustices, is the separation of the different phases of care which, although sometimes spread across different times and spaces, do need to be regarded and treated as inseparable because they are interrelated: caring about, taking care of, providing care for, receiving and responding to care, and allowing such processes and relationships to develop into patterns of care as would allow for trust and solidarity to emerge and take root (see Chapter 4.3). In this thesis, I

provided sufficient evidence to justify the conclusion that some of the incidents where structural forms of injustice were enacted and reinforced, were possible precisely because of the way in which surrounding organisational contexts pre-structured the encounters between the study's participants. In other words, relating to the experiences of hardships, taking decisions around what should be done, and how, were disjointed in terms of time, place, and the actors responsible for each, greatly enabling unjust practices. Conversely, the examples of subversion found in this study suggest that more just ways of being, relating, and acting became possible at the points where the different phases of care were collapsed into particular moments – I referred to these in Sections 11.1.3 and 11.1.4 using the terms *face-to-face*, *demands of immediacy*, and *moral impulse*. I would like to propose here that these, too, were the moments when human interdependence between self and *Other* was discernible, and when experiences of vulnerability were shared as members of this study's three participant groups related to one another across structural divides.

The moral sensibilities that may emerge from experiencing care, and from forming the kinds of connections facilitated by experiences of care, are quite out of sync with welfare practices in which service users have tended to be regarded as the needy and always potentially blameworthy *Other* who might at times be deserving of charity and support, but generally ought to be managed and controlled. Likewise, they are out of sync with a global context in which displacements and cross-border migration have become as widespread as has the perception of the displaced border-crossers as needy, and always potentially blameworthy *Others* who might at times be deserving of charity and support, but generally ought to be kept out or at least managed and controlled. The key question that remains therefore is what, under the predominant structural conditions, might help in trying to extend those moments of subversion, captured in this and other studies, beyond the particular and immediate situations in which they occurred. How can *just*, caring, practices become more than spontaneous aberrations in overall contexts that are socially unjust and which promote practices that contribute to structural forms of injustice? How could vicious circles of injustice be turned into virtuous circles of justice?

It is in response to this question that the pertinence of affective turn theories for the ethical debate becomes apparent. Carolyn Pedwell and Anne Whitehead proposed with Patricia Clough that to nurture and develop their affective capacities could assist people in grasping

the injustices that may surround, affect and implicate them (see Chapter 4.4). In this context, I found Clare Hemmings' concept of *affective dissonance* particularly helpful in that it refers to the feelings that result from experiences of discrepancy between people's moral preferences and their actual responses to the world. And, drawing on Michalinos Zembylas' idea of *critical emotional reflexivity*, I suggested that attention to feeling might be key to perceiving, relating and responding differently to people, situations, contextual conditions, and structural processes of injustice. As argued in Chapter 4, critical emotional reflexivity would be practiced most fruitfully within communities of practice in which participants can trust not only that their successes will be recognised, but also that they can discuss without fear of blame any oversights, defeats, failures, and the complex and contradictory emotions to which being entangled within structural processes of injustice gives rise. Exploring the complex zone in which successes and failures are sometimes hard to tell apart, needs to feel safe.

Yet, with Clare Hemmings, I also cautioned that such communities should not acquire their sense of safety from including only likeminded people; instead practitioners should make conscious efforts to allow their *Others*, their service users, to speak as well. Because differently positioned people are affected differently by unjust processes, conditions and relationships, people's feelings may reveal both differences – but also similarities – of perspectives, vested interests, and possibilities for action. The study's findings amply evidence this. This is why Clare Hemmings speaks of an *uneven epistemic terrain* and reminds us that offers made to engage across structural divides may not be taken up and can even be resented by people positioned differently to the ones making the offer. Nonetheless, at the church, offers could have been made to jointly engage in a reflexive discourse about how structural processes of injustice entangled members of the differently positioned groups with one another – at the same time as pitting them against one another. In the process, some openings might have been created for Irene and Juliette, and for other congregational members, practitioners and refugees, to attain different outcomes: it is conceivable that as a result, resentments might have been articulated differently and more satisfactory ways of resolving conflicts might have opened up; responsibilities might have been perceived and negotiated differently, with burdens felt and shared otherwise; and a collective will for political action just might have been awakened. I believe that spaces for such critical,

emotionally reflexive engagement would have been available – if only we had been more acutely aware of its need.

The contextual conditions at the refugee services organisation were substantially different from those at the church (see Chapter 10). Firstly, work processes were highly formalised, with patterns of positioning, perceiving, and relating being entrenched in ways that impeded critical and emotionally reflexive discourse across existing service users/service provider divides. Secondly, practitioners in this organisations were confronted with displacement and human suffering on a scale that severely limited opportunities for encountering *Others* face-to-face, for building caring and trusting relationships, for demands of immediacy to surface, and for moral impulses to emerge. Nonetheless, this study's findings do suggest that reflexive discourse – even if was not a shared discourse between service users and service providers, but a discourse among the service providers alone – might have assisted in discerning openings for alternative forms of practice. A case in point is the isolated nature of my reflections during my time at the Refugee Services Organisation, an isolation which I was only able overcome afterwards, during the study's data analysis phase (see Chapter 10 and additional discussion of the incident in Section 11.1.3). Another illustration can be found my narration of a staff meeting (also in Chapter 10), in respect of which I contended that,

> Based on sheer numbers alone, the refugees became tainted as dangerous … While the quoted interchange evidences our *discomfort* with such reframing of our service users, … under the prevailing conditions, there seemed to be *little time to think matters through carefully* ... Instead, we took recourse in employing euphemisms [highlights added].

It stands to reason that while there seemed to be *little* time to think, with greater attentiveness to our own feelings of discomfort (that is, our experience of affective dissonance), and with greater awareness of the relevance of critical, emotionally reflexive discourse, we might have been more motivated to search for, and probably been able to find, at least *some* time to consider different possibilities of responding to injustice in which we were becoming embroiled.

I would like to make one final conceptual argument as to why the findings from both research sites suggest that attention to the spaces for critical, emotionally reflexive dialogue that did presented themselves, and to the ways in which these spaces could have been extended, would have been time well spent. This is because through making offers of engagement across structural divides and uneven epistemic terrains, possibilities for shared experiences

of dissonance can be turned into what Clare Hemmings *affective* forms of *solidarity* (see Chapter 4.4). I would like to propose, therefore, that those moments of care and openings for alternative forms of relating that surfaced, if intermittently, at both sites, can assist in developing some novel ideas around possibilities for a political practice directed at systematic and sustained changes in organisational and broader contextual conditions. In spite of their limitations, the documented openings illustrate that experiences of affective solidarity could evolve into a set of practices with the potential to complement and augment the 'innovative', 'subversive', and 'undocumented practices' presented, and critiqued as somewhat maverick and sporadic, in Chapter 3. That is, the moments of care and alternative ways of relating recorded in this study might help illuminate how practitioners, who have become entangled within structural processes of injustice, might become enabled to 'be more *just*' (compare my concluding discussion of Irene's and Juliette's interchange above).

Many of the 'negative' emotions articulated by the study's three participant groups were experienced as separate, and not necessarily as related to those experienced by others (see Sections 11.1.1 and 11.1.3). Nonetheless, these feelings emerged within the same contexts, and therefore must be regarded as having related roots. To the extent that these emotions signified experiences of affective dissonance, we might have felt better had we been able to create a few safe spaces for reflexive dialogue, for participants – albeit in different formations – to both speak and listen, while trusting that they would be heard. Such spaces could have allow participants to critically engage, process and draw conclusions around their respective, and sometimes shared, emotions, their sources, and potential remedies. In the process, we might have begun to experience, affectively, a sense of solidarity, and developed greater resolve to try different ways of reaching across, our structural divides. Not only would this kind of dialoguing have constituted a form of care and been a *just* thing to do. In a context where social service organisations and other organisational spaces tended not to encourage such reflexive dialogues – as appeared to be the case in this study – it would have been subversive, too. To the extent that such interventions had felt 'right', albeit uncomfortable at times, participants might well have sought to extend and expand on the kinds of experiences and emotions to which reflexive dialogue might have given rise, and possibly developed a desire to act collectively on the insights gained. In this way, social work's commitment to social justice would have been reflected in the process of its pursuit.

11.3 Recommendations

Displacement and cross-border migration are phenomena that bring into sharp focus some of the structural injustices embedded in the contemporary ordering of the world and in the process, highlight social work's implication in them. This study's findings suggest that there are ample reasons to retain social justice as a professional ideal, while also emphasising the need for the profession to keep engaging with the changing implications that such a commitment has for practitioners working with groups rendered vulnerable by current global conditions. What recommendations flow from the findings presented above? Specific responsibilities for justice have been stated already in the conclusions of the publication in Part 2 of this thesis and summarised in Section 11.1.4 with the terms *mindfulness*, *targeted interventions*, and some initial ideas regarding an *ethics of responsibility for justice* in social work. Beyond such responsibilities, I would like to make the following recommendations with regard to the *use of theory and ethical approaches*, the *formulation of aspirational statements*, *social work practice*, *teaching and learning*, and *research*.

Writers in the field of applied ethics in social work have always made eclectic use of a wide range of theories and approaches, with their choices being determined, among other things, by the requirements of practice and the challenges experienced by practitioners, and by theoretical developments in other disciplines. In this study, I drew on the contributions of a range of political theorists and ethicists, including Martha Nussbaum (Chapter 6), Amartya Sen (Chapter 7), Iris Marion Young (Chapters 8 and 10), and Nancy Fraser (Chapter 9), among others. This was in order to make sense of specific aspect of this study, including the perspectives of differently positioned participant, the unfolding relationships between them, and the impact thereupon of different study contexts. In the final chapter, I developed the study's empirical findings further in relation to an overarching interpretive frame provided by writers on the political ethics of care (in particular, Joan Tronto), and contributions of affective turn theorists (including Clare Hemmings and Michalinos Zembylas). This assisted with drawing conclusions that spoke specifically to the ethical challenges emanating from practitioners' entanglement in structural processes of injustice in the field of social work with cross-border migrants. While this study was focused on the question of social justice in relation to cross-border migration in South Africa, I have no doubt that the relevance of the

works considered extends well beyond this field. And while my intention was not to investigate the connection between social justice, injustice, emotion, and affect, some of the study's key findings underscore the relevance of affective turn theories for ethical discourse in social work. Efforts to mainstream these contributions and to explore how they can be used to complement and build on each other should certainly continue.

Regarding the formulation of aspirational statements, such as the evolving definition of social work and statement of ethical principles, the study's findings confirm that the idea of social justice continues to provide an important compass for moral practice. Importantly, they raise no concerns regarding substantive contents of the notion of social justice as listed in the current global definition and statement of principles for social work, save for one: the exclusionary function of territorial borders and nation state membership must be added to the documents' account of specific sources of contemporary injustices. In addition, the question requires attention as to how the two documents should capture the effects of the profession's evolving contexts on the way practitioners might seek to attain socially just outcomes. In particular, I recommend that during social work's periodic reviews of the documents, ways of giving greater recognition to the relational and process aspects of social justice should be considered.

To the extent that listing aggregate outcomes and stating professional duties does insufficient justice to the complexities of the practice situations to which they pertain, alternatives should be explored with a view to complementing, or even substituting for, some of the global definition's and statement of principles' current phrasings and framing. There does appear to be a need to provide clear-enough guidelines for practitioners, especially where they are faced with organisational rules and national legislations that are counter to, for example, social work's commitment to social justice. However, this needs to be balanced with an awareness that to the extent that such guidelines are phrased in a language of aggregates and duties, they might inadvertently feed into a blaming discourse and work to demoralise social workers in difficult practice situations, rather than inspiring their creative search for ways of being more *just*. One way of achieving a better balance is thus to re-look at how the language of the documents could be adjusted to reflect a shared and forward-looking approach to social justice. This might go a long way towards encouraging practitioners to continue trying to meet their responsibilities for justice even when complex practice

situations entangle them in structural processes of injustice. To this end, the language of care might provide practical alternatives to some of the phrasing of the ethical challenges and requirements that dominate the definition of social work and statement of principles at present.

Concerning social work practice, I would like to stress that *misframing* is an important, and global, form of injustice in the contemporary world. It needs to be confronted as such. Even where there is no reason to attribute blame, there is always a need for practitioners to be critically reflexive. The importance of attending in the process to emotions and affect cannot be overstated. Yet, attention to feelings should not be seen simply as an end in itself, but also be regarded as an important means to revitalise social work as a political practice. Furthermore, it is imperative to try and practice in recognition of the idea that social justice is not merely an end of good social work interventions. Social justice is also a process and concerns the ways in which social workers and their service users relate. Although outcomes are important, social work's practice focus may need to shift from an outcomes orientation so as to include greater attention to ways of relating, and the kinds of virtues we would like to foster in ourselves and one another in order to encourage good practice, particularly under difficult circumstances.

In Section 11.2, I already expressed my view that to care can be a form of subversion and provided reasons for this stance. I would like to add here that my idea of care as an ideal for social work practice would include social workers being guided by the Nancy Fraser's notion of participatory parity and thus striving towards dialogical forms of engagement, and towards relating to their service users as equals. Valid arguments concerning the maintenance of healthy professional boundaries should not serve to justify and endorse the kinds of hierarchical relationships that ultimately contribute to service users' voicelessness. I raised the idea of forming communities of practice at several points in this thesis. Social workers would stand to gain much from establishing and protecting such safe spaces: within organisational contexts, in opposition to organisational context, where appropriate with other practitioners in the field, and where conceivable in collaboration with service users. Having such communities of practice might well lead to the political practice of subjecting both organisational contexts and broader, structural processes of injustice to critique and social action. The theorists considered in this thesis made a range of propositions regarding

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the kinds of socially just contexts towards which social work could strive. These included the idea that the different phases of care should be integrated (Tronto), the conceptualisation of justice as an ideal of participatory parity that rests upon particular forms of framing, distribution, recognition and representation (Fraser), and specific modes of assigning responsibilities for justice (Young). These propositions can be debated, developed further and applied creatively in the field of cross-border migration and beyond.

Teaching, learning, and research are also forms of practice and thus, my recommendations concerning social work practice apply as well to lecturer/student and researcher/participant relationships, to the organisational contexts, and to the broader – economic, political, social, cultural, and ideological – contexts of social work's teaching, learning, and research endeavours. In addition, I would like to propose that there is a need to foster the development of deeper historical and broader contextual understandings. Practitioners who are locked in the 'here and now' of their work might not even be able to critically and reflexively explore how their own social positioning, perspectives, feelings, thoughts, relationships, and interactions fit into broader, structural processes and dynamics of injustice. This concern might be most readily attended to in social work's teaching and learning contexts. Likewise, there is a need to continue engaging with how best to help students develop their critical, emotionally reflexive habits and skills. A social justice orientation, like other values at the heart of social work, needs to be shown to be a form of practice, and a way of relating. Whatever the structural challenges of contemporary teaching and learning contexts, if students are to become social workers who strive to practice *justly*, they may need to experience first what trying to practice *justly* could mean.

There is an important role to play for researchers who are committed to social justice. Researchers can make a significant contribution towards mainstreaming feminist relational approaches to ethics, including the political ethics of care, and towards highlighting the ethical relevance of emotion and affect in social work education and practice. More specifically, the question of how the global definition of social work and the profession's statement of ethical principles might be adjusted to incorporate the ideas of justice as a shared and forward-looking endeavour and of justice as care, should be pursued in further ethical study and debate. Finally, there will always be a need for quantitative studies that produce tangible results concerning the effects of contemporary economic, political, social,

cultural dispensations and ideological formations on social work's service users and on social work practice across the globe. Still, methods that emphasise dialogue, provide opportunities to speak, listen, and to amplify the voices of people who experience *Othering*, exclusion, powerlessness, exploitation, and violence, and the broad range of hardships to which these conditions give rise, can make a direct contribution towards greater levels of participatory parity. And in contexts where economic and output considerations are dominant in driving institutional research agendas, pursuing such studies as are contrary to this agenda can in itself be a contribution to furthering the ends of justice.

