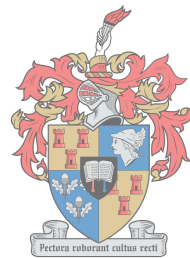


Die Son Sien Alles: The Constitution of Community in a Post-Apartheid Tabloid

by

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Abstract

This study considers a Cape Town based tabloid, *Die Son*, and how it has become a platform on which a particular community negotiates its boundaries and constitutes itself as shared identity. By approaching the tabloid as facilitating an identification with a larger collective in moral, political and legal terms, I show that the tabloid helps to enable the imagining of this working class, coloured community. Unlike in Anderson's case (1983), the tabloid works here *against* the nation as abstract form, with its promises of inclusion for all. Instead, it relies upon a process of negation, producing boundaries around the community it purports to represent. Such boundaries, I propose, are established by *figures out of place*, through which the tabloid produces limits of the community, not only displaying but also channeling public antagonism. I register these figure types – the abject criminal, the *wolf in blue*, the African foreign national – through different kinds of affective speech: disgust, fear, and hatred. By considering how affect gives form to particular group expressions, I understand *Die Son* and its readership as an intimate counterpublic that demands that people guard themselves against the presence of forces that threaten to undo community boundaries, thereby constituting belonging negatively. I further consider how the tabloid produces an image of itself as a counterparent, a figure which coincides with a development of attachment and identification. However, to fully exclude these *figures out of place* proves impossible and undoes the promise of *Die Son* that it will see everything [*Son Sien Alles*]. These figures continue to haunt the community, circulating in the tabloid and ensuring that, ironically, this intimate counterpublic persists as a promise of a secure community beyond the nation.

Opsomming

Hierdie studie behels 'n ondersoek van 'n Kaapstad-gebaseerde poniekoerant, *Die Son*, en die manier waarop dit 'n platform geword het waar 'n spesifieke gemeenskap sy grense kan onderhandel en 'n gedeelde identiteit kan vorm. Deur die benadering van die poniekoerant as fasiliteerder van die vereenselwiging met 'n groter gemeenskaplike versameling in morele, politieke en regsterme, toon ek dat die poniekoerant daaraan meedoën om die verbeelding van hierdie gekleurde werkersklas gemeenskap te versinnebeeld. Anders as in Anderson se geval (1983), werk die koerant – met sy beloftes van insluiting vir almal – hier téén die nasie as abstrakte vorm. In stede hiervan maak dit staat op 'n proses van ontkenning, waardeur grense om die voorgestelde gemeenskap getrek word. My argument is dat hierdie grense deur *misplaasde figure* gevestig word, waardeur die koerant grense van die gemeenskap voortbring, en nie net openbare antagonisme toon nie, maar dit ook kanaliseer. Ek teken hierdie figuurtypes – die volslae misdadiger, die *wolf in blou*, die buitelandse Afrika-burger – deur verskillende soorte affektiewe spraak aan: afkeer, vrees en haat. Deur oorweging van die manier waarop affek aan spesifieke groepsuitdrukkings vorm gee, beskou ek *Die Son* en sy lesers as 'n intieme kontrapubliek wat vereis dat mense hulself beskerm teen die teenwoordigheid van magte wat dreig om gemeenskapsgrense te verwoes, waardeur 'n gevoel van behoort negatief saamgestel word. Ek ondersoek voorts hoe die koerant 'n beeld van homself as 'n kontra-ouer voorhou, 'n figuur wat ooreenstem met 'n ontwikkeling van gehegtheid en vereenselwiging. Om hierdie *misplaasde figure* egter ten volle uit te sluit, blyk onmoontlik te wees en maak die belofte van *Die Son* dat dit alles sal sien (*Son Sien Alles*) ongedaan. Hierdie figure kwel steeds die gemeenskap, sirkuleer in die koerant en verseker, ironies genoeg, dat hierdie intieme kontrapubliek voortbestaan as 'n belofte van 'n veilige gemeenskap buite die nasie.

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Introduction

In this thesis, I consider a Cape Town based tabloid, *Die Son*, and how it has become a platform on which a particular community negotiates its boundaries and constitutes itself as shared identity. In particular, I consider how this collective is represented in the pages of the tabloid, through different kinds of speaking and through the use of particular kinds of affective speech. The tabloid, I show, is a medium through which substantial political claims are made concerning democracy, the nation, and the position of the coloured working-class community. In the words of one of the contributors to the tabloid, Christo Davids, *Die Son* displays "much of what we think about our situation, our problems, or even our neighbours."¹ Central to this study is how *Die Son* enables an imagination of a community that stands in an ambivalent relation to the nation and the promises and practices of the democratic state.

The popularity of *Die Son* is especially relevant at a time when the issue of how a "community" is formed and sustained has come under stress. Almost twenty years ago, Richard Sennett² concluded his book on the growth of flexible work in the new economy with a reading of the pressure these conditions place on community. He suggests that "one of the unintended consequences of modern capitalism is that it has strengthened the value of place, [and] aroused a longing for community."³ In South Africa, while community is spoken about regularly — a legacy of an apartheid past which coerced people into spatially and racial bound collectivities — it is less clear who constitutes a community and how this constitution is maintained at a moment

¹ Davids, C. 2008. 'The reason I write for Son', *Die Son*, 3 April, p. 10

² Sennett, R. 1998. *The Corrosion of Character: The Personal Consequences of Work in the New Capitalism*. New York & London: W. W. Norton & Company.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 138

where formally everybody is a citizen of a nation purportedly supposed to transcend all previously racially divided communities.

The tabloid, affect and the collective subject

My thesis builds on Benedict Anderson's insights about how newspapers were once a mechanism for collective identification with the nation.⁴ For Anderson, it was through the newspaper (and the novel) that individuals recognized a common fate with others and imagined themselves as part of a national community, to the extent that they were willing to fight and die for this abstract identification. What is different here is not only that now newspapers are generally unable to appeal to as many people — since their circulation is limited in comparison with other media forms — but also that, in a moment of global capitalism accompanied by the valorisation of local cultural practices, the nation may no longer be the principal site of collective identification or imagining.⁵

Die Son's community is a relatively small one. The tabloid is written in standard Afrikaans and a “linguistic variant”⁶ spoken amongst black and coloured speakers, which circulates in the Western, Eastern and Northern Cape. Yet even with this limited scale, what makes *Die Son* remarkable is that it has been able to increase circulation over the past 14 years to become one of the largest print media in the country, with circulation sitting around 79 193 copies⁷ daily. *Die Son*'s appeal, I suggest, has to do with the fact that it is engaged in a similar mechanism to the

⁴ Anderson, B. 2006 [1983]. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso.

⁵ C.f. Sennett, Op. Cit., p. 138

⁶ Wasserman, H. 2010. *Tabloid Journalism in South Africa*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, p. 31

⁷ C.f. <http://www.sonmedia.co.za/soncirculation.aspx>

one Anderson identified for the newspaper. That is, it is engaged in facilitating identification with a larger collective. My thesis shows that the community imagined by *Die Son* and its readership is one concerned with establishing the boundaries and borders of this community in moral, legal, and political terms. Tony Ehrenreich formulated it in a letter in *Die Son* in the following terms: “Poorer communities and working families must defend the public space if it is to be the basis for renewing communities.”⁸ He put forth that part of this challenge was to keep public spaces safe: “Gang and criminal activity must be resisted” and children must be protected from “growing brutality.” I propose that the negotiation and securing of the limits of community, in an endeavour to renew community, are ongoing through *Die Son*’s daily circulation in the Western Cape. While these limits are proposed by the tabloid, they are sometimes endorsed and others contested as readers react to past and present events.

In *Die Son*, the constitution of community is premised on a *negation*: a rejection of the fiction of universalism and of abstract national inclusion in the new South Africa. Due to the antagonism present in this negotiation, the limits are established and maintained through a response of policing an imagined threat of what I would formulate as *figures out of place*.⁹ Yet, as I demonstrate, the *figure out of place* does not necessarily exclusively intrude the interior of the community from the outside. Such figures also threaten to rupture the limit of the collective from within (chapter 2).

⁸ Ehrenreich, T. 2008. ‘Let’s rebuild community’, *Die Son*, 4 April, p. 32

⁹ The formulation of *figures out of place* is reminiscent of what Mary Douglas (1966:36) famously articulated as *matter out of place*.

I will show that the nature of the imagined community enabled by the content and circulation of *Die Son* is an affective one: an imagining *felt* by readers.¹⁰ Thus, I engage the limits of the community through how affect is used in *Die Son* to constitute the collective. Sennett states that a community is indexed by the pronoun “we.”¹¹ The articulation of “we,” Sennett posits, “requires a particular though not a local attachment.”¹² The particular attachment that unites a collective is, as Sigmund Freud might posit, libidinal in nature. Which is to say that a collective attachment¹³ rests upon “emotional ties.”¹⁴ Significantly, as I highlight, the mechanism that transforms the libido into an attachment entails identification. The pattern of identification is collective,¹⁵ requiring a distinction between a “beloved in-group” and a “rejected out-group.” Sennett suggests that the danger of the pronoun “we” is that it requires a distinction along the fault lines of inclusion and exclusion. Thus, the “emotional conditions”¹⁶ that I explore map scenes and register figure types that feed desires for contained community.

The images and narratives that are evoked by *Die Son*’s readers situations, problems and neighbours are ones that are community based, and which pivot around identification and woundedness (chapter 1), decency (chapter 2), policing (chapter 2 & 3), and nationality (chapter

¹⁰ The formulation of “felt by” implies an emotional tie: an identification process that has the capacity to abstract. Rocchio (2016:229), reading Lacan, argues that “identification is a process whereby individuals seek out images and discourses to keep their identities intact: to confirm their identities.”

¹¹ Warner, M. 2002. *Publics and Counterpublics*. New York: Zone Book, p. 137

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 137

¹³ C.f. Berlant, L. 2011. *Cruel Optimism*. Durham: Duke University Press

¹⁴ Freud, S. 1949 [1921]. *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*. Translated by Strachey, J. London: The Hogarth Press Ltd, p. 678

¹⁵ Adorno, T. W. 1991 [1951]. “Freudian Theory and the Pattern of Fascist Propaganda”, in Bernstein, J. M. (ed.). *The Culture Industry: Selected Essays on Mass Culture*. New York: Routledge., p. 140

¹⁶ Sennett, *Op. Cit.*, p. 138

4). The provocation for each chapter is an issue that might be regarded as a personal problem for the reader, but which *Die Son* frames as “fundamentally a condition of identity,”¹⁷ both individual and collective. Each theme in this study therefore deals with the “fantasy-work”¹⁸ of *Die Son*’s readers’ identity through logics of inclusion and exclusion. The figures that emerge out of the fantasy-work in *Die Son* – between the personal and the particular, the public and the private – manifest as spectres from the past in readers’ present moment. The constellation of figures that this study considers from *Die Son* include the tabloid itself accompanied by its readership (chapter 1), the figure of the abject criminal (chapter 2), the *wolf in blue* (chapter 3), and the foreigner (chapter 4). Each figure represents an attempt to discern an outcast within a familiar landscape, promoting the exclusion of those who do not belong. In this way, each figure is read as a *figure out of place*.

While *Die Son* textually mediates readers’ identity and the terms of membership, the tabloid, at the same time, reveals the presence of real and imagined forces that threaten to render community borders illegible. By engaging with each figure, the tabloid provides a unique lens from which to consider the unstable boundaries and limits of the collective self of *Die Son*’s readership. At the heart of delineating the limits of the collective, questions concerning registers of belonging, definitions of membership, and vernaculars of intimacy emerge. In considering questions of belonging, intimacy, and membership by *Die Son*’s readers, the focus of this project has been less animated by a concern with the medium of the tabloid itself, but the turn of precarious classes to mediums such as *Die Son*. This thesis therefore engages two broader questions: firstly, which logics of inclusion and exclusion does *Die Son* utilise to delineate the

¹⁷ Berlant, L. 1991. *The Anatomy of National Fantasy*. USA: University of Chicago Press, P. 2

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 2

boundaries of who is included in the interior of the readership community? In other words, what are the consequences of the readers' collective consumption of *Die Son* on the constitution of collective community and subjectivity? Secondly, what kind of public is *Die Son* constituting through its engagement with readers' identities that are simultaneously private and public?

In order to answer these questions, I explore the mechanisms and strategies utilised by *Die Son* to constitute a collective public with permeable boundaries. I approach the constitution of *Die Son*'s readership as a public that is text based. Crucial to *Die Son*'s formation of its reader public, I argue, is the circulating "concatenation of texts through time."¹⁹ *Die Son* has developed what Warner calls a "reflexivity about its own circulation, coordinating its readers' relations to other readers."²⁰ Indeed, through the reflexivity of *Die Son*'s circulation and its coordination of readers' relations with others, the tabloid offers readers a means to understand and situate themselves.

More so, the constitution of *Die Son*'s reader public is achieved not only through being addressed in discourse in the tabloid,²¹ but also through its organisation as a body.²² What is

¹⁹ Warner, Op. Cit., p. 90

²⁰ Ibid., p. 99

²¹ Granted, publics can exist without a discourse that addresses them (Warner, 2002:72). However, in this study I engage the constitution of *Die Son*'s readership as a public that not only requires minimal participation but is also addressed in discourse. Readers do not need to do anything in particular to belong to this public except pick up *Die Son* at different times and in different spaces. However, I would posit that *Die Son*'s reader public limits the organisation and boundaries of its body through the discourse utilised by the tabloid. The readership, importantly made up of strangers that may never meet, but have been selected by *Die Son* through criteria such as race and class, share a common identity historically mediated by other institutions (Warner, 2002:75). Thus, I understand *Die Son* as uniting its readership through their varying degrees of participation and engagement with the tabloid.

²² Warner, Op. Cit., p. 68

meant by the “organisation as a body” is that, crucial to the formation of *Die Son*’s readership as a public, is that it is organised by something other than state apparatus, where belonging to the tabloid requires minimal participation.²³ Specifically, *Die Son*’s readership is engaged in this study as a counter-public that is intimate, albeit it is made up of strangers. Warner specifies that what constitutes a counter-public is the “awareness of its subordinate status”²⁴ and that the discourse associated with it would be regarded with hostility in another context. The prefix “counter” is qualified not simply because one is marginal or subaltern. Rather, *Die Son*’s readers come to be marked as “counter” by their consumption and participation, even if minimal, with the tabloid. It is through this consumption of and participation with *Die Son* that its counter-public readership informs identity and defines membership.