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References for Illustrations

Illustration No.	Artist/Author/Photographer	Source	Accessed
Cover	Unknown	Unknown	Oct. 2013
Image 1.1	Dirk-Jan Visser	http://www.msf.org.au/uploads/pics/zimbabwe-Dirk-Jan-Visser.jpg	April 2014
Figure 2.1	UNHCR	UNHCR (2013a: 26)	N/A
Image 2.1	Unknown (Reuters)	http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2015/01/south-africa-soweto-tense-xenophobic-attacks-150123044841532.html	Feb. 2015
Table 6.1	Martha Nussbaum	Nussbaum (2000: 78-80)	N/A
Image 6.1	Darlene Menzies	http://www.infrastructurene.ws/2013/07/16/durban-cbd-to-be-revitalised/	Oct. 2013
Image 7.1	Zail Singh	http://www.iol.co.za/polopoly_fs/nd-itrump23-1.1179969!/image/1015243766.jpg_gen/derivatives/box_300/1015243766.jpg	April 2014
Image 8.1	Unknown	Daily News 23.05.08:1	N/A
Image 9.1	Zapiro	https://www.google.co.za/search?q=Zapiro+cartoons+%5Band%5D+South+AFrican+Flag&rlz=1C1KYPA_enZA648ZA669&espv=2&biw=1920&bih=947&tbm=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&sa=X	Jan. 2016
Image 10.1	Mkorayt	http://mkorayt.deviantart.com/art/Urban-615713242q=boost%3Apopular+in%3Aphotography%2Fcivilization+urban&qo=5	Jan. 2015

Table: References for Illustrations

Appendix 1:

Documentation Concerning Sampling & Data Collection

1.1   Participant Observation

1.1.1   Research Site Two - Members of the Receiving Community and Displaced Refugees Compared
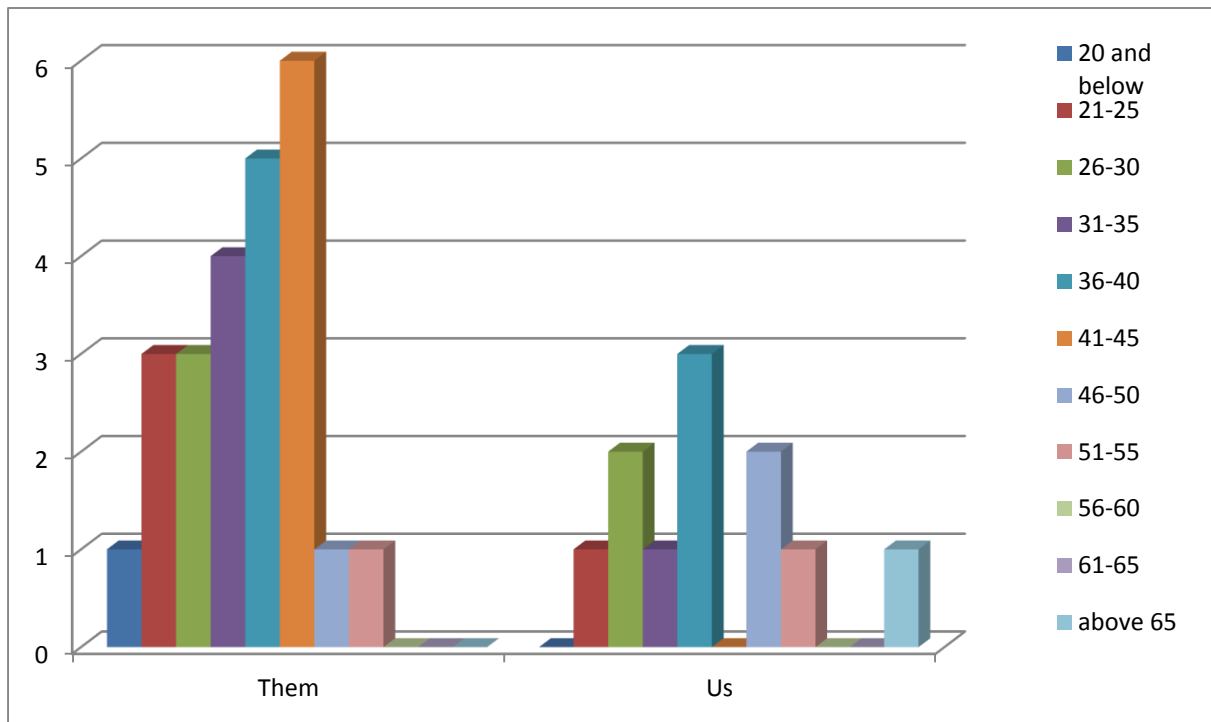
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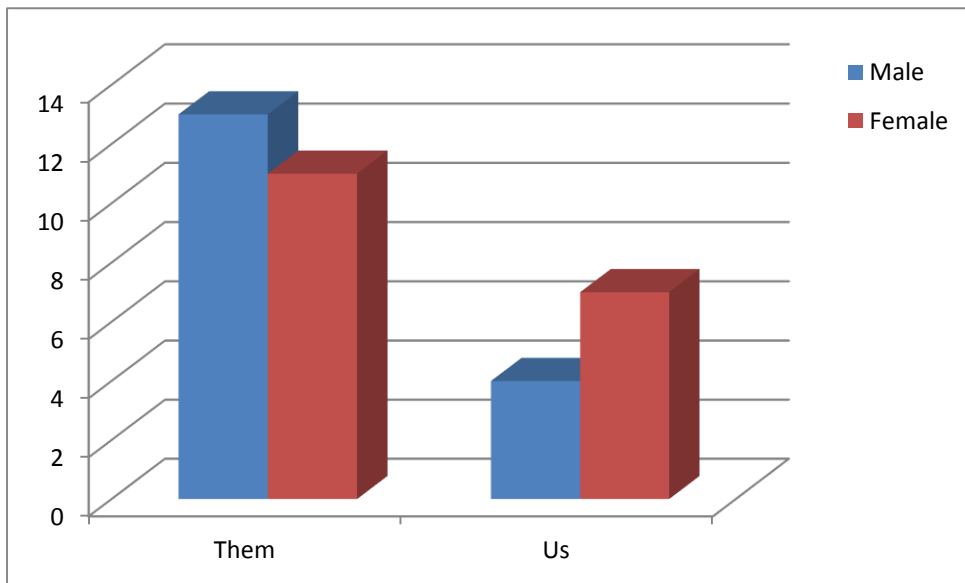
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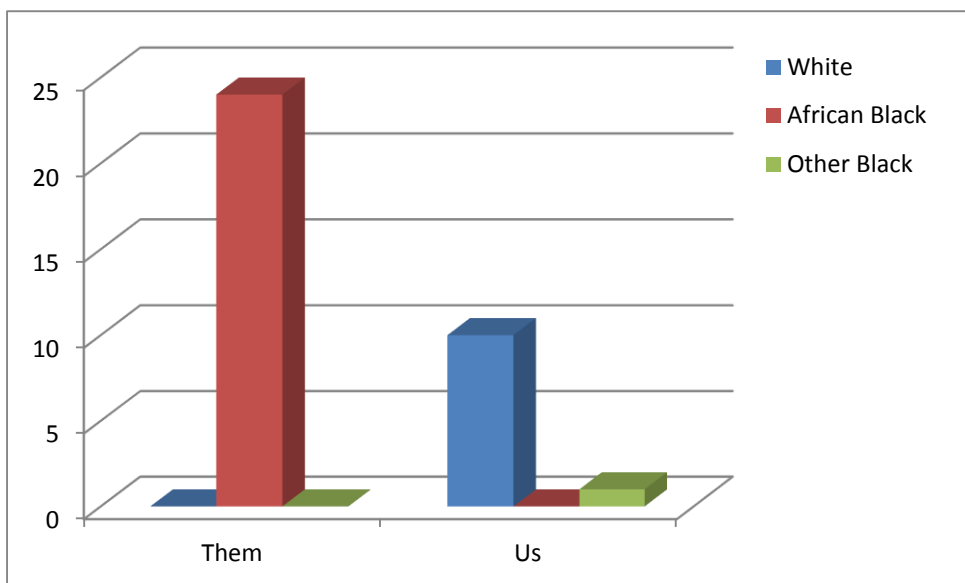
Race
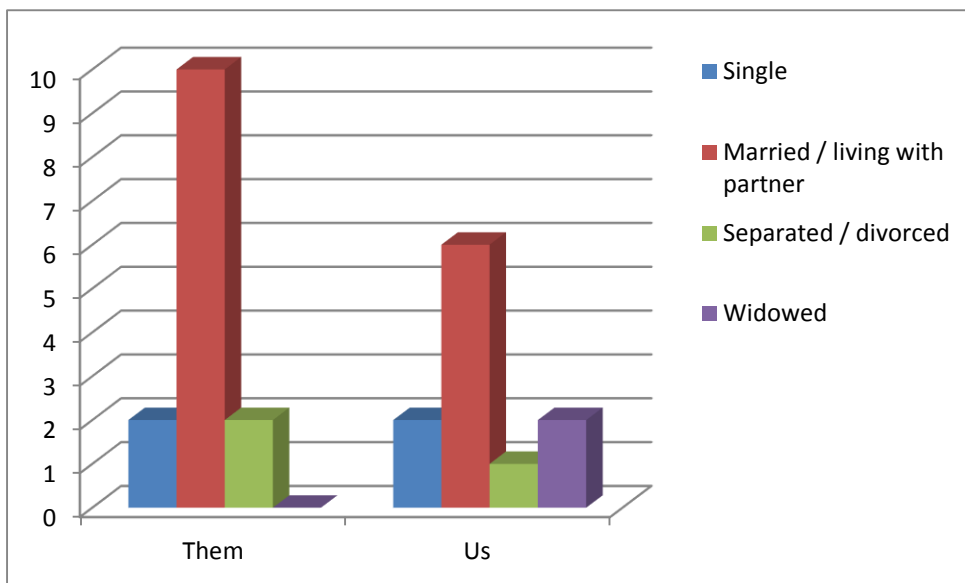
Family status – Relationships
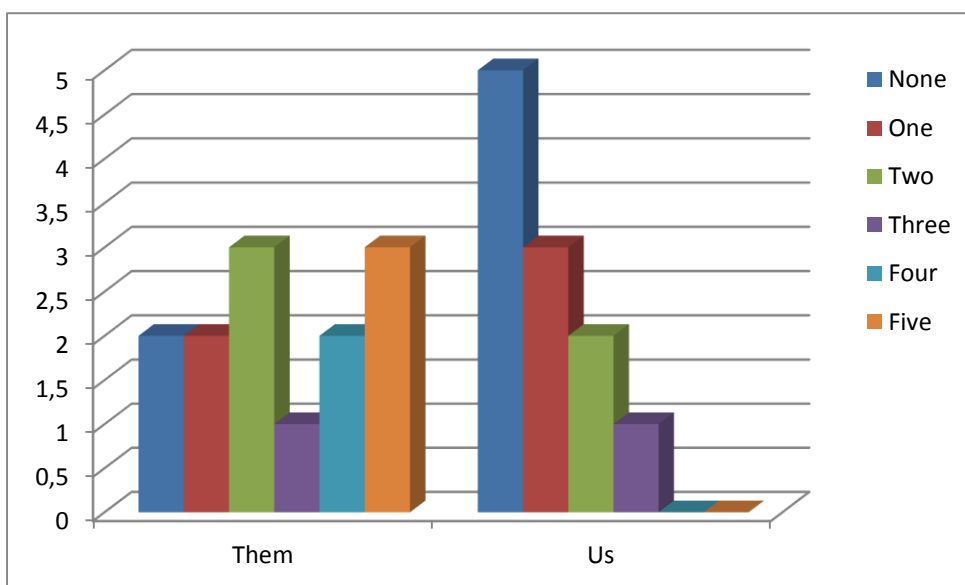
Family status – Number of Children Living at Home (Prior to Displacement)
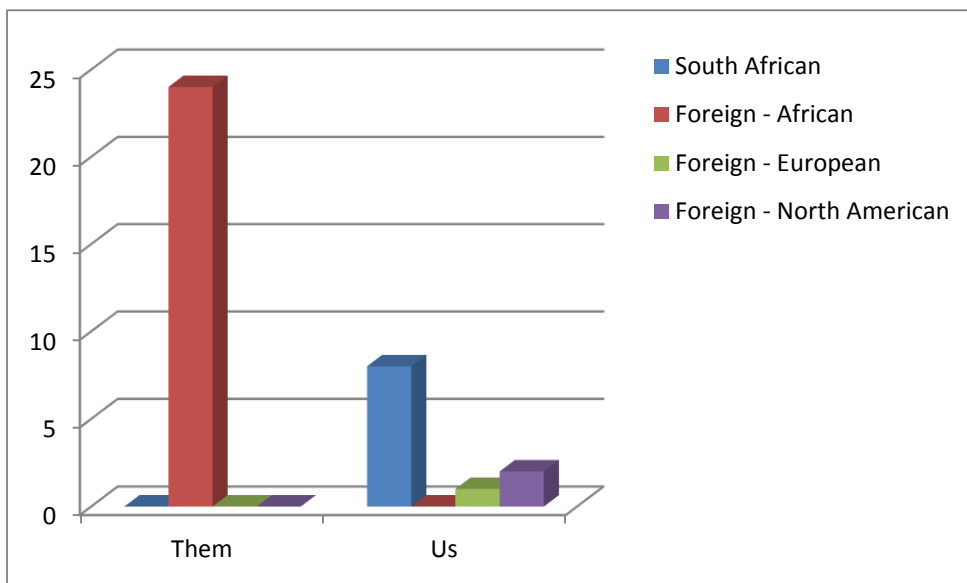
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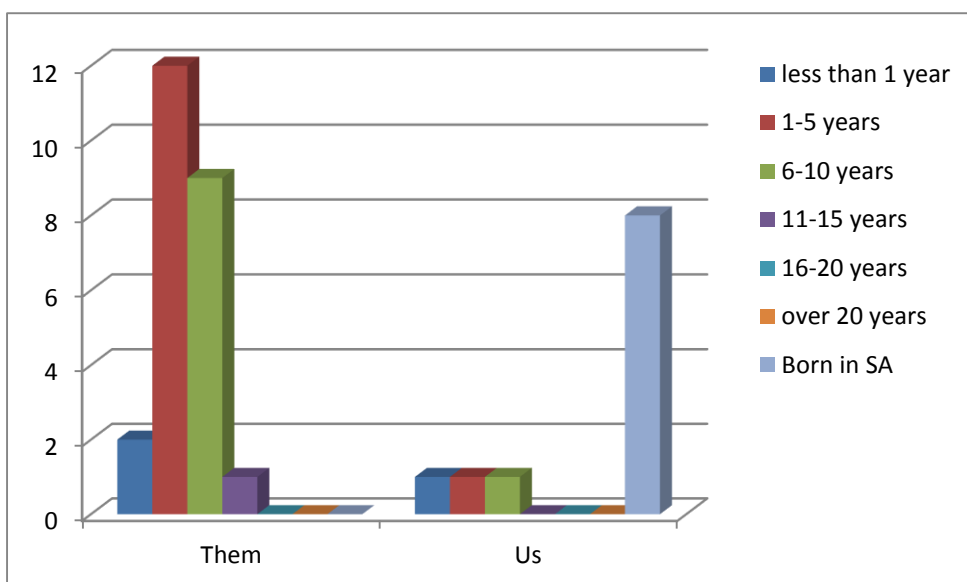
Years of Residence in South Africa
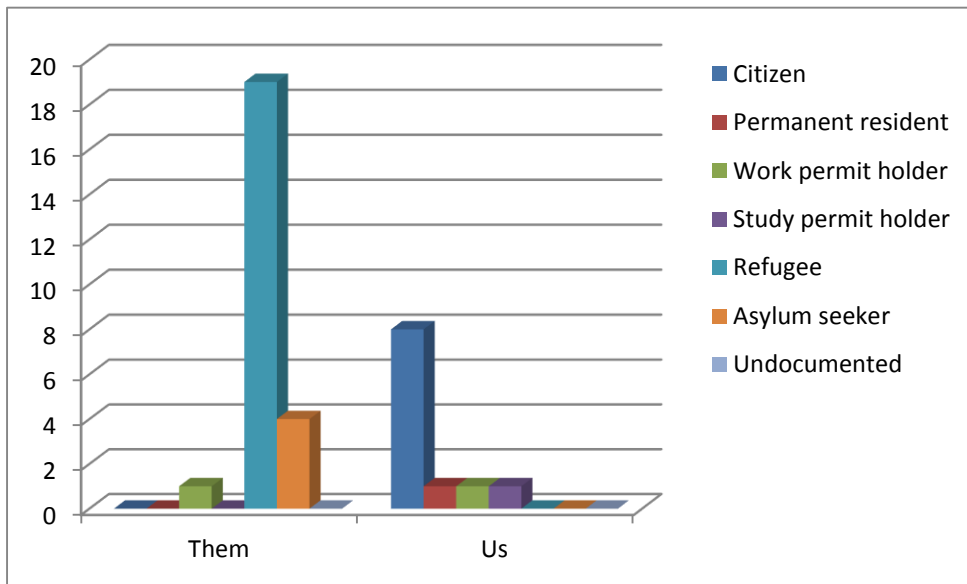
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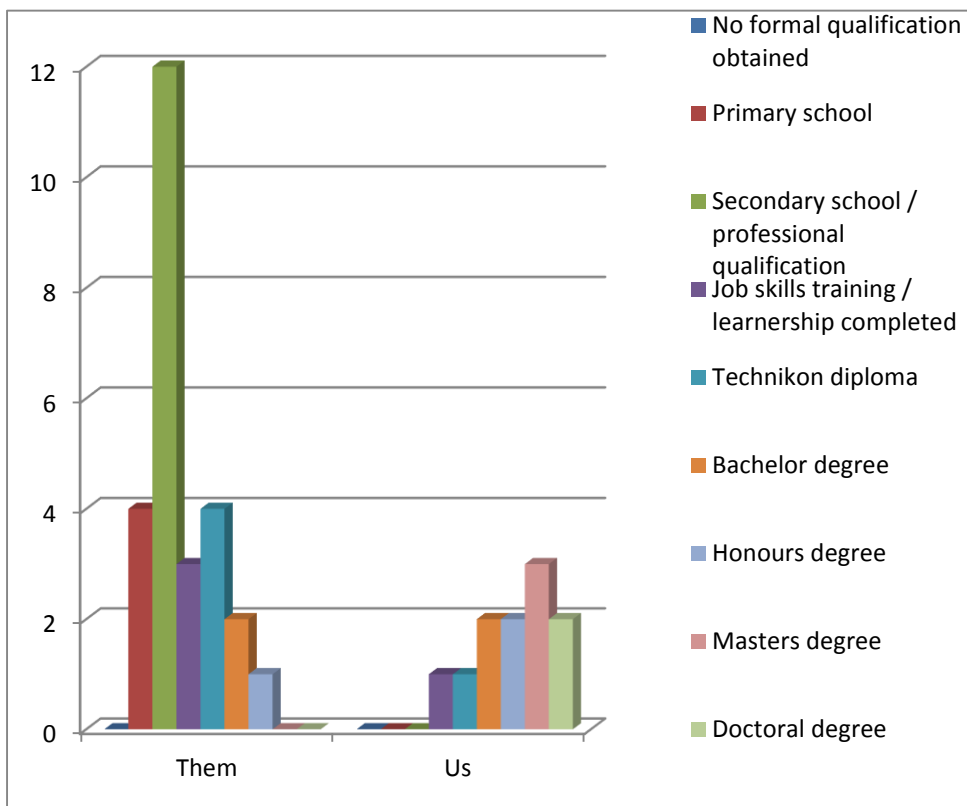
Highest Qualification
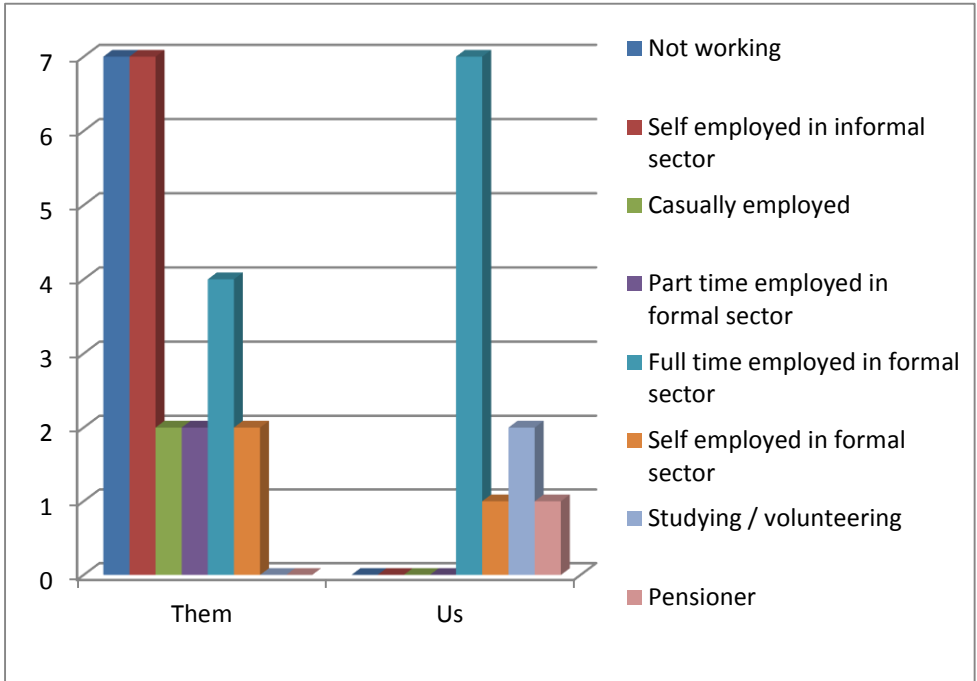
Employment Status (Prior to Displacement)
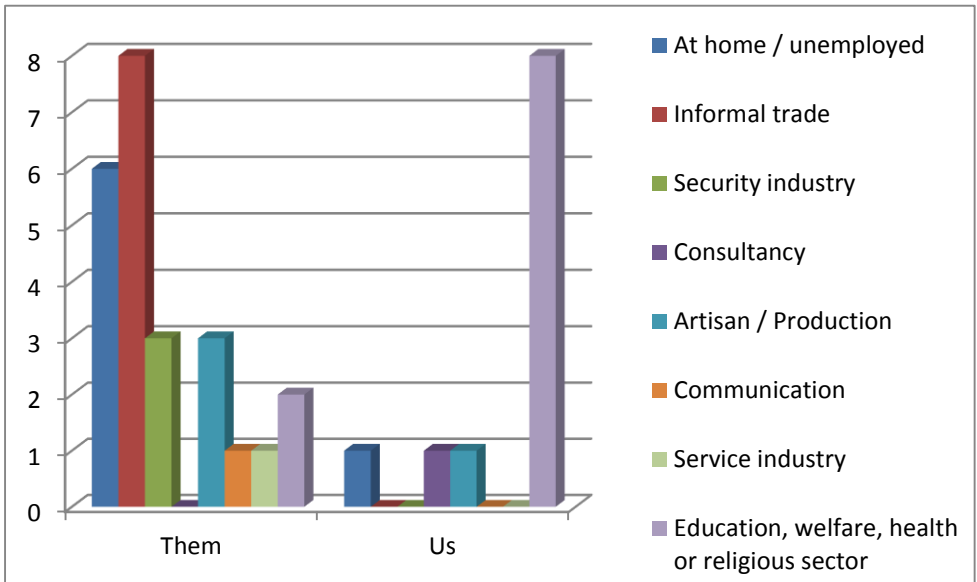
Field of Work (Prior to Displacement)
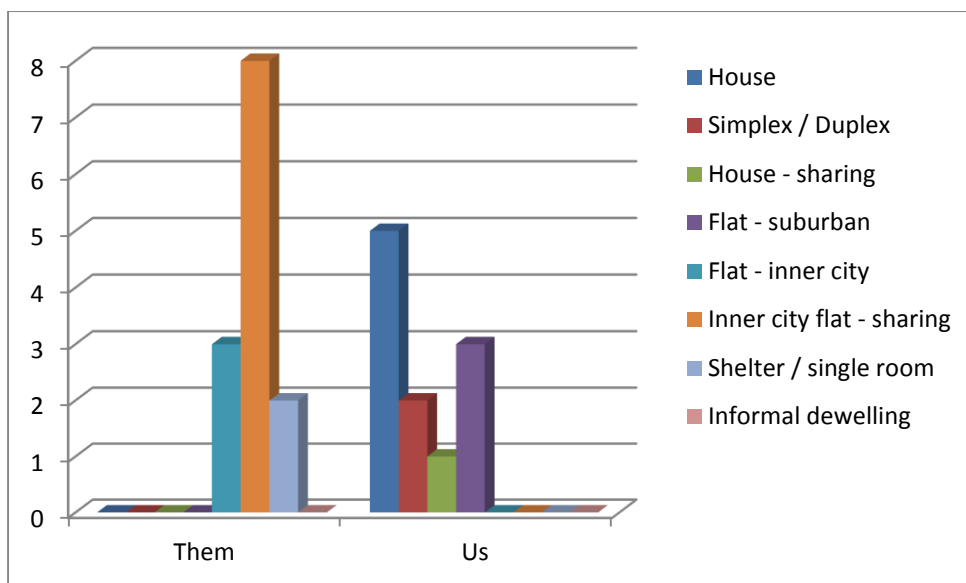
Accommodation (Prior to Displacement)