Yet, as much as *Die Son* functions as a container for its readers’ identification as members of a politically marginalised community (chapter 1) and ambivalent attachments (chapter 4), the tabloid simultaneously reveals the failure of defining membership and attempts to contain who constitutes the interior of the community. It is for this reason that I situate *Die Son*’s readership in this study as an intimate counter-public that, through the medium of the tabloid, encounter narratives that guide readers on how to guard themselves.

What *Die Son* reveals are attempts by readers to blame different state apparatuses for the failure of a “better life for all” to materialise (chapter 1) as well as African foreign nationals for thwarting prosperity in the present moment (chapter 4). Additionally, *Die Son* exposes the difficulty in guarding oneself against state actors (chapter 3) and abject community members that present themselves as something different to what they appear to be (chapter 1). The tension

²³ Ibid., p. 69

²⁴ Ibid., p. 119

dealt with *Die Son* in the themes of this study all reveal how the presence of forces that threaten to undo community boundaries frustrate the promise of both a sense of belonging and of community itself.

The presence of fantastic forces relates to what Comaroff & Comaroff articulate as the geography of apartheid being undone in post-apartheid South Africa,²⁵ which has exacerbated the obscuring of boundaries that render signifiers of identity illegible. The perceived and real threat of assault by these figures and forces that *Die Son* with its readers imagine points to the “limits of social being.”²⁶ To map *Die Son*’s promise to produce recognisable categories of insiders and outsiders, criminals and cops, those who belong and those who do not belong, is to understand *Die Son*’s readers’ desire for bounded categories amidst the fragmentation of contained raced and classed identities in post-apartheid South Africa. *Die Son*’s endeavour to utilise the *figure out of place* as an instrument for establishing the interior of the collective, gesturing to the problem of identity formation, as well as processing the *figure out of place* as a threat to the limits of readers’ social being and collective body, is a central concern of this study. Indeed, I argue that *Die Son* signals the tension between the universal citizen – captured by “we” – which the rainbow nation promises, and readers’ politicisation of “I” in an effort to see themselves as separate from others.

Die Son therefore promises a vantage point from which its readership can legibly read itself as separate from others. Yet, as I show, *Die Son* simultaneously reveals the difficulty in establishing the standards by which people belong. By publishing local dramas and horrors, the tabloid is

²⁵ Comaroff, J., & Comaroff, J. 2016. *The Truth About Crime: Sovereignty, Knowledge, Social Order*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, p. 104

²⁶ Comaroff, J., & Comaroff, J. 2004. Criminal Obsessions, after Foucault: Postcoloniality, Policing, and the Metaphysics of Disorder. *Critical Inquiry*, 30(4):800-824, p. 802

perceived as recognising the everyday difficulties that readers perceive as ignored by the mainstream media and by politicians. In *Die Son*'s endeavour to fulfil its slogan of *Son Sien Alles* [Sun Sees Everything], the tabloid discloses the limits of the collective self, undoing its promise: a failure for the borders demarcated in *Die Son* to materialise in the lives of its readership.

Notes on methodology

Methodologically, I did not engage, consider and reflect on *Die Son* as an object of inquiry that was to be “measured against a scale of good to bad performance, but as social phenomena that tell us something about the society in which they [tabloids] exist and the role of media in that society.”²⁷ If each chapter in this study focuses on the constitution of the collective and its limits, and the difficulties and ambivalences entailed in such identifications, my method consists of reading patterns that emerge from the everyday communication offered by *Die Son* and discerning what is collective about the way in which its readership imagines itself.

To examine the historical trajectory of *Die Son*'s readership imagination, I obtained copies of *Die Son* from the National Library of South Africa in Cape Town. I began my inquiry into *Die Son* by identifying highly publicised events that were centred on borders and limits of identity and which the tabloid revealed as fractured and inchoate. These events spoke to my research question in specific ways. For this reason, the May 2008 xenophobic attacks proved to be a productive vantage point from which to enter the world of *Die Son*. Initially, while compiling an archive of *Die Son*'s images and narratives of the May 2008 xenophobic attacks, my archive of the tabloid expanded from a selection of highly publicised stories to narratives that were also

²⁷ Wasserman, 2010, Op. Cit., p. xii

deeply interwoven into the everyday lives of *Die Son*'s readers. I therefore became concerned with not only high-profile events, but with mapping narratives that may be considered ordinary and commonplace, to consider how *Die Son*'s readers make sense of and manage figure types who threaten the legibility of both the individual and the collective borders.

Die Son, similar to other newspapers and tabloids, includes correspondence from their readers. These letters, as John Richardson reminds us, operates as a platform for “opinion, dialogue and debate”²⁸, which allows readers to “express their opinions, their fears, their hopes – and, just as important, air their grievances.”²⁹ The correspondence from readers played a crucial role in not only communicating the identity of *Die Son*, but also in the expression of the identity formation of its readership. For this reason, I did not limit my analysis to *Die Son*'s take on current events and social issues. I also delved into the readership's contributions, specifically through letters. By comparing a journalistic and civilian take on the events, I sought to unveil the sense of collective of the readership as well as the role *Die Son* plays in identity formation.

By way of mapping the ordinary in *Die Son*, I consequently selected issues and narratives from 2008 until 2011 that appeared in the tabloid on a regular basis. There was a point at which I made a leap to 2015. I did this to read 2015 in conjunction with the year 2008 and track *Die Son*'s coverage of the xenophobic violence that erupted across South Africa. While there were differences in the content of each story, the continuities that connected them were relevant to my analysis. Thus, the stories that emerged were subsequently organised into themes that spoke to my research questions. I developed an analysis of each theme in order to determine the scope,

²⁸ Richardson, J. E. 2007. *Analysing Newspapers: An Approach from Critical Discourse Analysis*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, p. 149

²⁹ Jackson, I. 1971. *The Provincial Press and the Community*. USA: Manchester University Press, p. 152, cited in Ibid.

focus, and argument of each theme. The stories that emerged more prominently were those related to identity, sexual violence, police violence and xenophobic violence perpetrated by those from the interior of the collective that threatened to tear communities apart. The themes I chose to focus on are by no means exhaustive. However, by compiling an archive that pivoted around these themes, my methodological concern was to create a “reservoir of experiences, ideas, and hopes”³⁰ of readers reflected in *Die Son*. The method of digging through the tabloid, to invoke Walter Benjamin, is a practice of “returning again and again to the same matter”³¹ from scenes and stories from *Die Son*’s readership every day and to “track the general of singular things,”³² mapping their “resonances across many scenes.”³³

I subsequently analysed headlines, news stories, stories regarding personal interest, the letters to the advice column, and adverts that were not only evocative, but which offered a reading of the reservoir of experiences, ideas, and hopes of *Die Son*’s readership as a collective. Guiding my selection of fragments from *Die Son* were narratives that travelled across the years in the tabloid and whose repetition bordered on the uncanny. These narratives were selected precisely because they spoke to broader social issues facing the tabloid’s readership presented in singular issues and the figure types that embodied them. Simultaneously, through these categories, I paid attention to the language that is employed by the tabloid and how it resonates with that of *Die Son*’s readers. Wasserman claims that *Die Son* is published in not only what he terms “standard

³⁰ Wizisla E. 2015. “Preface”, in Marx, U., Schwarz, G., M. Schwarz., & Wizisla, E, (eds.). Translated by Leslie, E. *Walter Benjamin’s Archive*. London & New York: Verso, p. 2

³¹ Benjamin. W. 2005 [1932]. *Selected Writings, Volume 2, Part 2: 1931 – 1934*, in Jennings, M., Eiland, H., & Smith, G. (eds.). Massachusetts & UK: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, p. 576

³² Berlant, 2011, Op. Cit., p. 12

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 12

Afrikaans,” but a “linguistic variant spoken among Black speakers.”³⁴ Thus, I paid particular attention to code switching, explicit use of foul language and jokes (chapter 1).

My approach to *Die Son* did not include interviews with its editors and writers. I do, however, analyse interviews from editors and writers from the tabloid that were done by Herman Wasserman. My primary concern was not with speaking to those who worked for *Die Son* as a way into the tabloid and its readers, but rather, with offering a reading of *Die Son* that provides a lens with which to look at its particular readership. I present my archive of *Die Son*, thus, not as “simply a repository,”³⁵ but an object with which to think through our current moment.

Chapter outline

In chapter 1, I focus on narratives by *Die Son* as well as its readers that reveal experiences and feelings of exclusion, humiliation and pain. These narratives that invoke the past and the present, I argue, reference a state of woundedness which imbue the lives of *Die Son*’s readers. I am aware that it may be problematic to apply an analytical category such as that of a collective injury to a group of people obscuring any differences that may characterise the collective. However, in this chapter I am concerned with how considering a collective injury may speak to a group of people that are bound to one another through a wound that references layers of loss, thereby operating as a means for readers to speak about their identity and feelings of exclusion. In considering *Die Son*’s readers’ collective injury, and how it points to the limits of the interior of the collective, I draw from Freud’s 1917 work on *Mourning and Melancholia* to theorise the formulation of

³⁴ Wasserman, 2010, Op. Cit., p. 31

³⁵ Halberstam, J. 2005. *In a Queer Time and Place: Transgender Bodies and Subcultural Lives*. New York & London: New York University Press, p. 169

coloured working-class subjectivity based on loss and injury. The feelings expressed in *Die Son* that are rooted in loss, I suggest, constitute a form of intimacy, which lends appeal to the tabloid as a medium of belonging.

Chapter 2 examines the reportage of stories of sexual outrage in the tabloid, framed by “campaigns” such as *Son sien ‘n rapist! Son sien ‘n lafaard!* [Son sees a rapist! Son sees a coward!]. The continual evoking of disgust, alongside the tabloid’s promise of retribution, not only constructs *Die Son* as an omniscient watchdog who cares for the people, but also readers who need to be warned graphically and repeatedly so as not succumb to being either a perpetrator or a victim of sexual violence. Thus, I focus on how *Die Son* utilises disgust as a mechanism to align members within a community: a logic of inclusion and exclusion. I argue that the tabloid’s discourses of disgust not only reflect a desire for such speech, but – in the process – allows *Die Son* to emerge as a counter-parent that derives its legitimacy from “the people.”

Although this chapter is crucial in demonstrating how *Die Son* excludes perpetrators of sexual violence from the moral community of its readership, allowing the tabloid to not only forge collective identification but also derive authority, this chapter is distinct from the others. The series of experiences that I describe, related to the interior conditions of the community, as well as the figures that I reference, are graphic. I strictly used details provided by *Die Son* to outline what had happened to victims, predominantly children, of sexual violence.³⁶ By only using details provided by *Die Son*, I am less concerned with the accuracy of the tabloid’s portrayal of these stories, but more with *Die Son*’s representation of stories of sexual violence. The tabloid

³⁶ C.f. Benedict, H. 1993. *Virgin or Vamp: How the Press Covers Sex Crimes*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

does not merely reference cases of sexual assault, but walks the reader through the scene of assault, situating the reader as a witness: one that *sees*. I find it necessary to inform the reader of the explicit content of violence present in this chapter. The explicitness of *Die Son*'s representation feeds into its logic of seeing. However, I am uncertain whether such a mode of representation is successful in its intervention.

In chapter 3, I consider the unstable boundary of the criminal and the cop in *Die Son*. I focus on how the tabloid has revealed numerous transgressions of the law in which the police are not the stable figures of social order that they are held to exemplify. By tracing the figure of the *wolf in blue* that *Die Son* evokes, I examine, to borrow Derrida's words, the "troubling resemblance"³⁷ and the "worrying mutual attraction"³⁸ of the criminal and the cop. I suggest that in the tabloid there is a reciprocal haunting of the spectre of the criminal in the cop, and vice versa. I draw from Julia Kristeva³⁹ and Theresa Caldeira⁴⁰ to argue that the language employed in *Die Son* to describe the criminal and the cop does not work to necessarily differentiate the two. Rather, the language used often equates the criminal and the cop. As a result, the obscene relationship between prohibition and transgression is exemplified.⁴¹ I situate how readers' anxieties of classification, as a concern for order, is expressed in *Die Son* as a disenchantment with authority.

In chapter 4, I turn to the ways in which collective hatred outlined the African foreign national as an 'object of hate' during the May 2008 xenophobic attacks in South Africa. I use *Die Son* as a

³⁷ Derrida, J. 2011. *The Beast and the Sovereign*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, p. 17

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Kristeva, J. 1982. *Powers of Horror: an essay on abjection*. Translated by Roudiez, L. S. New York: Columbia University Press.

⁴⁰ Caldeira, T. P. R. 1992. *City of Walls: Crime, Segregation, and Citizenship in São Paulo*. Berkley: University of California Press.

⁴¹ C.f. Bataille, G. 1991. *The Accursed Share: Volumes II and III*. New York: Zone Books.

lens to clarify the conditions that transform an individual into a collective, where who is considered part of the collective was made clear. Theoretically, I rely on the work of Sigmund Freud and Theodor Adorno to demonstrate how a collective is turned into a collective as well as reveal how affect is collectively formed to demarcate and negotiate insiders and outsiders. I argue that the 'foreign' body came to be outlined not by distance, but under conditions of intimacy and proximity. Hate, I suggest, is simultaneously a product and a tool of a desire to remove, or to destroy, a perceived threat from one's intimate sphere. Focusing on readers' responses, I reveal how the intimate proximity is imagined as threatening to take something from the national subject, with reference to *Die Son*'s attempts to undo the coupling of the Black foreigner with symbols of loss and/or threat. In making this argument, I reflect on *Die Son*'s framing of the xenophobic attacks as a politics of hatred to signal the ambivalent tensions between a series of borders: insider/outsider; interior/exterior; resident/refugee.