1.1.2 Open Sampling: Example of an Initial Diary Record

8 August 2008

[…]

9:30hrs. The Williamson Park people are late. Yalqoot's attempts since yesterday to pre-structure the "re-integration" exercise by asking for ten people at a time, and by asking that families be sent before sending single adults, prove futile. An hour after the first appointments were set, still nobody has arrived. There is an air of suspicion that the Williamson Park people, who have already developed a reputation for being "difficult" will refuse to "be helped".

10:30hrs. I develop the distinct sense that someone has opened the floodgates. There must be a minimum of three dozen people squashed into the waiting room. It is noisy, and you cannot walk even to the printer behind the reception desk without fearing to step on a child, or to bump into somebody's backside. Emmanuelle, our receptionist, seems to be doing at least four or five things at the same time. Edmond, one of our administrators, has left my pile of filing (I suspect he has filed two so far) and mutters more to himself than to me, 'The problem is that the moment I do something urgent, someone tells me to leave what I am doing because I need to do something urgent.'

Yalqoot is beginning to raise her voice, standing in the door which separates the reception and waiting area from the passage of the workspace. She is trying to create order by demanding that people follow the receptionist's instructions, which I think is a really good

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idea. Those who can hear her might feel offended because, yes, her irritation is audible, but then again, almost nobody would have heard.

Maizah whispers to me, 'We are all going to get sick. Can you smell this?' I wonder how the level of hygiene might be at Williamson Park and resolve that I really do not want to go there (which is maybe why I should). Somebody is trying to call me on my cell phone. There is no point in answering; it is too noisy. I sms back, 'I am in the Williamson Park Refugee Camp', which is not literally true. It is more like the camp is upon me.

One lady (apparently not from Williamson Park) is trying to squeeze past me into Oliver's office. My stress levels rise: I am beginning to feel claustrophobic and overwhelmed by the noise. The last thing I want now is for people to begin taking over the work space, because that is "my space". 'You guys have the reception area,' I think to myself and ask the lady if she is looking for somebody. 'Yes, Oliver,' she replies. I inform her, as if that wasn't obvious that Oliver is not here. 'I am very hungry,' she says and rubs her stomach. I notice that she is well groomed, as if this was evidence that she cannot also be hungry and elaborate, say, 'Well Oliver has left', manoeuvre past her into Oliver's room, which is now mine, and close the door between her and me: There is no way that anyone who is not from Williamson Park, and who has sneaked past the receptionist at that, is going to be seen today. I do not wish to explain the procedure of making an appointment to her which a) I assume she already knows, and which b) will create an opportunity for her to explain to me how and why she is desperate. I really don't want to hear it because a) I won't be able to do anything about it in the midst of helping the Williamson Park people, and b) it will delay my helping them and make me feel even more drained than I am beginning to feel already. Let's not accelerate the build-up of this unwelcome emotion.

[…]

1.1.3 Relational and Variational Sampling: Example of a Subsequent Diary Record

25 September 2008: Support Group Session
(They are like animals / On truth and narratives)

Attendance:
Almost, if not full attendance

Summary:

This must have been one of the eeriest and most intense meetings of my life. As I arrive at the church, I am pre-occupied with a number of comments that I have been hearing in the course of the day. There is firstly the assessment of Yalqoot's that one of my colleagues and friends – a professor who has a range of African, including Congolese, students in his programme, and has been going out of his way to assist not only these students while in this country but also after their return home, and not only the students but often also their families – 'has a bleeding heart' while his students 'are the biggest crooks'. Yalqoot also told me of her sense of estrangement even in relation to her own colleagues from the Great Lakes region. She said, 'I have worked with several people from Rwanda and Burundi and still don't understand how "they" think', and that 'there is this pervasive sense of paranoia'. "They", the

crooks, the paranoid ones, the strangers, are also the people whom I meet every Thursday and Sunday at church.

Regarding the helping relationships with service users in the office, Yalqoot said that she generally operated from the premise that, 'Your problem is not my problem. I can offer some solutions, but it is still your problem.' This is a sentence that I have heard before, and is a principle which I would probably teach my students who struggle with boundary issues in helping relationships. But from a social justice point of view, how can such an approach be condoned? If "your" problems emanate from an injustice of which "I" happen to be the beneficiary, how can "your" problem *not* be "my" problem?

(**11.04.09:** *Insert a memo here. This might be one of the key ethical dilemmas that I have experienced in this study, which would in turn account for some of the agony I am feeling to date. A whole range of other experiences I had and choices I made both at the church and at the Refugee Services Provider could be grouped around this dilemma.*)

As all of these bits and fragments of conversations go around in my mind, they are under-laid by the voice of one of the parents at my sons' school. Her husband had lived in the DRC for several years during the Laurent Kabila years. That was prior to their marriage, but he must have told her a thing or two. Her voice keeps ringing in my mind: 'They are like animals, Dorothee, they are like animals.' So "they" whom I meet every Thursday and Sunday at church are not only crooks, paranoid and strange; not only do their problems have nothing to do with "us" – "they" are indeed sub-human. Must "we" – why must "we" - be so guarded, so rejecting, so resentful, so devaluing of 'them'? What causes "us" to feel like that, to be like that? I feel burdened as I walk into the church yard and up the stairs to the dim room where we meet.

This is how I arrive at the meeting: A bit late, rushed, but most of all, beginning to feel terribly exhausted from my daily, even hourly, border-hopping between "them" and "us". And still, unfortunately, without feedback on any of the issues where we as a group depend on third parties to make progress. I fear that this is the beginning of a pattern and think that, 'These are the frustrating details of what it means in our day-to-day lives that 'we cannot change South Africa'', as I had said to the group just two weeks ago. How different it is to observe and describe the lines of exclusion and injustice which frame our society, than to experience them daily, tangibly, financially, as the members of this group do, or to jump across this society's dividing lines, back and forth, as I am doing daily, and hourly, at this point in my life.

But maybe what I said was wrong. Maybe we can change South Africa. Over time and with a lot of effort we can, maybe. But will we have the stamina, the sustenance, the perseverance and the patience as individuals, and as a group? What will we do to sustain ourselves as we work towards broader social change, if we will? How do we get to the point of really wanting to spend that effort? I think the group needs to be strengthened further – as a group. Remain a bit more inward looking a little longer, so that its members can grow a bit more understanding of and supportive towards one another than they currently are. Maybe if we went back into the past, some of the dividing issues in this group could be reframed just enough to help tackle the current issues differently?

I ask, 'Would you be willing to tell me about the history of the Great Lakes region? Would you help me understand why things are the way they are now?' Estelle has no problem with the idea. She says, 'We can talk. Not everything in our history has been bad. We can talk about these things.' Christian doesn't agree. He doesn't want to; no, he cannot talk about the past:

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'It will force me to remember things that make me sick.' And having said that, he cannot stop talking about home. So I learn that children can be put into mincers and offered to their parents to eat. I learn that therefore, some people cannot eat red meat at times – it reminds them of the past. Rivers can be red with blood and full of corpses. People can flee and climb over corpses as they lie on the streets. Your husband or your wife can be shot dead as they walk next to you, and you walk on. People didn't come to South Africa to get resettled to Europe or the US but to flee from death. Refugees just want to be treated fairly and with dignity, and just need stability and security. Poverty is not an excuse for xenophobia. These are the things I learn.

I am beginning to appreciate now that talking – and thinking - about the past is not something that everybody would want to do. But Noémie disagrees: 'It is not good to talk about business all the time. This is good. We should do it more often.' With that bit of back-up, I want to know from Christian: 'The problem with history is that it ends today, isn't it? So where do you draw the line between what you can, and what you cannot think and talk about?' I get no direct answer, but Estelle and Léocadie continue talking about the present in the past. Léocadie reports of the abduction of 60 children by the Lord's Resistance Army some time last week. Estelle tells me about her brother. How he became (I don't remember, was he abducted or enticed?) a child soldier at the age of twelve. How children are used for attack, running into the enemy's bullets ahead, while being shot at by the adult soldiers from behind so they don't retreat. How her brother had part of his face shot off but survived and was taken to be hospitalised in Kinshasa. And how, as he recovered physically, his mental deterioration became ever more evident as he went wild in the hospital, looking for a gun, and wanting to shoot the people around him. How he wanted to go back to being a soldier. She doesn't complete her story to tell us what happened to her brother. She just keeps repeating: 'This is a true story, Dorothee, this is the truth.'

As people speak, I am addressed with, 'Can you imagine what it is like…?' I cannot. 'Do you know what it looks like…?' No, I don't. 'Have you ever seen…?' I haven't, and I am afraid I don't want to, either. Increasingly, I am addressed with, 'What you've got to understand Dorothee, is…' Can anyone who hasn't seen what these people have seen even remotely understand? But at least, if there is such a thing as 'at least' in a conversation such as this one, my desire to know, and my desire to understand is taken seriously. And the fact that this conversation continues for almost an hour now, the fact that even one of those who didn't speak on that night found the listening to the things that she, too, knows much more rewarding than many of the other discussions that we have had before, suggest that people are not totally opposed to, but rather ambivalent about linking back with the past, and sharing it with one of those who are 'us' and who will probably never really understand.

(28.01.09: I notice that over the weeks, which followed this session, individuals approached me again and again to explain more details, their version, and their analysis of the conflicts of the Great Lakes, and trying to help me understand the suffering they have seen, and – who knows - to what extent, been through themselves. During my first home visit, François and Léocadie tell me of the Tutsi settlement in the Eastern DRC, how it links with the DRC's domestic politics, and why they believe that the conflict cannot be resolved. I think they hate Tutsis, they really do. 'Why, Léocadie', I ask after our first life story interview, 'Why the cruelty, the slaughter of civilians, the mass murder? I understand that there can be war when conflicts are not settled. But why is there such anger, why the rage?' Léocadie doesn't have worldly answers to my questions. The only way of responding is for her to divide people into those who

'have God' and those who don't. That is how it happens. Those who don't 'have God' do things that those who do cannot understand. That is how it is. But how can people who 'have God' at the same time afford to hate others so much?

After one of the office interviews in October or November, on his way out, Romain, the Tutsi, confirms that, 'Your will never be able to imagine what we have seen, and we will never be able to describe it to you' Read the Apocalypse, and you will understand. It is all written in there. People's depth of spirituality… is this how they make sense of the senseless, and find words for the indescribable?

Desirée , half Hutu and half Tutsi, thinks that she cannot ever go home again. She lost (one, two or three?) brothers and sisters to the slaughter of those who are the off-springs of unions that apparently, were never meant to be. They are half-breeds, outcasts, of whom too many of those whose "blood is pure" – or believe that it is - seem to want to get rid of. I am, in this conversation, struck by the air of loneliness and vulnerability which surrounds Desirée . She is so troubled, so complex. What will become of her? I keep telling her that I wish she could go home, back to her parents. From what Desirée tells me, they seem to care deeply about her. And then she says, in spite of everything, 'Yes, it is possible to go home.' Her parents are in Rwanda now. There is peace in Rwanda, at least for the time being. But life is tough over there. She must first find a way of completing her education. From a street vendor, a single mother (much too young), metamorphose into a third year catering student at DUT? How is that going to happen? I am struck by Desirée's determination and drive at least as much as by her vulnerability: I guess it's possible. How difficult it is to understand.)

Christian picks up on one of the earlier strands of his monologue, the one that apparently links the past with the present for him: His need for fairness, dignity, safety and stability, none of which he believes he has. I share my difficulties of having, as a social worker at the Refugee Services Provider, to decide on listening to people's stories who is a bona fide refugee, and who is not. Christian says, 'Dorothee, I have never been there but I know people who have, and they tell me that decisions are taken on the basis of stories people tell them about each other. Someone may not get help because someone else told the Refugee Services Provider that their son is an engineer … I know how the Refugee Services Provider has changed over the years. In the beginning, it was very different than it is now.'

Christian knows the Refugee Services Provider. He has been there. He has used their services. I have read his file. Obviously, Christian is being truthful in representing his assessment of the changes of policy and the quality of work done at the Refugee Services Provider, and the deterioration of relationships that he perceived over the years. As much as he does not provide an explanation, he seems genuine in his description of what seems to be a deterioration of relationships, a breakdown of trust between the 'older' refugees, those who came in the 1990's when the Refugee Services Provider was still under different management, and the Refugee Services Provider as it has come to be now, some ten years later. Why the need to lie about the source of his knowledge to the rest of the group and to me?