I

Bruin mense al die pad onderdruk: Injury, Loss, and Identity

Die Son has a large readership, predominately comprised of poor and working-class communities in the Western Cape, Eastern Cape as well as the Northern Cape. Readers are Afrikaans speaking and 87% identify as coloured – generally rejecting the umbrella term “Black” as a political category.¹ At a time when newspaper sales are diminishing, *Die Son* has continued to grow with circulation sitting around 79 193 copies daily.² Andrew Koopman, editor of *Die Son*, believes that those that are “still not in count”³ are the ones the tabloid is aimed at as well as who the tabloid remains loyal to, particularly as readers see *Die Son* as a platform capable of “bringing out their voice, of being heard.”⁴ Koopman’s formulation of the tabloid’s readership as those that are “still not in count” gestures towards experiences and feelings of exclusion, logics of hurt and humiliation: a state of woundedness. *Die Son*, I contend, offers a public space in which woundedness can be expressed, as well as being the medium of that expression, channelling it and giving particular form to it. That expression is one of woundedness, that *Die Son* circulates and readers may identify with it and can even (re)produce this affect in letters that display economic, political and personal wounds.

¹ C.f. Erasmus, Z. 2001. “Re-imagining coloured identities in post-apartheid South Africa”, in Erasmus, Z. (ed.). *Coloured by History, Shaped by Place: New Perspectives on Coloured Identities in Cape Town*. South Africa: Kwela Books & South History Online.

² C.f. <http://www.sonmedia.co.za/soncirculation.aspx>

³ Cited in Wasserman, 2010, op. cit., p. 40

⁴ Cited in Wasserman, 2010, op. cit., p. 40

In this chapter, I consider how *Die Son* focuses on reader's narratives of injustice, frustration and pain that take the form of a collective injury. This is not to say that the collective injury as an analytical and descriptive category can speak to an entire group of people as if that group were single and unified. Rather, the repeated reference to hardship and loss in the *Die Son* makes the tabloid a platform for collective identification, enabling them to recognize and name a shared affect. As I will show in later chapters, the wounded attachments expressed in *Die Son* exceed explicit political disappointments. One prominent element of this discourse of collective injury is related by readers to their failure to access and benefit from the promise underpinning the advent of democracy in South Africa. Indeed, the failure of the rainbow nation and "a better life for all"⁵ to materialise often governs reader's discourse of pain in *Die Son*: an identification of shared disappointment in the new South Africa.

I will give further consideration to how *Die Son*'s readers reflect on and deliberate loss in relation to coloured subjectivity and identity politics through Freud's seminal work *Mourning and Melancholia*.⁶ The identity articulated by readers is one often marked by exclusion, marginalisation and a lack of recognition.⁷ In this regard, I argue that pertinent to *Die Son*'s success is the tabloid's capacity to draw on and reference generalised notions of coloured working-class community in post-apartheid South Africa, despite Andrew Koopman's contestation that the tabloid is not strictly a coloured working-class tabloid.

⁵ Dubbeld, B. 2017. Democracy as technopolitical future: delivery and discontent in a government settlement in the South African countryside. *Anthropology Southern Africa*, 40(2):73-84, p. 73

⁶ Freud, S. 1981 [1917]. "Mourning and Melancholia", in Strachey, J. (ed.). *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*. London: Hogarth Press.

⁷ C.f. Brown, W. 1995. "Wounded Attachments" in Brown, W. (ed.). *States of Injury: Power and Freedom in Late Modernity*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Die Son provides a public arena for readers that are specifically working-class that they would not be able to find in mainstream public texts⁸ otherwise has, for Koopman, translated into an approach where the tabloid is seen as being oriented to the interests of the communities that *Die Son* writes about:

What we try to do is write for the ordinary people— their suffering and their joys. We give people unique news, news that *Die Burger* might not take seriously. We are a community paper, just on a bigger scale. We really try to tell ordinary people’s stories. People can come and sit here and tell us something happened, and we will pay attention to them. At *Die Burger*, they won’t even give those people a hearing. We try to give them news that they won’t find on television or [in] another paper.⁹

For Koopman, part of being a “community paper” requires ongoing engagement in the lives of “the ordinary people” that the tabloid is concerned with. Koopman’s claim that the tabloid is oriented to the community was echoed by a reader: “The *Son* brings us news that the *Argus* doesn’t, especially as concerns the Coloured community.”¹⁰

Prior to 1994, “[c]oloureds never really acquired a community press except for the Argus-owned Cape Herald (founded in February 1965) and a few publications sponsored by religious organizations.”¹¹ By 1968, *Die Burger* introduced *Die Burger Ekstra* in order to make the most of the newspapers already prominent coloured readership. While *Die Burger Ekstra* made a concerted effort to include coloured readers in their paper, Wasserman argues that “‘coloured’

⁸ Wasserman, 2010, Op. Cit., p. 88

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Cited in *ibid.*, p. 129

¹¹ Switzer, L., & Switzer, D. 1979. *The Black Press in South Africa and Lesotho: A Descriptive Bibliographic Guide to African, Coloured and Indian Newspapers, Newsletters and Magazines 1836-1976*. Boston: G.K. Hall & Co, p. 9

readers in the Western Cape were positioned as ‘extra’ members of society, not enjoying full status as an audience this newspaper catered for.”¹² Yet, it wasn’t until the 1980s in South Africa, as Strelitz and Steenkamp¹³ have noted, when political action was at its peak that an alternative¹⁴ media sphere emerged. Coloured, as well as Indian, press struggled to “transcend sectional interests and needs”¹⁵ due to the fact that the anti-apartheid protest was regional: the coloured press predominantly in the Western Cape and the Indian press in Kwa-Zulu Natal. Switzer and Switzer argue that the inability for coloured and Indian press to transcend the “geography of protest”¹⁶ was further mediated by the marginal status of coloured and Indian population groups.

In addition to the regional specificity of protest, Samson notes that *Die Son* utilizes an “English-Afrikaans Cape Flats vernacular to mark its regional specificity, and their relationship with their mainly Cape Flats, readers.”¹⁷ Similarly, Glenn and Knaggs argue that tabloids such as *Daily Voice*, as well as *Die Son* in this instance, validate “readers’ peculiar regional ability to move

¹² Wasserman, H. 2008. “Media and the Construction of Identity”, in Fourie, P. J. (ed). *Media Studies: Media History, Media and Society*. 2nd ed. Cape Town: Juta & Co, p. 246

¹³ Strelitz, L., & Steenkamp, L. 2010. Thinking about South African tabloid newspapers. *Ecquid Novi: African Journalism Studies*, 26(2), 265-268, p. 266

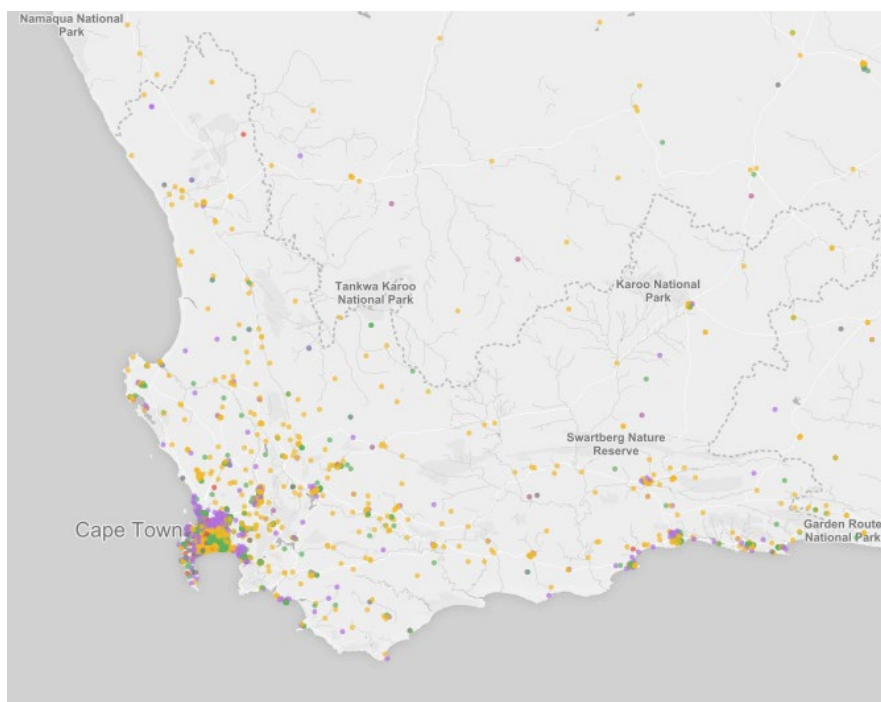
¹⁴ The qualifier “alternative” was granted to newspapers and tabloids at the time that situated themselves in alignment with an anti-apartheid struggle.