Christian elaborates further on the stories that have to be told at Home Affairs, the ultimate "truth-finding" institution in an asylum seeker's and a refugee's life: 'After ten years, you are treated like a newcomer. You have been here for ten years, and you are asked to re-tell your story. And if you forget some parts, you may have your refugee status revoked … All we ask is to be treated fairly.' The fear of having your refugee status revoked arbitrarily is an experience of xenophobia that is more creeping, silent and pervasive than the violent

outbursts that occurred in May. When I listen to this – and I get the feeling that Christian's job is today to air all those things than many members of this group are also feeling - I can understand the sense of paranoia that Yalqoot relates. All the knowledge of how Home Affairs functions, decides and implements its decisions in individual lives (either destroying people's existences that may have been built for years or giving another lease on life, temporarily, for two years only, and never to be relied upon as permanent and safe) is passed on through word-by-mouth, through rumours. The institution that can make or break people' existences is not known well, it is only murmured about. How could anyone subjected to this overwhelming, hostile power not feel paranoid?

Somehow, this evening comes to an end. I am feeling dizzy and not quite sure as to what really happened. Was it destructive, or was it cathartic? But somehow, we seem to be a safe enough place for "us" to talk to one another, to speak from the assumption that somehow, "I" can dare try to be understood by 'you'. Where am I going to offload the burden of what I have heard? I am feeling dizzy, and I cannot sleep at night. Now it is I who has to talk, and I do – to a foreigner, to someone I trust, to someone who has suffered in South Africa like "them", but who has, like me, not seen what "they" have seen at home. He says, "Dorothee, what you have to understand is this…" This is a phrase I am beginning to like. I find it encouraging. I find it suggestive of the possibility that I can understand, after all; if not all the facts, so at least intuitively.

The truth, that truth which is lived, can be too painful to narrate. And that truth which is the bureaucratic reduction of life to the key events and verifiable, non-contradictory facts that might be good enough to legitimate a person's claim to residence (or services at the Refugee Services Provider) is a completely different thing. The one is felt, messy, incomplete and incongruent, the other is established as measured against exactness. But how do you convert a truth which is too painful to narrate into one which is exact enough to be related to a bureaucrat so that he, or she, may choose to legitimise your claim to living in this hostile country (or to a social worker so that she may allow you access to all too scarce, but desperately needed resources)?

The two truths might overlap, at best. If they overlap at all, for your life story could be used against you and become a weapon of your own exclusion, so you may want to reduce it to just that, a story which may or may not have cursory resemblance with what you consider the truth yourself. But there is no way of knowing exactly which part of your life story should be presented to the bureaucrat and how, because all you know about this bureaucracy is based on your previous experience (and the parameters for inclusion set by this institution may well have changed since you were last there), and rumours of what has happened since are only told to you by others. Or by others still, who know others who seem to know something that you don't know.

And yet, your ability to reframe your story according to these new parameters is constrained by your previous story, which has been recorded, filed, and which can be used against you any time, for years to come. So people narrate when they meet an official, a bureaucratic exponent of this country, they construct a story. They are bound to frame a story that meets the bureaucratic criteria for truth, can be re-told into the future and still hold as a means of legitimising your existence here, and which is at the same time able to protect the narrator against those memories which are too painful to be relived. Surely, under these conditions, it would be foolish for any one of "them" to blindly trust anyone of "our" officials. Who knows, to "them", "we" might seem like animals …

1.1.4 Example of Diary Records suggesting Theoretical Saturation

14 October 2008

[…]

I believe that I have got more than enough data now, and… the gaps between diary entries are becoming bigger, especially at the Refugee Services Provider.

[…]

15 October 2008

[…]

I realise yet again, that matters are far more complicated than being reducible to simple equations, such as 'Research Site 1 = disempowering and patronising clients' and 'Research Site 2 = dignified and respectful relationships'. Relationships are far more complicated than that. Or simple for that matter: After all, the church and the Refugee Services Provider do operate in the same social, political and economic environment.

[…]

16 October 2008

[…]

I do realise that it is time to bring to an end my participant observation in this agency. It has been good. I have greatly enjoyed my stay with [withheld]. I like my colleagues. There have been times when I felt as completely integrated as if I had been a permanent staff member. I have gone through a lengthy phase of really, really identifying with the social workers in this agency, seeing, and trying to understand, their challenges as if I was 'one of them'. This had been my aim from the beginning. But my recognition of the fact that I am *not* 'one of them' has re-imposed itself during the past three weeks. And grown with that has my awareness of the double load which I am carrying: one of doing the work as 'one of them' and another of reflecting on the work as '*not* one of them'. It is time to move on.

[…]

21 –31 October 2008

[…]

The last two weeks I spend without an office of my own. It is a strange feeling to get used to, but in a way, an excellent transition phase to my eventual departure.

[…]

I sit in interviews with Valentine, Charles, Hélène, and Maizah – and see pretty much the same dynamics, patterns and struggles that I am used to from my own interviews.

[…]

1.2 Life Story Interviews with Cross-border Migrants

1.2.1 General List of Topics for Initial Interview

- Reflections on life in home country

- Events leading up to, and reasons for, leaving home country

- Journey to South Africa

- Arrival and initial settling in

- Current life circumstances: Successes and challenges

  o Encounters with public service providers
  o Encounters with law enforcement agencies
  o Encounters on the labour marked
  o Social encounters

- Future plans

1.2.2 Example of a Guide for a Follow-up Interview: Aliyah

Social support and public -services

- Tell me about the social workers you met.

  o How did you come to ask for services?
  o What did you expect?
  o How were you treated?
  o Were your expectations met?
  o Did you get even more, or better, support than you had hoped for?
  o What could have been done differently?

- Tell me about the support received from religious organisations.

  o How did you come to access support?
  o What services and support did you get?
  o Would you have coped without religious support?

- You talked about many Somalis who were 'good' people, and who helped you and your son to survive. At the same time, you told me that it was you yourself whom you had to ultimately rely on for survival.

  o What was the motivation for people to assist you?

- Whom do you trust?

- In an ideal world, what support would you need in order to be well, and to become the person you would like to be?

- What would your advise to another woman be who arrived in South Africa now the same way you did?

Life journey

- Before you left Somalia, who did you dream of becoming?

- What would your life have been like had you not had to flee Somalia?

- What caused the conflicts that made you flee Somalia? What will it take to bring peace to your country?

- What would it take for people's memories of violence and displacement to heal?

- What would it take for you to heal?

- If there was peace, could you see yourself going home and bringing up your child there?

- What is your biggest fear for the future?

- What is your biggest hope?

- When you picture yourself in ten years' time, what do you see?

1.2.3 Excerpts from Transcript: Life Story Interview with Aliyah

11 December 2008

Social support and public services

[…]

D   I think you were just talking about the people who were telling you to go [to the social worker].

A   Yah, yah, they showed me the office and said, 'You can ask for help.' That way, I went there.

D   And what help did they want you to ask there?

A   The rent, the food... Because they gave me the place but it was accommodation, I *had* to pay [emphasised]. So they told me, I must ask to pay the rent. Actually, they were giving me half rent because it was R900. It was not even half, they gave me R300

D   It's a third... [chuckling]

A   [Giggling, too] It was better than nothing... it was better than nothing.

D   And then when you went to Verena, since you said that she gave you less than half of what you wanted, what were you hoping for?

A   I was hoping, at least they would give me one thing, maybe rent or food but it wasn't like that.

D   What happened?

A It was different from the way I was hoping. I was hoping they would pay at least the full amount of the rent, at least. But also it was better than nothing [giggling].

[...]

D Is there anything that could have been done differently to help you, in Durban or even Cape Town?

A Like what?

D Like what could be done better?

A Like at the police site?

 D Yes, also at the police site.

A They didn't help me, nothing, nothing, until right now. Because when I went there they just said, 'When we need you we will call you, when we need you, we will call you,' until [my husband] came out of jail. I don't even know which way he came out. And even at that time, if I weren't scared and sitting inside all the time, maybe something *bad* could have happened to me [emphasised]. Because someone did something, like to kill someone. And even that day he said, 'When I come out, I will kill you,' and I went to the Inspector and told him, 'He was phoning me from inside,' and he said, 'No, just ignore the phone he can't do *nothing*' [emphasized]! You see?

D You knew he could do a lot?

A Yah, he can *do* [emphasised]!

[...]

Life journey

A You know, sometimes I say, 'What do I do?' Like now, I don't have a choice. You see, you don't know what to do exactly. Even now to work, I don't think I can work properly. Because if you are going to work you think about your life, you think about your child, oh, and you can mess up your job. Sometimes, you know, if I'm alone, I sit like this, I say, 'Why me? This life, it is only me like this. Because from the beginning, my life, you know, from the beginning... Sometimes I say, 'The thing happened to me, it's going to happen to Muadh, also.' [Aliyah laughs, again.]

D Do you think it's fate?

A ... I don't know...

[Aliyah sighs, then there is a long silence]

[...]

A Eh, I am scared. If they tell me to go back to Somalia, eh, I don't know if I would be happy! [Chuckling] I don't know... It is my country. It is the place where I was born. Everybody likes his country, nobody hates their country. But it makes me scared, very, very scared... Because you ran away, you jump, the people, they... I am very scared. Even you can't be happy to go back there.

D For the memories?

A   Yah... Uh, it makes me scared... very scared...

[Some silence]

D   You think those memories can ever go away?

A   [Chuckling] Never... It can't go away [chuckling, again].

[Some more silence]

D   Aliyah... When you were still at home with your mother – because you were already twenty one twenty two when you left - that time, what did you dream to become one day? What was your life dream?

A   Actually, when I was twelve, fifteen, I was dreaming to have a good job, to study, stuff like that. But because of my country and the war came and stuff like that, all the dreams died. Because you can't dream of something that can't happen. You can't go to school to do more studies because you're scared for your life, even to get out of the house. So actually, from when I was fifteen, all the dreams were dead. The door of the dreams, it was closed... [chuckling]... Yah…

D   And what did you then think it was going to be like?

A   Oh, I don't have an idea.

D   Just waiting?

A   Yah

D   And seeing what the next day is going to bring?

A   Yah, just waiting and seeing, until now… I don't have *any* dream I don't have any idea, I just *sit* [emphasised]. Because *if* you dream, you say, like now, 'I've got a problem with my husband, every night and every day, he just phones me to scare me, to do like this. But I don't have a way to say, 'Let me go away from here' I don't have that way. I can say, the way I tell all the people, I say, 'I'm like an animal I'm not a human being,' because I don't think, I've got nothing, I just got what is coming today. Because you can *think* about the future, you can think about this and that if you have the way to start.

D   But you *are* waiting to be resettled, and you *did* apply for it?

A   Like they said, it's gonna take the years [to be resettled]. If something is coming in years... maybe if they can say, 'Next week,' or, 'Next month you'll go,' then maybe you can say, 'Oh if I go there, maybe I can study, maybe I can make all my dreams come true. Maybe one day, I can be like the way I was thinking the time I was young.' But now, from when I applied for resettlement in 2006, and now 2008 is going to be finished, and nothing done, so it's like, now I think, 'Oh, maybe, it's not going to happen today or tomorrow, it's gonna be more years.' And that that more years, you can't know if you are going to stay alive: 'If maybe this husband who is troubling me, maybe he is gonna kill me tomorrow, so...' I'm confused.

D   Yah

A   Actually, I'm confused.

[…]

1.3   Depth Individual Interviews with Practitioners of Care

1.3.1 Interview Guide

- What were your reasons for studying *social work / community development / theology*?

- In what fields of service have you previously worked?

- What were your reasons for starting to work with cross-border migrants?

- How would you describe your *current work experience / experiences in working with the refugees at the church*?

    Probes:

    o When did you start working *with the Refugee Services Provider / at the church*?
    o Did you do any work – as a professional, activist or volunteer - with cross-border migrants prior to *joining the Refugee Services Provider / the xenophobic violence*?
    o What are your current position and responsibilities?
    o How would you describe your *service users / the refugees staying at the church* and the challenges they face?
    o How would you describe your roles in relation to *your service users / the refugees staying at the church*?
    o What *makes / has made* this work rewarding?
    o What are / have been the greatest challenges in this work?

- Have you in your *current line of work / work with the refugees at the church* experienced any ethical dilemma that you could relate here?

    If you haven't personally had such an experience, do you perhaps know of a colleague's experience of an ethical dilemma that had a personal impact on you?

    Probes:

    o What exactly in that experience constituted the dilemma?
    o What factors, events and circumstances brought the dilemma about?
    o How was the dilemma dealt with at that time?
    o How did you feel during and after that experience?
    o Please describe the role of your organisation in the course of this experience.
    o Please describe the role of any third party that might have been relevant to this experience.
    o Please describe the role of the law in the course of this experience.
    o When dealing with the ethical dilemma you have just described, what were your most important support systems?
    o What were the most important blocks to resolving the dilemma?

- Are there any other issues that you would like to talk about?

1.3.2 Excerpts from Transcript: Depth Individual Interview with Robert

25 November 2008

[…]

D As you know, this interview is mostly about the encounter that all of us had with the refugees that stayed at the church. But to start, since you are one of the ministers here, I wanted to know, what did you bring to that encounter?

R The first part of the answer to that question was a deep sense of conviction of God's call upon my life to be using my life in a way that would make a difference to the world, and that through the work of the Church was where I was meant to be. So the motivation to the starting to study theology was really kind of coming out of the sense of… It was more of an anthropological sense as opposed to a theological one in many respects: Understanding of what it means, or a growing or a desire to understand what it means to be human, and how to be human in a way that is humanizing for others. So I think that was an important part of the whole motivation. And seeing the church as a place where the discovery of what it means to be fully human is a primary concern in my understanding, and really wanting to give my life to that.

[…]

D About a year and a half ago when we had these poverty workshops, you were implying that the *Other*, theologically speaking, doesn't exist…

R Yah… I mean… when it comes down to the nitty-gritty realities on the ground, of course there's *Us and Them* categories all over the show. But still, I think there is, I think that for example, the preaching that happened in Manning Road over years now: If you were to do a study of that, I would be fairly confident that you would discover a thread through that which would consistently be affirming some of the theological principles of the dignity of all people, the sacred worth of all people, our common humanity, that we all made an image and likeness of God… You know those kinds of convictions...

D And so we stumbled into the situation we are in now?

R Yah…

[…]

D Coming to this particular experience with this particular group: I personally don't know how it happened. I just know that one Sunday morning, it was announced that we have new people in this Church, and that they happen to live here, and then there was this whole group of, well, strange faces in our midst. If you can just recall exactly how this group come to live at our, well, Children's Church venues?

R You will recall that it started, the whole xenophobia stuff started up in Gauteng and then spread fairly rapidly to other urban centres, and it was something that I personally was very conscious of. There was a particular weekend where [the Council of Churches] organized visits of church leaders into different areas of affected people. I wasn't a part of that, but one of the staff members of [the Council of Churches], Reuben, who is a member of our church, on the Sunday evening he just shared briefly something of what had happened over the weekend… I think it was maybe the Monday evening when I got a

message to him. We had an American student with us, and she was attending an event at [the Council of Churches]. And I said to her, 'Please tell Reuben that if there is a need for accommodation for people that we would be open to assisting'…

And as it turned out the next day, I got a call from him to say that there was this group of Burundians and Congolese people at the American Embassy, and would be able to assist? At that stage, we knew that it was impossible to say how long it would be. We knew that it wouldn't be a question of days. We knew it would be a question of weeks or maybe months, but we didn't know. The limited size of the group that was originally mentioned meant that we felt that we were able to respond… and so we said, 'Yes'.

Effectively, the group arrived, and then over the weekend, there were more children who had been relocated elsewhere that then came to parents who realised that there was a safe place.

[…]

D   Your own role as a church minister, how would you describe that role?

R   I think initially it was quite a hands-on role in terms of just meeting people, like receiving them, conducting interviews – not on my own but with others - but then trying right up from the word "go" to try and get some management plan in place…

D   How would you characterise what then unfolded in terms of this: How did the groups, the two sets of *Others* maybe, how did they perceive each other and begin interacting?

R   There would be quite a spectrum, depending on where particular people found themselves in terms their involvement and their engagement. I think, one level is the congregation that had been there before these people arrived. For many of the people sitting in the pew, it was something that was registered as, 'These people are here', but fairly soon thereafter, I think it was not something that was immediately apparent in peoples' consciousness that this group was still here… I think for many people, if we are to be quite honest about it, it actually hasn't impacted too direct on them.

But for others who have been more involved in different areas in the life of the church, I think the sense of impact was greater. Firstly, there were just the practicalities of having nearly 50 people living on the premises. So other activities that would have normally happened were they were staying were obviously impacted. And over the course of time, that was one of the difficult things to manage: The sense of, 'This church is being taken over, and we don't have the space that we used to have before, and it's a little bit dirty, or dirtier than it was, and there is washing out in the line were before there wouldn't have been, and this sort of thing. That, I think, are some of the negative reactions.

But from a lot of people, I had quite a lot of feedback of people's sense of gratitude that the church is involved in this sort of thing, seeking to help in this kind of way. There was wonderful responsiveness to some of the appeals that were put out in terms of assistance. I think there were a real willingness and a real desire for people to be involved in some way and to contribute in some way... I think the whole xenophobic thing really touched a nerve on our collective psyche as it were. That was initial sort of wave of response which did kind of die down as the novelty of things passed.

[…]

Appendix 2:
Documentation Concerning Data Analysis

2.1   Adjunctive Procedures

2.1.1   *Examples of Memos from the Late Data Collection / Early Data Analysis Phase (2008-2009)*

Knowing and Acting Across Time

11 March 2009

I have returned to my office at the university… That is where my salary is paid. In this time of economic recession and poorly administered transformation at our university, life has become harder at my workplace as it has everywhere else. Staff cuts and several poor managerial decisions later, my workload has increased further, leaving me almost no time to work on my study, let alone finding any time to meet what I have begun to consider my moral responsibility: That is, to respond to the needs if not of anybody else, then of people whom I have come face to face with… Even recognising people in their entirety and responding to them empathetically – if nothing else – takes time. And time I do not have.