¹⁵ Switzer & Switzer, Op. Cit., p. 23

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 23

¹⁷ Samson, S. 2014. Respectability and Shame: The depiction of coloured, female murderers in the *Daily Voice* and *Son* tabloids – 2008 to 2012. [unpublished dissertation]. Cape Town: University of Cape Town, p, 64

between two language groups.”¹⁸ Making the most of readers’ English-Afrikaans vernacular, Ingo Capraro states that *Die Son*’s language use “tells the story as it happens. Not in the language of the *taalstryders* [language warriors], *dominees* [pastors],¹⁹ and those longing for the days of political and cultural Afrikaner domination, but the way our readers speak. Our lingo is a “seamless” Afrikaans – the language of any race or colour. The Cape editions speak a mixture of Capey and northern suburbs Afrikaan.” The language that *Die Son* uses marks not only its regional specificity, as Samson has noted, but it also references a collective who use the vernacular specific to *Die Son*.



¹⁸ Glenn, I., & Knaggs, A. 2008. “Field Theory and Tabloids, in Hadland, A., Louw, E., Sesanti, S., & H. Wasserman. (eds.). *Power, Politics and Identity in South African Media*. South Africa: HSRC Press, p. 116

¹⁹ C.f. van der Waal, K. 2008. “Essentialism in a South African Discussion of Language and Culture”, in Hadland, A., Louw, E., Sesanti, S., & Wasserman, H. (eds.). *Power, Politics and Identity in South African Media*. South Africa: HSRC Press, p. 61

*Map 1: Western Cape, South Africa, from self-identification Census 2011.*¹ Map by A. Firth.

Die Son is therefore a powerful site for readers to reflect on the interior of a way of life for readers that may feel that mainstream media have forgotten them.²⁰ *Die Son* does not solve all of the readership's issues; however, it attempts to solve one: the readers' representation by focusing on the "concerns of a strong, neglected regional group."²¹ But it does gesture toward the resolution of the ones it cannot solve itself: the economic, political and other social lacks.

In making the argument that *Die Son's* recognition of coloured working-class subjectivity, through articulations of injury that often accompany readers' every day experience is crucial to understanding the tabloid's success, I suggest that *Die Son* is a productive medium providing a voice for the "ordinary people." Readers are able to express and identify dissatisfactions and frustration with everyday life in a language similar to the "way that we speak."²² Thus, I will focus on the areas of the tabloid where *Die Son* claims to care for, listen to and give voice to the readers that they write about.

Finally, I briefly consider the "balance" that *Die Son* promises between serious news and joke-work. The comedic pleasure works to both index the community that it helps to constitute, by using a particular genre of humour, and to provide some relief from the dismay and even horror and abjection of the "serious news." While the humour mobilised in *Die Son* does not offer solutions to the dissatisfactions of the present condition of life for its readers, it provides a sense of solidarity as the joke-work is seen as belonging to the interior of the readership community, further confirming a collective identification.

²⁰ Wasserman, 2010, Op. Cit., p. 132

²¹ Glenn & Knaggs, Op. Cit., p. 116

²² Ibid., p. 129

On loss and melancholy

Wendy Brown's concern with *Wounded Attachments* asks: what are the "particular constituents"²³—the historically specific conditions—that allow for a logic of collective injury? Brown points to a desire for recognition that "often breeds a politics of recrimination and rancour."²⁴ How, then, does individual loss become collective through the tabloids narratives of state neglect, marginalisation, exclusion, and loss? Loss, in this chapter, functions as a placeholder while the fantasies and hopes for a "better life for all" are experienced as unattainable. Thus, guiding my selection of *Die Son's* collection of narratives, letters, and evidence of the structural exclusion of its working-class readership are feelings of frustration and pain that point to loss, thereby exposing the failure of the post-apartheid state to integrate and manage alterity in its striving for an inclusive citizenship. To understand this loss, I draw from Freud's theorisation on mourning and melancholia. In particular, I turn to melancholia as a structure of feeling that unites a collective experiencing and re-experiencing of a recognisable wound. This wound becomes a unifying mechanism as opposed to a process of working through a collectively felt loss.²⁵

Throughout *Mourning and Melancholia* Freud attempts to define and distinguish between the two. He argues that mourning refers to the "reaction to the loss of a loved person, or to the loss of some abstraction, which has taken the place of one,"²⁶ resulting in the withdrawal of the libido from the lost object. The libido withdraws "bit by bit,"²⁷ rather than all at once, allowing

²³ Brown, Op. Cit., p. 55

²⁴ Ibid., p. 55

²⁵ C.f. Luckhurst, R. 2013. *The Trauma Question*. New York: Routledge.

²⁶ Freud, 1917, Op. Cit., p. 243

²⁷ Ibid., p. 245

the ego to eventually become free of the lost object. Melancholia, on the other hand, refers to an “object-loss which is withdrawn from consciousness,”²⁸ resulting in a sense of an unknown loss. Unlike mourning, melancholia typically draws the ego to an enduring attachment to the lost object. Thus, for Freud “in mourning it is the world which has become poor and empty; in melancholia it is the ego itself.”²⁹

After presenting the features specific to melancholia, Freud contends that “the same traits are met with in mourning.”³⁰ Although the distinction seems arduous to establish in Freud’s eyes, the contribution of other scholars is fruitful in further distinguishing both notions. In *The Psychic Life of Power*,³¹ Judith Butler shows how mourning can be distinguished from melancholia in two ways.³² The first difference appears when someone real is lost; the second when there is a loss of an ideal. Freud, Butler claims, appears to associate the loss of an ideal or an abstraction primarily with melancholia,³³ whereas in mourning, it is not only the loss of the person at stake but “the ideal may have substituted for the person.”³⁴ With this distinction in mind, *Die Son*’s attachment to a constellation of lost objects appears melancholic in nature, taking into consideration melancholy forms of collective identifications.³⁵ By considering the reader’s

²⁸ Ibid., p. 245

²⁹ Ibid., p. 246

³⁰ Ibid., p. 244

³¹ Butler, J. 1997. *The Psychic Life of Power: Theories in Subjection*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

³² Ibid., p. 172

³³ Ibid., p. 172

³⁴ Ibid., p. 172

³⁵ Ibid., p. 132

manifold encounters with loss in *Die Son*, melancholia seems to structure the kinds of affects that allow for the past to linger in the present by an attachment not to a lost object, but to loss itself.³⁶

Freud evokes the imagery of melancholia as a partially “open wound,”³⁷ a wound that empties the subject’s ego until it is impoverished. This wound is not unlike Christo Davids’ allegory of a utopian promise, and requires revisiting in order to be treated:

Hoop op ‘n land met geleenthede. Hoop dat jou buurman jou vriend sal wees en jou viand jou broer sal word. Hoop vir ‘n Utopia, ‘n land van melk en heuning. Maar toe skrik ons wakker [...] Daar was eens op ‘n tyd ‘n droom. ‘n Droom dat dinge beter sal raak. ‘n Droom dat ons almal gelyk sal staan in ons land. Dat ons die wonde saam sal lek en só genesing sal bring vir iets wat tot in sy hart gekwes is. Ons het self opgesit, die wonde toegedraai en wegge-loop sonder om terug te kyk. Maar nou het die wond gesweer en dit lyk of dit enige tyd kan bars. Al wat ons nou kan doen, is om oor te begin met genesing. Meer as die eerste keer. Die wond het ons land siek gemaak. Dis tyd om hom van binne af skoon te maak [Hope for a country with opportunities. Hope your neighbor will be your friend and your enemy will become your brother. Hope for a Utopia, a land of milk and honey. But then we woke up [...] Once upon a time there was a dream. A dream that things will get better. A dream that we will all be equal in our country. That we will lick the wounds together and bring a healing to something that has wounded [its] heart. We put ointment on, wrapped the wounds and walked away without looking back. But now the wound has swollen and it seems like it can burst at any time. All we can do now is to begin with healing. More so than the first time. The wound has made our country sick. It's time to clean [it] from the inside].³⁸

³⁶ Eng, D. L., & Kazanjian, D. 2003. “Mourning Remains”, in Eng, D. L. & Kazanjian, D. (eds.). *Loss: The Politics of Mourning*. Berkeley: University of California Press, p. 4

³⁷ Freud, 1917, Op. Cit., p. 253

³⁸ Davids, C. 2010. ‘In 1994 was daar hoop’, *Die Son*, 1 February, p. 6

In this short text, Davids acknowledges not only the failure of an inclusive community in post-apartheid South Africa, but also evokes a community of readers through his reflection on what is both individual and collective. In addition to the imagery of the wound which recalls Freud's metaphor, notice that David speaks of a dream. This reveals an ambivalence regarding the object-loss: whether it has ever existed or has been a mere hope. The democratic fictions of inclusion return as a "national haunting."³⁹ *Die Son's* working-class reader, I suggest, experiences South Africa as an enduring "melancholic national *object*"⁴⁰ that haunts post-apartheid ideals of inclusivity and liberty: a wound that is seen by readers' as affecting this community differently than it does to others. If the ability to resolve grieving means the ability to gradually withdraw from an object lost, thereby finding some kind of closure, it also allows for future investments in new objects—be it hope for a utopia, a land of milk and honey, or a dream that everyone will be equal in South Africa.⁴¹

Die Son is therefore sensitive to the formulations of post-apartheid community as enduring "responses to specific historical circumstances,"⁴² which entail attachments to loss, memories

³⁹ Eng, D. L., & Han, S. 2000. A Dialogue on Racial Melancholia. *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*, 10(4):667-700, p. 673

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 674

⁴¹ Žižek, in a different reading of melancholia, does not see melancholia as entailing the enduring attachment to the lost object, but rather the process in which the melancholic subject comes to possess the object, but no longer desires the object. In this instance, we can imagine Žižek's proposal as manifesting as the discrepancy between the promise of democracy and the experience of democracy and its failures (In: Breckman, W. 2004. "The Post-Marx of the Letter", in Bourg, J. (ed.). *After the Deluge: New Perspective on the Intellectual and Cultural History of Postwar France*. USA: Lexington Books, p. 84).

⁴² Durrant, S. 2004. *Postcolonial Narrative and the Work of Mourning: J. M. Coetzee, Wilson Harris, and Toni Morrison*. Albany: State University of New York Press, p. 12

and narratives that found their way into the present moment. Due to the specificity of the memories and narratives evoked, *Die Son* is conceived as catering for a coloured working-class readership in particular. In response to this, Koopman has stressed the range of possible audiences for the tabloid:

A lot of people will say we are a Coloured newspaper. But that's not true. We are seamless. We do not look at the colour of the news. But the reality is that most of our information comes from the Cape Flats, because the numbers there are bigger. We increasingly get calls from White readers with tips. You can see *Die Burger* is now also starting to include more Coloured news, I don't know if that's because they now have a Coloured editor [Henry Jeffries], but they are realizing that their readers are getting extinct. They know their readers are becoming extinct and they have to create a new market. And where is the new market? With the Coloured middle class.⁴³

By including events and narratives from readers' everyday lives in the tabloid, *Die Son* gains popularity by paying attention to issues that would not otherwise have been recognised in mainstream media outlets. Thus, even though the readership feels marginalized, *Die Son* makes them matter. Koopman reflects on the failure of mainstream media:

If you look at the Western Cape, the largest part of the population is Coloured. But if you open a newspaper, you don't read about what is happening to those people, in those communities. You read about something you don't know. It's a different world you are reading about, it's not a reality to you. They never told people the truth of what is going on in the Western Cape. What you read about are things like the battle about language [of instruction] at [the University of] Stellenbosch. Is that an issue for people who are struggling to survive? People want to know how stories are relevant to them. We really try

⁴³ Koopman, cited in Wasserman, 2010, Op. Cit., p. 170

to address issues that are important to people. People should feel that the things we cover are things that concern them.⁴⁴

By *Die Son* publishing content that is relevant to the concerns of its readers, the tabloid “creates a sense of proximity between readers and tabloids,”⁴⁵ thereby establishing a mode of identification between *Die Son* and its readers. Thus, despite Koopman’s claims that the tabloid does not “look at the colour of the news,” I argue that *Die Son* is not founded on an openness that is “seamless.” Rather, the tabloid is premised on an expression that evokes shared experiences of loss through the control of the reader’s positions made available by the tabloid itself.⁴⁶ More so, Sofia Johansson,⁴⁷ identifies an “emphasis on threat”⁴⁸ as significant to the formation of readers’ sense of a collective boundary. That is, the formation of the boundaries of the collective amongst readers requires to some extent a rejection of that which does not belong in the closure of the collective: what is identified as abject, an abuse of power exercised on and experienced disproportionately by the community of readers or a perceived outsider that is ‘coming too close.’⁴⁹ As *Die Son* approaches sexual abuse, gangsterism and police brutality, amongst other issues, it also works against a universal collective, thereby “closing ranks”⁵⁰ of the collective social addressed.