I believe that I am trapped in the same structural straight jacket as the refugees, just on a much higher level of material comfort. For as much as they are marginalised and exploited, I am drained of my intellectual labour, and the system of which I am part is increasingly geared towards filling the last spaces of (academic) freedom that one of its staff might enjoy with demands for student output and administrative responsibilities. Moral and political action must come out of a person's recreational time and personal space, which, too, is increasingly occupied by economic demands. Social action is the right thing to do, but it does not put food on the table of the refugees. And social action, too, takes time and needs space. Where do we begin? How do I give hope when I myself often feel powerless? Is there anyone who does not feel oppressed? What then is the point of knowing?

Face-to-face Encounter

2 December 2008

I feel particularly strongly about this category following my interview with Aliyah. The way I responded to her in the constrained environment of Refugee Services Provider and in the much more unconstrained life history situation at my house is significant. And somewhere in

between the two are my relationships as a 'fellow congregational member' of the refugees at the church.

It seems like the less constraining the environment, the less I am reduced to a particular role which determines, at least in part, my behaviour, the more genuine the encounter, the more compelling the moral demand placed on me. At the formal welfare organisation, I was the social worker whose job it was to respond to certain problems that a service user brings to the office. And the service users will bring those problems that they understand the office is there to resolve. As a social worker, I don't do or say certain things that are generally deemed unprofessional or even unethical. As Yalqoot said, 'If you cannot do it for the other 300 clients, don't do it for even one.' Thus, I would not have, could not have, bought lentils for a client as I felt like doing for Michelle after my home visit. Thus, I could appeal to people's sense of fairness when withholding resources: 'Think of those who are worse off than you'; or, 'If I did this for everybody, the money wouldn't last.'

As a 'fellow congregational member', I was far less restricted. I reduced the demands that were placed on me by saying, 'I am not your social worker', or, 'This is a church'. But on the other hand, there was also an ethical code that guided my behaviour: Acting on compassion. Overtly expressed demands could be frowned upon, but I found myself compelled to respond to visible need. Thus, it seemed more than appropriate that when I went to the Spice Emporium after the home visit to Michelle that I should also buy for her. At the same time, Michelle was also compelled to 'read me' better than any 'client' at Refugee Services Provider would have been expected to. When she hoped that I would use my green ID to rent a flat for her, I was visibly uncomfortable. I expected her to notice and to not come back to me about it. She didn't.

But the crassest example was that of Aliyah. When she sat in front of me and just narrated, narrated anything she wanted, with the clear understanding that the purpose of our encounter as just that, narration, I felt more deeply morally compelled than in any of the other types of encounter. Here, our meeting was reduced to just that: From one human being to another. And at times, because that was the commonality we had established, from one woman to another. The same woman that I had met as a client at the welfare organisation and whom I had rendered just the ordinary social work services to and felt good about it, suddenly had an almost complete moral hold over me – at least for the time we were together. What I would do with my moral responsibility afterwards, was still going to be another story.

The more genuine the encounter, the greater the moral depth of the encounter. This was most glaring in my different types of interview with Aliyah. I cannot even say the life story interview was more emotionally draining (even though I felt depressed and incapacitated to do any other work for the rest of the day), than, say, the interviews at the Refugee Services Provider. I remember clearly how draining it was not to help. On several occasions there I felt like my clients had attached a rope to my intestines and as they demanded the help that I would not, or could not, give, they would pull. I did not feel like this at all after the interview with Aliyah. Just I was sad. And wanting to help, as a person, not as a social worker.

2.1.2 Examples of Diagrams from the Early Data Analysis Phase (2010-11)
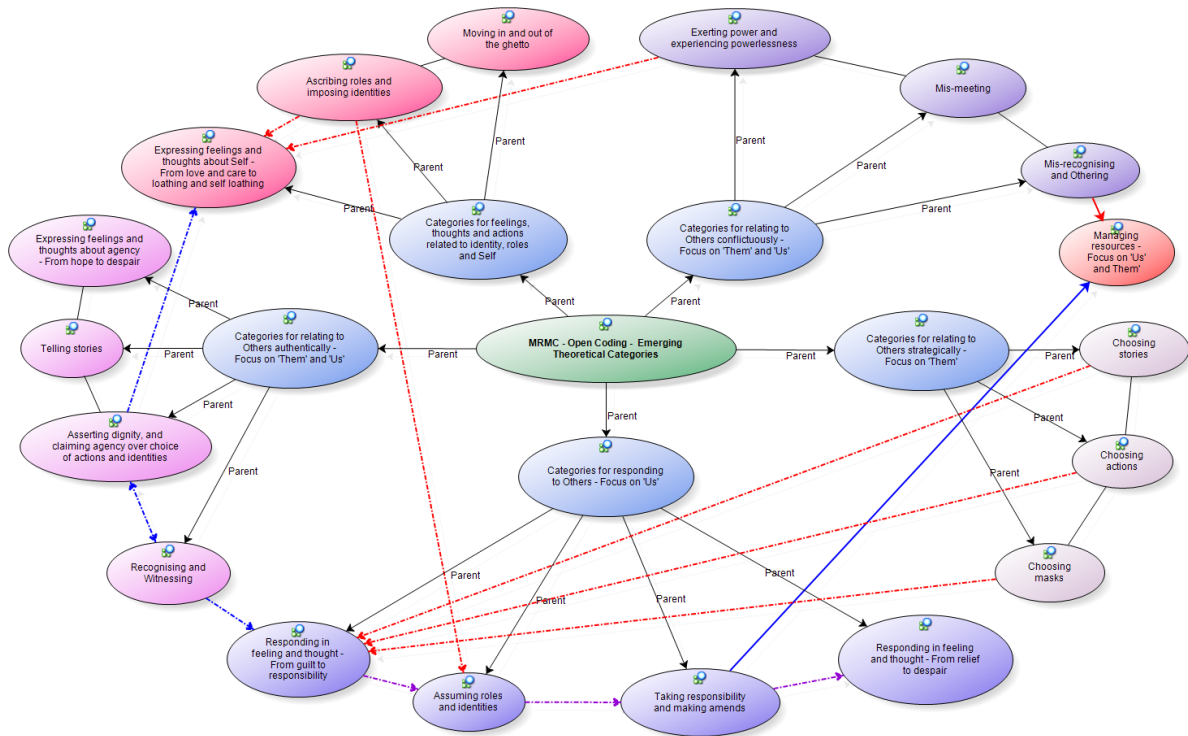
Open Coding Diagram for Chapter 9 – Encountering the Other, 22 December 2010
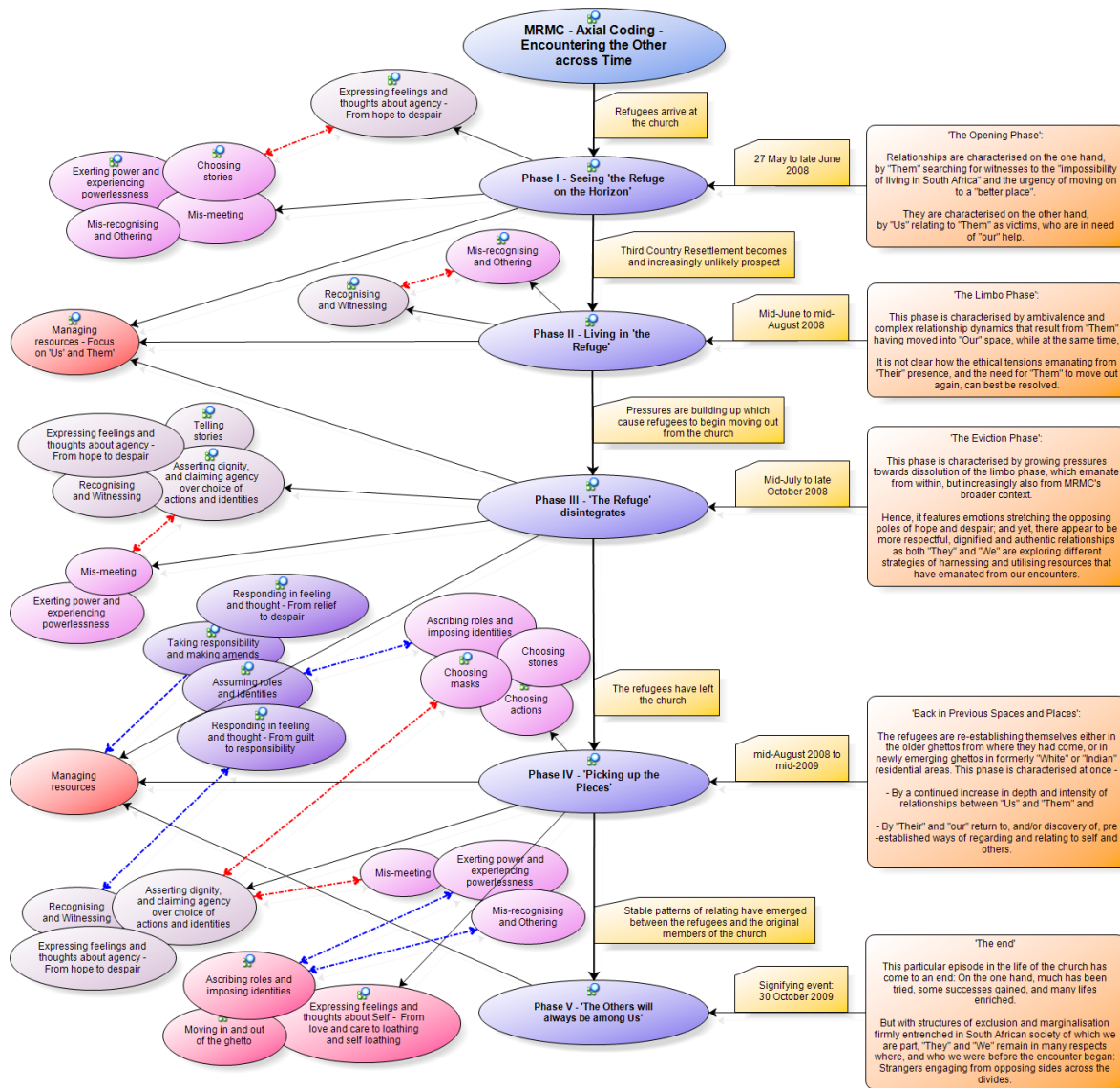
Axial Coding Diagram for Chapter 9 – Encountering the Other, 13 March 2011

2.2 Audit Trails for Analysis Process

2.2.1 Example of Audit Trail from the Late Data Analysis Phase (2012): Chapter 10 – Assuming Responsibility for Justice

Notes on the data analysis process from 5 June to 21 July 2012, as shared with my co-authors:

Guiding concepts and questions

Both my selection of data and my first round of analysis were guided by the idea of Othering which I have applied in previous publications as well:

- Those who do the responding are "Us", i.e. social workers at the refugee services provider, RSP – or "the service providers"
- Those who are being responded to are "Them", i.e. refugees mostly from the Great Lakes region with some from Zimbabwe – or "the service users"

This does not mean that "We" emerge as the subjects, and "They" as the objects in the relationships; as you will see, both "Us" and "Them" speak and act upon one another.

Instead – as in the previous articles on the Us-Them relationships at the Church – the "Us versus Them"-metaphor denotes a power differential which positioned the participants in the study differently in terms of our respective abilities to pre-structure and pre-figure relationships, to define needs and to order and space our encounters with one another. So far, I have pursued two layered questions:

- On "Their" part: What required responding to (and how did the service users try to elicit "Our" responses)?
- On "Our" part: What responses were forthcoming from the service providers (and which were the contextual and communicative conditions under which these responses occurred)?

It is important to note that "We" experienced none of "Their" issues that called for "Our" response directly:

- "Our" knowledge of the issues at stake was mediated by "Them" telling "Their" stories;
- "Our" emotional responses were mediated by "Their" actions and (verbal and non-verbal) communication; and
- "Our" practical responses were mediated by our knowledge and our emotional responses.

Theirs, then, constituted a set of counter-discourse and practices and an alternative form of power that enabled "Their" resistance against "Our" agenda of pre-structuring / pre-figuring of our encounters and of pre-determining "Their" needs.

Background and context

There are three sets of stories that are narrated by the refugees, and to which the social workers in the study were called on to respond.

- Stories of genocide and civil war of the 1990s and early 2000s in the Great Lakes region and which prompted massive refugee movements, with South Africa emerging as an important destination;
- Stories of xenophobic pogroms which in May 2008, displaced over 100 000 foreign nationals in South Africa; including some of the refugees concerned in this study;
- Stories about survival under conditions of urban poverty South Africa pursues a policy of "urban self-settlement" for refugees – there are no camps. In the context of deep xenophobia and a deepening web of exclusionary rules and legislation, most refugees suffer from dire poverty.

The common thread throughout the data below is the struggles of the social workers at the refugee service provider (RSP) in responding to the scale of the humanitarian crisis that presented itself in the aftermath of the xenophobic pogroms. This inability has several layers:

- The refugee services provider (RSP) is a UNHCR-funded agency and as such, bound to only service "bona fide refugees":
    - o The problem is that in the African context (or anywhere for that matter), it is very difficult in practice to distinguish between a bona fide refugee and an economic migrant.
    - o The UNHCR now talks about "mixed migration movements", but this is still assuming tacitly that people are either refugees or economic migrants, and not actually both.
    - o As a result, the services the data pertains to were rendered based on an incorrect framing of its service user base – and this then revealed itself as the first of three un-resolvable contradictions in social work practice.
- The South African state does not provide any integration assistance to refugees:
    - o As a result of South Africa's expanding web of exclusionary rules and legislation, as well as consistently high levels of xenophobia, all the refugees in the study were marginalised in almost all respects of their lives; in some respects being completely excluded.
    - o To compensate for the laissez-faire approach of the South African government, the UNHCR agreed to provide some material support to refugees. But in order (I suppose) to place a lid on potentially exploding cost implications, this is defined strictly as emergency relief, and intended to lead towards "self reliance".
    - o However, with socio-economic exclusion and poverty of refugees being structural, such ideological framing of the problems experienced by the refugees caused a mis-match between how the purpose of the assistance provided was understood by the social workers at the RSP and by the refugees, respectively – this revealed itself as the second un-resolvable contradictions in practice.
- The xenophobic violence coincided with the global economic crisis:

- o (Except of course that this might not be a coincidence... but this would be hard to prove).
- o The UNHCR responded to the crisis of displacement by increasing its emergency budget. At the same time, the economic hardship suffered by refugees increased greatly during the same year, and this was not acknowledged.
- o This led to many refugees approaching the RSP with claims of being victims of xenophobic violence, while in fact they were victims of structural exclusions and poverty – this is the third un-resolvable practice contradiction faced by the social workers at the RSP.

Data analysis

I have analysed the data using the following steps:

Open coding I

Selection of data for inclusion in the "responsibility set" based on the following criteria:

- RSP diary:
    - o Any encounter in the context of the Refugee Services Provider that seems to contain either a response or an inability to respond;
- Research interviews & Church diary:
    - o Any narration or comment that helps contextualise the responses – either against the history of the refugee participants of the study, or against the current context, i.e. the post-pogrom period in South Africa, 2008.

Open coding II

Organisation of data along four broad themes:

- Theme 1: Narrating (issues that created the need for response)
    - o These are stories told by refugees in the context of research interviews and as such, were not intended to elicit a response from a social worker.
- Theme 2: Responding at a distance
    - o These are those responses by social workers at the RSP to the crisis of xenophobic displacement, structural exclusion and/or poverty of refugees which were removed in terms of time and space from their actual encounters with refugees.

    Included here are field notes taken during staff meetings at the refugee services provider and around general efforts by its staff to organise the office space, as well as my own reflections at the end of a particular experience.

    Given the power differential between the social workers and their service users in terms defining the purpose of interviews, excluding service users from the interpretation of their needs, and so on, all of these responses served to

pre-structure and prefigure direct encounters between social workers and the refugees.

- Theme 3: Responding in personal encounters
  - o Stories told and actions displayed by refugees in practice situations were intended in order to elicit a response from social service providers. The source used to document this interplay between telling/acting on the one hand and responding on the other are field notes which I took immediately after the encounters in question.
    - ▪ At the Church, stories were told apparently to enhance the social worker's (my) understanding. The encounters between social worker and refugees were intimate and unfolded over a long time, and the motivations behind the sharing of stories were complex.
    - ▪ At the RSP, the encounters were generally short and once-off. Purpose of the encounters was generally to convince the social worker (me) that financial support towards rent and groceries was needed.
  - o Due to the data source – i.e. my field notes – most of the responses recorded here are my own.
- Theme 4: Commenting (on responses received)
  - o Included here are extracts from interviews with refugees and diary records of conversations, in which comments were made about relationships, interactions and spacing efforts at the offices of the refugee service provider, as well as reflections by the RSP service providers, articulated during semi-structured interviews after the end of my field placement there.

Axial coding

Organisation of Data into periods along a time line:

- Pre- ethnographic study:
  - o Civil wars and genocides in the Great Lakes region, and xenophobic pogrom in South Africa: These are the events that have created the service-user base and provide the legitimisation for the existence and services rendered by the RSP in the first place.
- Post-pogrom period in South Africa:
  - o Ethnographic study commences at the Refugee Services Provider (RSP). Service providers do not cope with the volume of service users calling for assistance and the volume of requests; Key events are bolded
- RSP strategic response to post-pogrom challenges:
  - o RSP staff hold a strategic planning meeting to formulate and implement an institutional response to the steep increase in requests for assistance in the post-pogrom period; Key events are bolded
- Post-field placement period:
  - o Semi-structured and life story interviews held with service providers and service users. Members of both groups were able to comment on any of the issues above, as well as to narrate any other issues of choice.

CDA: Coding by actors/speakers & context

Under this heading fall the two following steps:

Coding by speakers, actors & contexts		
Organisation of data in terms of who responds to whom, and in which context:	Service users thoughts, speech and practices	*Blue font*
	Service provider thoughts, speech and practices	*Red font* for Dorothee *Maroon font* for all other RSP staff
	Service users and service providers connecting and co-responding in their speech and actions	*Orange font*
	Context: any statements and descriptions that qualify the situation surrounding the discourses and actions of the service users and providers	*Green font*

Plotting encounters against a site map of the RSP offices		
Interpretation of data in terms of space: The waiting area and the office space are separated by an inter-leading door which spaces the encounters according to fields of power	Service users dominating in the waiting area	I have created a colour-coded map to help visualise the distribution of power and domination in this context.
	Service providers dominating in the office area	
	The inter-leading door becoming a tool to organise and divide the flow of power within the office space	

Example for coding by actors/speakers and context:

I develop the distinct sense that someone has opened the floodgates… The [refugee] camp is upon me. One lady (apparently not from Albert Park) is trying to squeeze past me into Oliver's office. My stress levels rise: I am beginning to feel claustrophobic and overwhelmed by the noise … Another person squeezes past the inter-leading door, which in my fast-evolving imagination right now seems to separate the separate the sane from the insane part of the office. He informs me that he only needs two minutes. I am physically cornered as he blocks my escape route back into my cubicle, so I might as well listen. I am told that he worked 'for an Indian', that he has not been paid for 1½ months, that he is from Zimbabwe, that he needs to bury his mother who has just passed away, that the LHR staff said that he should come here, that he has no money, so we need to help with money, and his hands are sticky and sweaty …

I refer him to Yalqoot who is in the process of warding off another would-be intruder into the office area and escape. Four minutes later, Yalqoot tears open my door: 'Did you tell this man to talk to me!?' 'Yes, I told him that you would know whether or not we can help.' Admittedly, Emmanuelle could have done that. But Yalqoot happened to stand right next to me, while Emmanuelle is an unbridgeable three meters away in the insane part of the office, surrounded a wall of people, so I would have struggled to get through to her. And even if I had succeeded and not lost him on the way, she wouldn't have been able to assist him, that's certain. *I try to look innocent. Yalqoot gives up and talks to the man.*

I used to believe that I could manage ethical dilemmas by limiting my direct moral responsibilities to the people I come in face-to-face contact with, and to restrict my face-to-face time with people to a manageable amount. What if that doesn't happen because in my work context, I have no control over the process of restricting the number of people I meet? After all, this is a walk-in office setting with "voluntary clients". *How then do I manage this limited amount of money, time, and emotional energy? By selectively apportioning empathy? By not "seeing" some persons I meet while "seeing" others, that is, by allowing for a genuine face-to-face encounter only in some meetings, and strategically setting up the other encounters into mis-meetings?*

Selective coding

Identification of Key words and phrases in the responsibility set:

Theme 1: Narrating (Coded by topics)		
<u>Broad context</u>	Including the historical, social & political context of conflict, genocide and civil war; the geographic/topographic context of flight etc.	*Green highlights*
<u>Narrow context</u>	Including the narrator's life circumstances prior to flight, the events preceding and surrounding his/her choice to flee, actions of people around the narrator etc.	*Yellow highlights*
<u>Personal choices and journey</u>	Including the narrator's choices when and where to go, to flee or any other important life choice	*Turquoise highlights*
<u>Trauma & loss</u>	Including descriptions of traumatising events and traumatic experiences, losses, and/or feelings associated with them	*Pink highlights*

Theme 2: Responding at a distance (Coded by perceptions & rules)		
Descriptions of contexts Any descriptive statements made by anybody about the following:	The office's broader contexts, i.e. descriptive comments made about the social, economic, policy, legal, and funding contexts in which the office is situated	*Teal highlights*
	The office's narrow context, e.g. descriptive comments about the more immediate service context, including service users' behaviours, actions and expectations, service providers' roles and responsibilities	*Turquoise highlights*
	The office's interactional context, e.g. descriptions of service providers' activities	*Green highlights*
Descriptions of space & time Any descriptions of the following:	Office space, or movement through office space	*Pink highlights*
	Time or movement through time	*Purple highlights*
Emotions, thoughts & evaluative comments Any statements about feelings and evaluative comments in relation to any of the descriptive statements listed above made by the following:	Lower-ranking colleagues, i.e. administrative staff, professional staff	*Maroon highlights*
	Higher-ranking colleagues, i.e. director, board members	*Dark yellow highlights*
	Myself	*Red highlights*
	Shared emotions, thoughts, i.e. statements that cannot be attributed to anyone in particular	*Grey highlights*
Rules Any efforts (suggested or implemented, successful or failed) around the following:	Management of service users, the work context, service provider activities	*Dark blue highlights*
	Management of space/time	
Response-ability Any phrase that includes the following:	A derivate of "response" or "ability"	*Yellow highlights*

Example for Theme 2:

Sibongile: 'People can't even answer the receptionist's questions because there are so many people around.'

Hélène: 'You walk in, and five people want to talk to you at the same time.'

Yalqoot: 'We need queue management…

Hélène: 'Please let's not call him "security". If you call him "security" [under her breath:] with a gun, [louder again:] and you render refugee social services, it doesn't match. It doesn't sound nice'…

Ashleigh: 'He will be a "security" but we will call him a "queue manager".

Theme 3: Responding in personal encounters (Coding by interactions)		
Eliciting responses Included here are, on the part of service users, the following:	Stories which detail and explain the circumstances of living that have led to the request for support. I include states of being here, as these also "tell a story"	*(maroon highlights)*
	Emotional expressions and actions including speech acts (excluding movement and excluding stories) that serve to elicited a response from service providers	*(red highlights)*
Articulating, and acting upon, thoughts & emotions Any feeling, though or action (including speech acts) on the part of service providers in response to the stories, statements, emotional expression, states of being or action (including speech acts) on the part of service users:	Negative thoughts & emotions including derivates of "frustration", "anger", "irritation", "annoyance", "appellation" or "resentment"	*(turquoise highlights)*
	Positive thoughts & emotions including any term that indicates connection (e.g. empathy, sympathy or solidarity) or a positive feelings about an encounter	
	Actions including speech acts (excluding movement) in relation to service users, including those of providing or withholding support	*(green highlights)*
Ordering space & time Any word/phrase indicating efforts by either service users or service providers which are directed at ordering, spacing, structuring or controlling the context in which their encounters were placed	Spacing: Relevant phrases include terms such as "door", "office", "waiting room", "window", or "courtyard"	*(pink highlights)*
	Timing: Relevant phrases include terms like "time", "minute", "hour", "week", "month", "today", "past", "soon" etc	*(purple highlights)*
	Movement: Relevant phrases include terms like "wait for", "go into", "move out of", "walk past", "come through", "remain behind" and so on	*(blue highlights)*
	Rules for timing, spacing and movement: Including any phrase referring the use of rules, process, procedure, strategy, protocol of engagement between service users and service providers	*(dark blue highlights)*
Response-ability I have highlighted two types of phrases:	Any phrase that includes a derivate of "response" or "ability"	*(yellow highlights)*
	Any interaction that cannot be attributed to either "Them" or "Us", i.e. all those interactions in which the term "We" denotes both "Them" and "Us" together. This	

	includes both incidents of connection and incidents of conflict	

Example for Theme 3:

I develop the distinct sense that someone has opened the floodgates… The [refugee] camp is upon me. One lady (apparently not from Albert Park) is trying to squeeze past me into Oliver's office. My stress levels rise: I am beginning to feel claustrophobic and overwhelmed by the noise … *As I venture out of … again (I remain after all curious as to how this film will unravel and do not wish to miss an important scene), another person squeezes past the inter-leading door, which in my fast-evolving imagination right now seems to separate the sane from the insane part of the office. He informs me that he only needs two minutes. I am physically cornered as he blocks my escape route back into my cubicle, so I might as well listen. I am told that he worked 'for an Indian', that he has not been paid for 1½ months, that he is from Zimbabwe, that he needs to bury his mother who has just passed away, that the LHR staff said he should come here, that he has no money so we need to help with money, and his hands are sticky and sweaty…*

I refer him to Yalqoot who is in the process of warding off another would-be intruder into the office area and escape. Four minutes later, Yalqoot tears open my door: 'Did you tell this man to talk to me!?' 'Yes, I told him that you would know whether or not we can help.' Admittedly, Emmanuelle could have done that. But Yalqoot happened to stand right next to me, while Emmanuelle is an unbridgeable three meters away in the insane part of the office, surrounded a wall of people, so I would have struggled to get through to her. And even if I had succeeded and not lost him on the way, she wouldn't have been able to assist him, that's certain. I try to look innocent. Yalqoot gives up and talks to the man.

I used to believe that I could manage ethical dilemmas by limiting my direct moral responsibilities to the people I come in face-to-face contact with, and by restricting my face-to-face time with people to a manageable amount. What if that doesn't happen because in my work context, I have no control over the process of restricting the number of people I meet? After all, this is a walk-in office setting with "voluntary clients". How then do I manage this limited amount of money, time, and emotional energy? By selectively apportioning empathy? By not "seeing" some persons I meet while "seeing" others, that is, by allowing for a genuine

face-to-face encounter only in some meetings, and strategically setting up the other encounters into mis-meetings?

Theme 4: Commenting on responses– No selective coding done
Not done - as per discussion with Vivienne & Michalinos (10-13 July 2012): We agreed that it would be sufficient to base the responsibility article on auto-ethnographic material, i.e. the RSP diary, so comments by social workers and service users obtained in post-hoc interviews would no longer be required.

Theoretical coding of critical incidents

As per discussion with Vivienne & Michalinos (10-13 July 2012),

- Theme 1 data:
    - Will not be used as it contains traumatic material which the article, due its length and focus, cannot do justice.
- Theme 4 data:
    - Will not be used as the data can be dealt with more frankly if discussed in relation to the researcher. This means that the article will draw on auto-ethnographic data only, i.e. the RSP diary.
- Themes 2 and 3:
    - This data lends itself to a discussion within a theoretical framework which centres on Young's social connection model of responsibility, in contrast to what she calls the liability model.
        - Joint selection (by Vivienne, Michalinos and myself) of those critical incidents for discussion in the article that speak directly to, allow for application of, and help us interrogate, the agreed-upon theoretical framework; we settle on two main categories.
            - Setting parameters for responding:
                - Refusing blame/refusing responsibility: "This is not our fault, so it is not our responsibility" (Liability model, Young, 2007, 2001), followed by passing blame on to the victim (Ife, 2006)
                - Exclusion by Othering (Tronto, 1993; Plumwood, 1993; Bauman, 2004), thereby disconnecting: "They are many, and they are dangerous" (A counter-example for the social connection model, Young, 2007, 2011)
                - Exclusion by rule: "They don't fit the criteria that set the parameters of our responsibility" (Mis-framing, Fraser, 2008; Liability model, Young, 2007, 2011)
            - Responding:
                - Disconnecting: e.g. repulsion; alienation;
                - Connecting: e.g. imaginatively; communicatively.

As per discussion with Vivienne & Michalinos: In view of the route of selecting and discussing "critical incidents", it is not necessary to answer questions that would fall under the heading, "Conditional Matrix". Questions thus not pursued any further include:

- Which modes of engagement and types of responses dominated at a distance?
- Which dominated in face-to-face encounters?
- Which form of engagement on the part of the service users elicited which type of response on the part of the service providers?
- Which modes of engagement and types of responses dominated in which part of the office?
- At what point along the time line did these responses occur?

2.2.2 *Example of Audit Trail from the Late Data Analysis Phase (2013): Chapter 7 – Subjectivities of Survival*

Correction & immersion

Checking of interviews:

- Corrected 9, and re-transcribed 9 interviews;

Total amount of data:

- 145,645 words

Settling question of topic

First discussion with supervisor for preliminary delineation of topic: Understanding migrants' survival strategies. This includes participants' -

- Narration of their motives for, and acts of migration;
- Participants' perceptions of the South African context and themselves within it; as well as -
- Activities directed at survival in South Africa.

Corresponding research questions from PhD proposal

- Why do migrants cross, and choose to remain within, the borders of South Africa?

- How do cross-border migrants articulate their experiences, as well as their perceptions of the economic, social, political and legal contexts within which they live?

Axial coding & data reduction

Exclusion of life stories that have been used in the article "Dreams"

- Aliyah
- Michelle

Within the remaining six life stories, four themes developed along a time line within each participant's life story

- Surviving home
- Entering South Africa
- Surviving South Africa
- Hopes & plans for the future

Exclusion of sections that do not fit into the above themes; data reduced to:

- 27,084 words

Further narrowing of focus and refinement of theoretical framework

Second discussion with supervisor to further delineate the topic:

- Narrow down and specify the notion of survival strategies by including the following concepts: surplus populations and subjectivities of survival

Open coding & further reduction of data

8 themes developed around activities in relation to survival and subjectivities in relation to activities:

- Uprooting

- Crossing borders & arriving

- Finding work & staying employed

  o Trying to build a career
  o Job hunting
  o Waitressing
  o Truck driving
  o Working as security guard
  o Car guarding
  o Informal trading

- Subsisting, saving & spending money

  o Networking
  o Budgeting
  o Securing shelter
  o Finding food
  o Supporting family at home

- Relating to authorities (Government, UN & refugee services)

- Relating to the Other (Statements on expatriates & South Africans)

- Engaging in close relationships (Statements o family & friends)

- Subjectivities of survival: Making sense & learning life's lessons

  o Dignity, self-image & well-being
  o Work & upward mobility
  o Being vulnerable & needing help
  o Agency

Exclusion of sections that do not fit into the above themes; data reduced to:

- 13,970 words

Coding along discursive categories & further reduction of data

Critical Discourse Analysis:

- Being affected and/or statements on context

    o Passive voice and/or
    o Statements around causes of own actions and states of being

- Effecting (exercising agency)

    o Active voice and/or
    o Transitive statements on own actions

- Experiencing affects (Subjectivity)

    o Reflexive and/or
    o Intransitive statements on own states of being *(including feelings, value judgements in relation to self and/or significant others to whom participants relate and/or the actions performed by self and/or significant others)*

Exclusion of life stories that do not reveal anything about survival strategies and/or subjectivities of survival that other life stories do not also reveal:

- Timon

Exclusion of quotes that do not lend themselves to analysis as per the above; data reduced to:

- 10 436 words

Developing focus: Excluding themes, sub-themes & visualising remaining themes

Excluding (sub-) themes that exceed the paper's immediate focus and/or do not speak to the theoretical categories developed:

- Subsisting, saving & spending money (removed)
- Relating to authorities (removed)
- Relating to the Other (removed)
- Engaging in close relationships (removed)
- Making sense & learning life's lessons (Integrated into above: "re-claiming agency")

Developing & visualising remaining themes:

- Taking & implementing decision
- Experiencing successes &obstacles
- Assessing outcomes
- Responding affectively
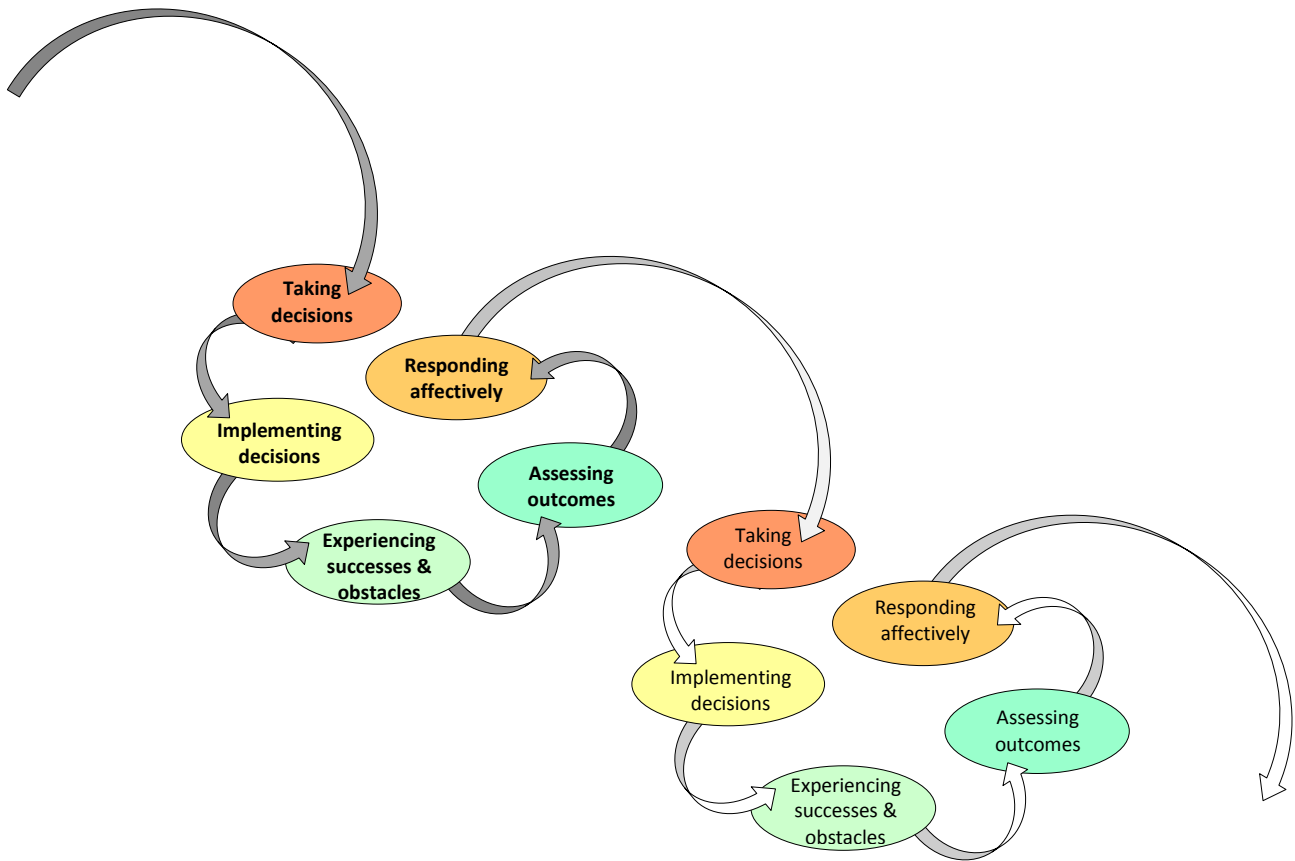
Diagram: Themes for "Subjectivities of Survival"

Further refinement of theoretical framework

Third discussion with supervisor & discussion with supervisor 1 to further delineate the topic: Development of normative framework of social justice for interpretation of participants affective responses, decisions and implementation thereof vis-à-vis and economic, social, political & legal contexts:

- Notions of capabilities & agency
- Affective turn in feminist ethics

Development of categories and sub-categories

- Category 1: Uprooting ←
    - o Choosing to leave home
    - o Deciding to come to South Africa (All)

- Category 2: Taking action towards survival
    - o Engaging in wageless work ←
        - ▪ Home-based production & vending (Leocadie)
            - ▪ Using ethnic networks (Francois)

Note that agency has already been exercised. Presentation & discussion of findings will explore further –
- How migrants survive;
- How the South African context facilitates or hinders migrant agency;
- What kind of subjectivities emerge;
- How migrants describe their context of survival and articulate their experience thereof.

Use Denning (2010) quote for the dispossessed and uprooted who have no choice but to sell labour, or to engage in wageless work

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- o Seeking employment
  - Using ethnic networks (Emile, Sebastien)
  - Using media (Bola, Lance)
  - Using labour brokers (Lance)

- o Working
  - Pursing an academic career (Bola)
  - Working as an artisan (Lance)
  - Working as security guard (Emile)
  - Guarding cars (Sebastien)
  - Driving trucks (Emile)

> Use Mullaly (2010) on structural forms of oppression

> "*We could not afford pilot training*"

> "*The ethnic network was the only one available, and it forced me to do what I did not want to do*"

- Category 3: Experiencing obstacles
  - o Assessing outcomes
    - Denied access to opportunities (Leocadie, Sebastien)
    - Blocked opportunities (Lance)
    - Stunted upward mobility (Bola)
    - Re-exclusion through rules & practices (Leocadie , Emile)

> "*You referred me to the employment agency but they never called me back*"

> SOB licensing system

> Licensing system at flea market

- Category 4: Experiencing loss of agency
  - o Responding affectively
    - Feeling undignified (Sebastien)
    - Feeling hurt (Bola)
    - Feeling tired (Bola)
    - Feeling hopeless (Emile)
    - Feeling self-loathing (Emile)
    - Feeling anger (Lance)

> Use Mullaly (2010) on internalised oppression

> Use Mullaly (2010) and Dominelli (2002) on strategies of the oppressed

> Lance's planned crime ("*now I am calling the shots*") can be interpreted twofold:
> - As an affective (retaliatory) response
> - As an i...

- Category 5: Re-claiming agency
  - o Acting on affects
    - Planning retaliatory actions (Lance,
    - Contemplating violence against self (Emile)
    - Committing lateral violence (Emile)

> Use Simone (2011) quote on regaining spaces for autonomous action and Dominelli (2002) on accommodation a...

> Forging papers

> Paying bribes

  - o Adapting actions
    - Continuing to follow rules & practices (Bola)
    - Circumventing exclusionary rules & practices (Emile)
    - Undermining exclusionary rules & practices (Emile, Leocadie)
    - Manipulating interpersonal encounters (Sebastien)
    - Enlisting supernatural support (Emile)
    - Seeking alternative spaces (Sebastien)
    - Planning a crime as alternative form of income generation (Lance)

> Running from the police

> Getting "*the white lady*" to feel something

> Praying and making lifestyle changes to please God

> Getting "*the white lady*" to feel something

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Uprooting: A peculiar mix of agency and the lack thereof -
- Choosing to / being forced to leave home
- Deciding to / happening to come to South Africa
- Crossing borders, arriving & settling in (*"It happened/I made it happen"*)

Taking action

Seeking employment → Using labour brokers

Engaging in wageless work → Using ethnic networks → Using media, internet, newspapers

Producing goods at home → Vending → Selling labour

Experiencing obstacles

Pursuing an academic career
Working as an artisan
Working as security guard
Driving trucks
Guarding cars

Experiencing obstacles

Denied access to opportunities
Blocked opportunities
Stunted upward mobility
Re-exclusion through rules & practices

Denied access to opportunities
Blocked opportunities
Re-exclusion through rules & practices

Experiencing loss of agency

Feeling undignified
Feeling hurt
Feeling hopeless
Feeling tired
Feeling angry
Feeling self-loathing

Reclaiming agency

Seeking alternative spaces
Managing interpersonal encounters
Enlisting supernatural support
Engaging in acts of solidarity
Planning retaliatory actions
Contemplating violence against self
Committing lateral violence
Continuing to follow rules & practices
Circumventing/under-mining exclusionary rules & practices

Continuing life courses: The continued exercise of agency in relation to contextual constraints & opportunities -
- Some successes
- Mostly defeats

Diagram: Categories for "Subjectivities of Survival"

Excluding sub-categories –

… That exceed the paper's immediate focus and/or do not speak to the theoretical categories developed:

- Subsisting, saving & spending money (removed)
- Relating to authorities (removed)
- Relating to the Other (removed)
- Engaging in close relationships (removed)
- Making sense & learning life's lessons (Integrated into above: "re-claiming agency")

Literature review / Development of core categories in relation to readings / Selective coding in relation to core categories

- Category 1 (Uprooting):
    - Mobility as an instance of agency
    - Complexities and blurring of boundaries between "forced" and "voluntary" migration
        - ⇨ Readings on globalisation, nation state and surplus labour incl. Collier (2010); Fraser (2008); SAMP readings; Weber & Bowling (2008)

- Category 2 (Taking action to survive):
  - Work and surplus populations
  - Urban spaces & survival in Global South
    - ⇨ Beall et al. (2001?); Collier (2010); Denning (2010); Simone (2004); Kihato (2004);

- Category 3: (Experiencing obstacles):
  - Global economic and political context;
  - National rules, regulations, attitudes & practices of exclusion
  - Local rules, regulations, attitudes & practices of exclusion
    - ⇨ Amin (2012); Bauman (2002; 2004); Dominelli (2002); Duffield (2008); Fraser (2008); Kihato (2004); Landau and Vigneswaran (2011); Local Bylaws & other legal docs; Mullaly (2010); Richard's and previous readings on globalisation, nation state and surplus labour; SAMP readings; Weber & Bowling (2008)

- Category 4 (Experiencing loss of agency):
  - Notions of dignity, hope & other affective responses
  - Oppression & internalised forms of oppression
    - ⇨ Amin (2012); Ghorashi (2008); Hartnack (2009); Kihato (2004); Dominelli (2002); Mullaly (2010); Nussbaum (2000, 2006); Sen (1999; 2009); Simone (2011); Vivienne's readings on capabilities & agency; Vivienne's readings on affective turn in feminist ethics

- Category 5 (Re-claiming agency):
  - Notions of capabilities & agency
  - Internalised forms of oppression, lateral violence & "deviance" from dominant rules
  - Oppression, Acceptance & resistance
    - ⇨ As per Category 4

2.3   Blind Coding: Transcript from Independent Researcher

By Linda Kreitzer, 15 February 2012

Interview Robert – Themes – humanizing encounters

1. Building relationships is at the core of this service. We live in a 'them' and 'us' world and although we think we don't practice and think like this we do. His example on 41:19 really brings this home. He was challenged by his 'them' – refugees and 'us' church members to become 'one' in humanity. Key here is the message of 'you are welcome here'.

2. The tension and challenge of putting theology and theory into practice was a big issue throughout this interview. And still, at the end, it was difficult. Having challenged the church to be more fully human (0:53) a test was given in the form of these refugees to show that understanding of being fully human. This includes helping others which was the pastor's motivation. The theory now became a reality and how the church would respond is how they could take that theory and put it into practice. It was also tested beyond what they expected by having 50 instead of the original 8 come.

3. Person to person contact, building relationships and allowing some of the group to be part of the ministry was crucial to this success. It is about seeing people as subjects and not objects.

4. There was also the theme of resistance in the transcript. As well, it was interesting that for many of the Sunday going people this did not affect them but the core people who really got involved it was life changing. So, were the people who didn't get involved resistant to change, helping others? For others the reality hit them and they were resistant. I wonder if they stayed resistant or if they changed over time as well. 6:06 – There seems to be a disconnect between the theory of democracy and what has been happening under the apartheid system. Not only are the refugees in transition but the country is in transition as well. It is about changing attitudes and shifting perspectives. Change in demographics also seems to cause resistance.

5. The word 'focus' is used quite a lot. This situation made them sharpen their focus on what their call to humanity is all about.

6. The theme of diversity is strong and celebrating diversity in a country where this has not been the case. Diversity brings common bond of humanity (7:08). It is almost like going against the norm, where hatred for one ethnic group over the other has been the norm and now we are to love each other. This transition is difficult, cause's resistance. It seems that it again comes down to seeing people as humans and bonding as humans. Getting over all of the socializing and barriers is difficult.

7. Ties theology to the injustices of the world, poverty.

8. 14:47 – Change in attitude and perception takes time and constant effort. It is a process that is often tested by events that unfold in our lives or in this case the church's life.

9. Working for injustice, whatever you do takes time and needs to be organized. This church was fortunate to have a student to do this. Intake interviews were done and other things

were organized to help out these people. Organization is key. Another social work role is a broker. (19.05) A broker between many stakeholders is important.

10. The idea that some church members thought that the group 'was taking over' is an important theme. It goes along with resistance. Why did they feeling like they were being taken over? Interesting lessons about the fact that for many centuries this is how black people felt in South Africa. When privilege is challenged this is a common response. Again , this goes back to building relationships and in the end seeing these people as not the 'other' who is invading our church but seeing these people as 'human beings' who we welcome into our church.

11. Good will and great things come from being challenged. Strengths come out in many different ways. Again this is about one-to-one relationship building. Resilience of the people and their close bonding and looking out for each other was an important issue to look at for many of the people.

12. A group to be able to share hurts, sorrows, etc. was key here and provided an avenue for people to share and voice their situation, feelings and hurts.

13. Including a refugee into the ministry fairly early on was a sign of confidence and acceptance and was a positive thing to do.

14. Recognition of the systemic barriers that these people face.

15. Reciprocity was important. The musicians being involved and the warmth of the people towards the congregation. A give and take which is not true in many welfare programs where it is a one way system. Here that reciprocity really helped with having a good experience.

16. Financial issues

17. Challenges of each individual of the church and the refugees and the growth experience of those willing to get their hands into the situation and help.

Aliyah – them and us at different levels – Abuse

1. The whole story of Aliyah is one I have heard over and over again. What strikes me with this story is the abuse that Amina experienced from other Africans, South Africans and the bureaucracy. This physical and emotional abuse suffered by Amina was from the effects of political upheaval, fleeing a violent country, violence by her husband, the South African police, etc. The cycle of abuse, generation after generation.

2. The issue of trust – When one has been through the above abuses to trust anyone is a miracle. However, she was fortunate to have some of her own people she could turn to in time of need and she experienced loving acts by these people.

3. Resilience – The woman is a survivor despite all that she has gone through. I think the statement "If you have a problem you can survive" is an interesting statement.

4. Abuse of power – This whole story reeks of the abuse of power. As a refugee, a woman, a mother and homeless person, she has very little power except her own will power. She is the marginalized of the marginalized. She seems to be taken advantage of by the police when she calls to ask for help.

5. Choices and circumstances – We can't be accountable for where we were born, who our parents are, the political state of our nation, our age and ethnicity. Already, Amina has all of these against her because they are not like the dominant society. They give her very little power. As an adult, she can try and change her circumstance so that she can make it in society. Even then, her choices are influenced by what she has experienced in the past and her own will power.

6. Family connections seem important - By family I mean her ethnic group as well as her blood family.

Church support group session – Your problem is not my problem. I can offer some solutions, but it is still your problem.

1. Them and us- subject/object, civilized/primitive, powerful/powerless, respect/disrespect, truth/untruth, trust/distrust. Why do we put people in these categories? Is it because we don't want to feel responsible, it is easier to not know these people so we treat them like objects?

2. Refugees are people who have experienced more trauma than you or I will experience in our entire lives. Is it too much to ask that they be treated fairly and with dignity?

3. Powerful effects of being able to tell ones story. I don't think it is even important that the listener can truly understand the trauma and pain. It is the listening ear that is important. This connects the "them and us". It makes an object the subject that has feelings and is human.

4. Is it important that the story they tell is exaggerated, untruthful, not all there? Maybe stories exaggerated because they want to impress the refugee board. They are playing the game because that is what they have been taught and that is why they have survived so far. Stories can be used against you as well as for you. Anyway, who says there is one truth only?

5. Trust and mistrust – Mistrust of between young and older refugees. Why is this so? Institutions that that make or break ones existence. This is totally powerful organization and one that people fear.

6. Them and us, are we the animals?

Church home visit – Abuse that breed's abuse that breeds abuse

1. Unfair systems in the market. Police raids

2. Violence and abuse - Michelle lost almost everything. The business, the baby, then her husband and then the violence came. Crisis breeds violence.

3. Loss – so much loss. Loss of country, loss of dignity, loss of baby, loss of business, loss of womanhood, loss of house, loss of support.

4. Trust and mistrust – Trust of church member and employer. Mistrust of system, husband,

5. Religion – Can be a help.

6. Moral issues – Martine to her religion. Social worker to her professional code of ethics.

7. Poverty – Hand to mouth existence. Cycle of poverty, no way out

8. Poverty – loss – abuse – poverty – loss – abuse

9. Resiliency – Despite all of the above, these people survive and eventually get money to live on. Little successes and happy moments keep them going.

Robert – Nov. 25, 2008 – Treating people with dignity and respect. Being fully human

1. Giving life to help others be fully human. This goes against the subject/object experience that so many refugees experience.

2. Church situation came at a 'perfect storm' time when the church had decided to focus on more practical ways to help communities. All this theory became reality. Reality hit and some people didn't like it. There was resistance to change.

3. South Africa itself is changing in attitude, demographics, community, nation and world in the midst of a transition.

4. Diversity as a positive contribution – The celebration of diversity in terms of our differences as people can connect us with that deep common humanity that binds us together. It is going against the hatred with love. And yet,

5. Diversity is often seen as a negative thing – It is about changing attitudes and going beyond what the socialization process was under apartheid. Often when we as a dominant society are asked to change, to give up our power, we resist and fight the change. We feel as though our power has been taken away from us. "We do people a great disservice when we do not allow and encourage and provide opportunity and facilitate those kinds of encounters across barriers that our secular society continues to try to uphold" (pg. 3). And yet, in this church the Sunday only goers were not impacted by the service the church was giving to the refugees.

6. Religion is a strong motivator.

7. Poverty, people who are marginalized, victims of injustice, abuse, people come in all shapes and sizes.

8. Them and us in society.

9. Common thread at the church was the dignity of all people, the sacred worth of all people, our common humanity. And yet them and us exist.

10. When injustice is so apparent, it takes only a few people to have an effect for change on other people.

11. Flexibility – More refugees showed up than they expected and they were flexible and adaptable. They also had a student who could lead the group.

12. Organized – Any service needs some organization, intake interviews, daily living jobs, organizing the refugees on a daily basis and encouraging them to do as much for themselves as possible.

13. Broker role – Between the refugees and the state, social services and families.

14. Building relationships – The best way to get over the 'them and us' is to get to know the families and to build relationships. Once you know the people then they are subjects and

not objects and it is more difficult to see a clear 'them and us' and it becomes 'we'. This also took place with the prayer meetings where people felt free to voice their concerns.

15. Reciprocity – The church members gave and the refugees gave as well. A 2 way giving is important.

16. Resiliency – After all of their suffering, refugees are very resilient.

17. Hopelessness – Refugees came with hopelessness and as the settled into the church and built relationships and saw some progress maybe that hopelessness changed.

18. System disappoints –

19. Strengths of the group – Looking out for each other, helping each other, coming together and giving gratitude and warmth to their carers.

20. You are welcome here – a way to bring the 'them and us' together. A way to humanize the encounter.

21. The time when the 'them and us' ceased to exist was when the refugees just wanted to be part of the congregation.

Common threads among all of the transcripts

1. Violence and abuse as a cycle. Often starts when a person is in crisis and has nothing. All the refugees experienced abuse and violence.

2. Mistrust – There was mistrust between refugees and between the S.A. systems of justice.

3. Resiliency – All refugees seemed to be resilient when faced with so much trauma, violence, abuse and disappointment and loss.

4. Them and us – subject/object, primitive/civilized, worthy/unworthy

5. Religion – Both the church and refugees had a faith that seemed to help them deal with the situation at hand.

6. Loss – loss of one's home, friends, family, support, children, dignity, humanity, loss of power by church members, loss of being comfortable and living the theoretical until forced to live the reality.

7. Relationship building – the most important part of decreasing the 'them and us'.

8. System – Disappointing all round for refugees and the church members trying to help them.

9. Poverty, marginalized, abused, beaten by family and the system, cycle of poverty.

10. Helping each other, clinging to each other for support.

11. Religion is a motivator to stay alive and keep going and is a motivator to help others.

12. Story-telling is a powerful healer and it is important for refugees to tell their stories.

Appendix 3:

Documentation Concerning Ethical Obligations

3.1   Ethical Clearance Certificate

UNIVERSITY OF
KWAZULU-NATAL

RESEARCH OFFICE (GOVAN MBEKI CENTRE)
WESTVILLE CAMPUS
TELEPHONE NO.: 031 – 2603587
EMAIL   : ximbap@ukzn.ac.za

7 NOVEMBER 2007

MS. D HOLSCHER (961115163)
SOCIAL WORK & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Dear Ms. Holscher
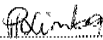
ETHICAL CLEARANCE APPROVAL NUMBER: HSS/0635/07D

I wish to confirm that ethical clearance has been granted for the following project:

"Exploring cross-border migration from a critical postmodern perspective: Implications for Social Work's normative commitment to social justice"

PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the school/department for a period of 5 years

Yours faithfully

MS. PHUMELELE XIMBA
RESEARCH OFFICE

cc. Post-Graduate Office (Lyn Marriott)
cc. Supervisor (Prof. V Sewpaul)
cc. Dr. D Farland

Founding Campuses: Edgewood   Howard College   Medical School   Pietermaritzburg   Westville

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3.2 Request for Permission of Entry, Information Sheet and Consent Form for Research Sites

3.2.1 Request for Permission of Entry

6 June 2007

[Address withheld]
Fax No.: [withheld]

Dear [name withheld],

My PhD Study: Request to conduct participant observation study at [withheld]

Further to our previous discussions, I am now writing officially to request your permission to conduct part of my proposed PhD study at [withheld]. Please find below a brief overview of the study, as well as some practical considerations.

Topic

The topic of the proposed study is, Exploring cross-border migration into South Africa: Implications for social work's commitment to social justice.

Rationale

The rationale behind the study is that a commitment to social justice is central in the self-definition of social work.

At the same time, the number of both documented and undocumented persons migrating across international borders is increasing. Social work with migrants is thus an emerging field of practice, with its specific sets of protocols, practices, methods and ethical challenges. It has been noted in the literature that social workers receiving international migrants play a crucial role in the allocation of limited resources, in the context legislation that clearly distinguishes between economic and non-economic migrants, including asylum seekers and refugees.

This situation is bound to raise ethical issues, specifically around the scope and limits of social justice, a concept which essentially refers to the distribution of rights, opportunities and resources within, and across societies. These issues are worth exploring, both for the benefit of social workers and service users in this particular field, and for the profession at large.

Research design

As far as the research design is concerned, mine will be a qualitative, ethnographic study. I intend working with two samples, one comprising cross border migrants themselves, with whom I hope to collect life histories. The other sample would be [withheld], where I would hope to conduct a participant observation study.

I am planning to use a Grounded Theory approach for the analysis of both sets of data. That means, I would look for themes and issues emerging as I collect the data, which would guide further data collection – until the most pertinent themes and concepts emerging around the topic of social justice become sufficiently clear.

Participant observation at [withheld]

With regard to the proposed participant observation at [withheld], I am fully aware that hosting an additional social worker for a lengthy period will place a number of demands on the team, in addition to creating logistical problems. At the same time, research topics in the field of ethics, such as social justice, can create insecurity on the part of the 'observed' as to whether or not they will be judged by the 'observer'. So I spent some time thinking about how these two concerns could be best addressed.

Benefits

Firstly, [withheld] should benefit from my presence in a tangible way. Therefore, I would be happy to render services like any social worker would.

Collaboration

Secondly, the study should be as collaborative as possible. During the participant observation period, I would like to be as well integrated with [withheld] as possible. Over and above rendering services, I would be keen to participate in all meetings and other activities that your agency would permit me to attend or assign to do.

Thus, rather than observing, capturing, analyzing and eventually 'judging' other people's work and dilemmas, I would be able to include myself in this process, that is, observing myself, and taking field notes on my activities, difficulties, and reflections. In addition - staff willing – I would like to conduct the data analysis jointly, as a collaborative process, possibly in the form of a workshop after, or as a series of meetings during the participant observation period.

In addition, I would of course be grateful if the social workers at [withheld] could grant me at least one formal interview during or following my stay at your agency.

Time frames

The process I am proposing is quite intense and there would need to be sufficient time for me to become acquainted with your agency's processes, protocols, social work role and functions; to do the required work; to collect the data; to workshop and analyse it; and possibly, to collect some more data thereafter. In all of this, I would have to be mindful of my other work commitments, that is, structure the participant observation around the university holidays, study breaks and my personal leave. I do of course not know what would be convenient for you.

Right now, I can propose two alternatives. You may have other suggestions.

Option 1:

Date	Duration	Purpose
September 2007	One week	To familiarise myself with the relevant processes, protocols, social work roles and functions at [withheld]
January/February 2008	One Month	Participant observation
March/April 2008	½ day	Staff workshop
August 2008	One Month	Participant observation (if needed)

Option 2:

Date	Duration	Purpose
August–October 2007	Two to three months	Concurrently: Familiarisation with processes, protocols, roles and functions, Participant observation Staff workshop, Follow-up observations

Space

You have raised space, or rather the lack of space, as a potential problem. Would it be possible to rent an additional room for the duration of my stay at [withheld]? I will be applying for a research grant, and could include the cost of the room rental in my budget. While there is no guarantee that such a budget item would be approved, it might be worth exploring this.

This is all I can think of raising at this point in time. Please do contact me should we need to clarify or discuss any of the above items or additional concerns you may wish to raise.

I do look forward to your reply.

Sincerely

Dorothee Hölscher

3.2.2 Information sheet

[Address withheld]
Fax No.: [withheld]

(Date)

Dear [name withheld],

Information on: Research on ethical implications of cross-border migration for social work

Thank you for considering allowing me to conduct the above study at [withheld].

As already discussed, I am undertaking the proposed research as my PhD study. My intention is to explore the implications of cross-border migration into South Africa for social work's commitment to social justice. I believe that that such an exploration will ultimately contribute to enhancing the quality of services in the said field of social work.

Conducting this research will require me to spend an average of three to four days from about 1 August to about 31 October 2008, as a participant observer at your agency. During this period, I would like to be as well integrated with [withheld] as possible.

Over and above rendering services, I would be keen to participate in all meetings that your agency would permit me to attend, and in any other activities you would assign me to do. During the earlier part of my stay, I would like to conduct at least one formal interview with those of your social work staff who would agree to participate. Towards the end of my stay – staff willing - I would like to conduct a workshop to jointly explore some of the emerging themes. All data collected in the course of this period would be stored on my computer and in my lock-up cabinet at my offices at the University of KwaZulu Natal and destroyed after five years of the completion of my study.

While I would maintain strict confidentiality, I need to advise you that being the only organisation of your kind in Durban, it would in principle be possible for the readers of the final research report or any subsequent publication to identify your organisation as its source. I therefore wish to assure you that I would remain mindful of my responsibility regarding [withheld]'s public reputation. In the write-up of my thesis, I would be guided by the endeavour of this study not to pass ethical judgement but to gain ethical understanding.

Please note that [withheld]'s participation in my study is voluntary. You have the right to withdraw this permission at any stage your organisation may find this necessary. There will be no rewards for participating, nor would there be any negative consequences for withdrawing. For any queries before, during and after my participant observation period at your agency, you could contact me at 031-260 3165 (b/h), or on my cell phone at 082-950 1414. Alternatively, you could contact my research supervisor, Prof. V. Sewpaul of the school of Social Work & Community Development, University of KwaZulu Natal at 031-260 1421.

If you are willing to grant me permission to undertake my study at [withheld], kindly complete the attached consent form.

Sincerely

Dorothee Hölscher

3.2.3 Consent form

I, _____ give permission to Dorothee Hölscher, PhD Candidate at the School of Social Work and Community Development at the University of KwaZulu Natal, to conduct her study on the ethical implications of cross-border migration for social work at [withheld]. I understand, and have discussed the content and purpose of the study with my staff. I have obtained their consent to sign this form on their behalf.

I understand that this study will require Ms Hölscher to spend approximately three months during the period, August to October 2008, as a participant observer with [withheld]. This means that she should be as well integrated with [withheld] as possible, participate in all meetings that the agency would permit her to attend, and conduct any other activities she would be assigned to do. During the earlier part of her stay, this would further involve at least one formal interview with interested social work staff, and, towards the end of her stay, a joined staff workshop.

I also understand that:

- The participation of [withheld] in this study is voluntary.

- Permission for Ms Hölscher to conduct her study at this organisation can be withdrawn at any stage [withheld] may find this necessary.

- There will be no rewards for our organisation's participation in this study, nor will there be any negative consequences should we decide to withdraw.

- While strict confidentiality will be maintained, it will in principle be possible for the readers of the final research report or any subsequent publication to identify this organisation as its source. Ms Hölscher will therefore remain at all times mindful of her responsibility regarding [withheld]'s public reputation.

- All data collected in the course of this research will be stored on Ms Hölscher's desktop computer and lock-up cabinet at her offices at the University of KwaZulu Natal and destroyed within five years of the completion of this study.

My signature below indicates my organisation's permission for Dorothee Hölscher to conduct her study at [withheld].

Signed at _____ (Place) on _____ (Date)

_____

([withheld])

3.3 Information Sheet and Consent Form for Participants in Life Story Interviews

3.3.1 Information sheet

(Date)

Dear _____,

Information on: Research on ethical implications of cross-border migration for social work

Thank you for considering participating in the above named study. As already discussed, I am undertaking the proposed research as my PhD study. My intention is to explore the implications of cross-border migration into South Africa for social work's commitment to social justice. I believe that that such an exploration will ultimately contribute to enhancing the quality of services in the field of social work with cross-border migrants.

You would be required to participate in a personal interview of about two to three hours in which you would tell your life story. In addition, there might be a number of follow-up interviews to explore particular issues in more detail. The interviews would be audio recorded and transcribed. The transcripts would be stored on my desktop computer as well as in my lock-up cabinet in my offices at the University of KwaZulu Natal. They would be destroyed within five years upon completion of my study.

Your participation in this study would be strictly confidential. It might be necessary that you do not reveal your surname to me. To maintain anonymity, pseudonyms would be used in the final research report or any subsequent publications for both you and any other person that might be harmed by having their identity known. Likewise, we might have to change certain details of your story that might lead to your identification or that of any third person who might be harmed as a result. This would be done in consultation between us to ensure that the changed story would still convey what you originally meant to say.

I need to advise you that participating in a life history interview can be upsetting. Should you feel unwell during or after any of the interviews, you would be welcome to let me know immediately. I would be willing to assist you by being there for you at that time, and by referring you to a colleague who has agreed to provide follow-up counselling that you might require.

Please note that your participation is voluntary. You would have the right to withdraw from the study at any stage you want. There will be no rewards for participation, nor would there be any negative consequences should you decide to withdraw. For any queries before, during and after the interview, you could contact me at 031-260 3165 (b/h), or on my cell phone at 082-950 1414. Alternatively, you could contact my research supervisor, Prof. V. Sewpaul of the school of Social Work & Community Development, University of KwaZulu Natal at 031-260 1421.

If you are interested in participating, kindly complete the attached consent form.

Sincerely

Dorothee Hölscher
PhD Candidate

3.3.2 Consent form

I, _____ agree to take part in the study on the ethical implications of cross-border migration for social work, conducted by Dorothee Hölscher, PhD Candidate at the School of Social Work and Community Development at the University of KwaZulu Natal. I understand the content and purpose of the study.

I understand that I would be required to participate in a personal interview of about two to three hours. Purpose is to tell my life story. In addition, there may be a number of follow-up interviews, required to explore particular issues in more detail.

The interviews will be audio recorded and transcribed. The transcripts will be stored on Ms Hölscher's desktop computer as well as her lock-up cabinet in her offices at the University of KwaZulu Natal. They will be destroyed within five years upon completion of my study.

I also understand that:

- My participation is voluntary.

- I have the right to withdraw from the research at any stage I want.

- There will be no rewards for participation, nor will there be any negative consequences should I decide to withdraw.

- Strict confidentiality will be maintained throughout the research process. It may be necessary that I do not reveal my surname to Ms Hölscher.

- To maintain anonymity, pseudonyms will be used in the final research report or any subsequent publications for myself and any other person that might be harmed by having their identity known.

- Also to maintain anonymity, certain details of my story that might lead to my identification or that of any third person who might be harmed as a result, may have to be changed after completion of the interviews. This will be done in consultation between myself and Ms Hölscher to ensure that the changed story would continue to convey what I originally meant to say.

- I am welcome to let Ms Hölscher know immediately should I feel upset during or after any of the interviews. Apart from her support at that point in time, I am entitled to be referred to one of her colleagues who have agreed to provide the necessary follow-up counselling.

My signature below indicates my willingness and permission to participate.

Signed at _____ (Place) **on** _____ (Date)

_____ (Signature)

_____ (Print name)

3.4 Information Letter and Consent Form for Participants in Depth Individual Interviews

3.4.1 Information sheet

(Date)

Dear social worker,

Information on: Research on ethical implications of cross-border migration for social work

Thank you for considering participating in the above-named study. As already discussed, I am undertaking the proposed research as my PhD study. My intention is to explore the implications of cross-border migration into South Africa for social work's commitment to social justice. I believe that that such an exploration will ultimately contribute to enhancing the quality of services in the said field of social work.

Your participation would require you to partake in one individual interview of approximately one hour. This interview would be audio recorded and transcribed. The transcripts would be stored on my desktop computer as well as in my lock cabinet in my offices at the University of KwaZulu Natal. They would be destroyed within five years upon completion of my study.

While I would maintain strict confidentiality, I need to advise you that in view of the small size of [withheld], it might nonetheless be possible to trace such comments back to you, which would eventually be cited in the final research report or subsequent publications. I therefore wish to assure you that I would remain mindful of my responsibility to ensure that your participation in this study does not cause harm to you, particularly your relationships with your colleagues and your employer. Should you feel unsure of the potential effects of any of your comments made in the course of the proposed interview, you would be welcome to bring this to my attention at any time so that we could agree on how best to address your concerns.

Please note that your participation is voluntary. You would have the right to withdraw from the study at any stage you want. There are no rewards for participation, nor would there be any negative consequences should you decide to withdraw. For any queries before, during and after the interview, you could contact me at 031-260 3165 (b/h), or on my cell phone at 082-950 1414. Alternatively, you could contact my research supervisor, Prof. V. Sewpaul of the school of Social Work & Community Development, University of KwaZulu Natal at 031-260 1421.

If you are interested in participating, kindly complete the attached consent form.

Sincerely

Dorothee Hölscher
PhD Candidate

3.4.2 Consent form

I, _____ agree to take part in the study on the ethical implications of cross-border migration for social work, conducted by Dorothee Hölscher, PhD Candidate at the School of Social Work and Community Development at the University of KwaZulu Natal. I understand the content and purpose of the study.

I understand that I will be required to participate in a personal interview of approximately 60 minutes. This interview will be audio recorded and transcribed. The transcript will be stored on Ms Hölscher's desktop computer as well as her lock-up cabinet in her offices at the University of KwaZulu Natal. It will be destroyed within five years upon completion of my study.

I also understand that:
- My participation is voluntary.
- I have the right to withdraw from the research at any stage I want.
- There will be no rewards for participation, nor will there be any negative consequences should I decide to withdraw.
- While strict confidentiality will be maintained, it might nonetheless be possible to trace such comments back to me, which are eventually cited in the final research report or subsequent publications. Ms Hölscher will therefore remain mindful of her responsibility to ensure that my participation in this study does not cause harm to me, particularly in my relationships with my colleagues and my employer.

- Should I feel unsure of the potential effects of any of my comments made in the course of this interview, I am welcome to bring this to Ms Hölscher's attention at any time so that we may agree on how best to address my concerns.

My signature below indicates my willingness and permission to participate.

Signed at _____ (Place) **on** _____ (Date)

_____ (Signature)

_____ (Print name)

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3.6 List of Contributors and Contributions to the Articles included in this Study

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Integrated into Chapter 2	Hölscher, D. (2012) 'Social Justice' in Healy, L.M. & Link, R.J. (eds.) *Handbook for International Social Work: Human Rights, Development & the Social Work Profession*, Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 43-51.	*Data collection:* N/A – Theoretical paper *Data analysis:* N/A – Theoretical paper *Development of theoretical frame:* Dorothee Hölscher *Write-up:* Dorothee Hölscher
Chapter 6	Hölscher, D., Sathiparsad, R. and Mujawamariya, C. (2012) 'Interpreting refugee women's life stories: Towards a *Human Capabilities* framework for social work with cross-border migrants', in: *Social Work Practitioner/ Researcher*, Vol. 24(1), pp. 48-65.	*Data collection:* Dorothee Hölscher *Data analysis:* Reshma Sathiparsad Dorothee Hölscher Consolee Mujawamariya *Development of theoretical frame:* Dorothee Hölscher *Write-up:* Dorothee Hölscher Reshma Sathiparsad
Chapter 7	Hölscher, D. (2016) 'Subjectivities of Survival: Conceptualising *Just* Responses to Displacement, Cross-border Migration and Structural Violence in South Africa'. Forthcoming in: *Social Work/ Maatskaplike Werk*	*Data collection:* Dorothee Hölscher *Data analysis:* Dorothee Hölscher *Development of theoretical frame:* Dorothee Hölscher *Write-up:* Dorothee Hölscher

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[1]   Contributors are listed in the order of their contribution; the name of the principal author is underlined.

Chapter	Reference[1]	Distribution of tasks
Chapter 8	Hölscher, D. & Bozalek, V.G. (2012) 'Encountering the *Other* across the Divides: Re-grounding social justice as a guiding principle for social work with refugees and other vulnerable groups', in: *British Journal of Social Work*, Vol. 42(6), pp.1093-1112.	*Data collection:* Dorothee Hölscher *Data analysis:* Dorothee Hölscher *Development of theoretical frame:* Vivienne Bozalek Dorothee Hölscher *Write-up:* Dorothee Hölscher
Chapter 9	Hölscher, D. (2014) 'Considering Nancy Fraser's Notion of Social Justice for Social Work: Reflections on *Misframing* and the Lives of Refugees in South Africa', in: *Ethics & Social Welfare*, Vol. 8(1), pp.20-38.	*Data collection:* Dorothee Hölscher *Data analysis:* Dorothee Hölscher *Development of theoretical frame:* Dorothee Hölscher *Write-up:* Dorothee Hölscher
Chapter 10	Hölscher, D., Bozalek, V.G. & Zembylas, M. (2014) 'Assuming *Responsibility for Justice* in the Context of South Africa's Refugee Receiving Regime', in: *Ethics & Social Welfare*, Vol. 8(2), pp. 187-204.	*Data collection:* Dorothee Hölscher *Data analysis:* Dorothee Hölscher Vivienne Bozalek Michalinos Zembylas *Development of theoretical frame:* Dorothee Hölscher *Write-up:* Dorothee Hölscher Vivienne Bozalek Michalinos Zembylas