⁴⁴ Cited, in Wasserman, 2010, Op. Cit., p. 169

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 136

⁴⁶ Johansson, S. 2007. *Reading Tabloids: Tabloid Newspapers and Their Readers*. Huddinge: Södertörn Academic Studies, p. 100

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ C.f. Wasserman, 2010, Op. Cit., p. 137

⁵⁰ Hansen, T. B. 2005. Melancholia of Freedom: Humour and Nostalgia among Indians in South Africa. *Modern Drama*, 48.2: 297–315, p. 304

While we may object that media objects do not deterministically make the communities they seek to address, we should venture to acknowledge the power media objects carry in influencing the forging of an imagined collectivity that may (partially) satisfy a desire for a site of belonging.⁵¹ One of the mechanisms utilised by *Die Son* to help create a community or a “collective sociality” is through the publication of advice, events, letters, and narratives that produce boundaries between insiders and outsiders, marking who is considered part of the collective “we.” Although the insiders form a collective in opposition to the outsiders, a shared/common characteristic is required to propel the collective from a status of mere differentiation to one of relation.

The enduring attachment to and identification with the lost object or ideal suggests that melancholia is a productive conceptual register from which to consider how *Die Son* constitutes and maintains the boundaries of its readership as well as investigate *Die Son*’s relationship with its readers.⁵² Indeed, “social feelings rest on identifications with other people, on the basis of having the same ego ideal”⁵³ constituting a collective that shares the same enduring attachment to loss, thereby referencing a recognisable wound. Gesturing to the tension between the individual “I” and the universal “we,”⁵⁴ Koopman provides a conversation to readers that took

⁵¹ Dornfeld, B. 1998. *Producing public television*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University, p. 187

⁵² Duck, L. A. 2008. Listening to Melancholia: Alice Walker’s Meridian. *Patterns of Prejudice*, 42(4-5): 439-464.

⁵³ Freud, S. 1989 [1923]. “The Ego and the Id”. Translated by Riviere, J. *The Freud Reader*. London: Hogarth Press, p. 638-43, cited in Duck, 2008:449.

⁵⁴ The sense of community can be examined alongside Wendy Brown’s work in *Wounded Attachments*. In this text, Brown (1995:64-65) argues that the identity of “those disenfranchised by an exclusive “we”” gains coherence as subjectivities marked by exclusion protest against the “fiction of an inclusive/universal community.” Here, Brown (1995) is concerned with the elision of histories of exclusion with the disciplinary production of those identities structurally excluded. Building on

place between himself and a neighbour in the form of a post-apartheid narrative. For him, such an account offers us an allegory of marginalised subjectivity and the shortcomings of rainbow nation in the “new South Africa”:

Waar is die nuwe Suid-Afrika? Die een waarvan hy al so baie gehoor het? [...] die nuwe Suid-Afrika en die Reënboognasie is die grootste bedrogspul waarvan ek ooit gehoor het. Wie benefit van die nuwe Suid-Afrika? Nie ons gewone mense nie. Die rykes raak ryker en die armes raak armer [Where is the new South Africa? The one he has heard so much of? [...] The new South Africa and the Rainbow Nation are the biggest scam I've ever heard of. Who benefits from the new South Africa? Not our ordinary people. The rich get richer and the poor get poorer].⁵⁵

Koopman continues the narrative of disappointment and the failure of the 1994 promise between himself and his interlocutor “Oom [uncle] Sonny” to whom “[t]he picture has not changed, man. The white man still sits in the bakkie and reads the newspaper while blacks do the *hard labour*” [*Die prentjie het niks verander nie, man. Die wit ou sit nog in die bakkie en koerant lees terwyl die swartes die hard labour doen*].⁵⁶ In an effort to invoke an image that demonstrates how “the picture has not changed”, Oom Sonny asks Koopman whether he has ever heard of a white person that lives in a wendy house, stating that coloured and black South Africans continue to remain the predominant segment of the South African population that live under those conditions. A reader provides insight regarding Koopman’s conversation with oom Sonny: *Bruin belange in die nuwe Suid-Afrika is nog geensins bevorder nie. Bruin mense het steeds ang en voel van verontregting bestaan steeds. Hulle is herderloos en smag na uitkoms. Hulle bevind*

Brown’s argument, my concern here is the elision of political, social and economic organisation with a melancholic attachment to a wound that functions as a form of identity production (Brown, 2006:35).

⁵⁵ Koopman, A. 2009. ‘Waar is die nuwe SA dan?’, *Die Son*, 27 May, p. 6

⁵⁶ Koopman, A. 2009. ‘Waar is die nuwe SA dan?’, *Die Son*, 27 May, p. 6

hulle vreemdelinge in hule geboorteland [Coloured interests in the new South Africa have not yet been promoted. Coloured people still have anxiety and feelings of injustice. They are leaderless and have yearn for outcomes. They find themselves strangers in their native country].⁵⁷ In this instance, the white middle-class South African becomes the ideal against which readers oppose and measure themselves against as well as point to for proof of their injury.⁵⁸

Koopman's conversation with oom Sonny not only expresses disappointment regarding how the picture has not changed, but also expresses dissatisfaction over the miserable living conditions that the promise of 1994 purported to have changed and overcome. A reader echoed Koopman and oom Sonny's disavowal for the 1994 promise when they asked: "Yes, who says the "struggle" is over? What have you received since the first democratic election?" [*Ja, wie sê die "struggle" is klaar? Wat het jy gekry sedert die eerste demokratiese verkiesing?*].⁵⁹ If the state and the political sphere more generally do not appear as sites of recognition to mull over the injury inflicted historically as well as in the present, *Die Son* becomes a medium that provides the working-class collective "I" with content that is considered relevant. Yet, as Berlant⁶⁰ has noted elsewhere, the public acknowledgement of suffering and a state of woundedness does not necessarily translate into an alleviation of suffering.

⁵⁷ Briewebus. 2011. 'Eerste inwoners van die land kom laaste', *Die Son*, 17 June, p. 33

⁵⁸ Brown, Op. Cit., p. 61

⁵⁹ Son Briewe. 2011. 'Boere benefit en ons mense suffer', *Die Son*, 23 June, p. 12

⁶⁰ Berlant, L. 1999. "The Subject of True Feelings: Pain, Privacy, and Politics", in Sarat, A. & Kearns, T. R. (eds.). *Cultural Pluralism, Identity Politics, and the Law*. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press.

Although *Die Son* declares that it is not a “coloured” tabloid and indeed aims at a broader readership, it’s objective to give content to the collective “I”, those that are “still not in count,” has brought together a myriad of readers relating to the stories presented. *Die Son* has been adopted as a stable platform around which the readership’s community could identify and empathise and, in this way, endowing the collective “I,” with content to a negation felt by readers. By way of *Die Son*’s stable labour of acknowledgment, the tabloid retrieves the individual reader through the work of melancholy and allows for the formation of a collective determined by a common enemy and later a common wound.

Indexing injury and identity

The tabloid draws its strength from the recognition of how its readers cope with the everyday, “an always deferred future”⁶¹ in post-apartheid South Africa, which becomes part of the building of solidarity between *Die Son* and its readers. I discussed *Die Son*’s readers melancholic attachment to a wound not to suggest it has produced an identity politics based on fixed characteristics and overinvested in victimhood.⁶² This viewpoint implies, as Berlant has noted, that “in the good life there will be no pain.”⁶³ I argue instead that *Die Son* functions as a medium through which predominantly coloured readers can articulate their identity as one not characterised by lack, but an identity that, albeit still in production, is worthy of its own content-specific news and history. Thus, the everyday struggles of *Die Son*’s readers are grounded in a

⁶¹ Berlant, 1999, Op. Cit., p. 82

⁶² C.f. Brown, 1995; Berlant, 1999

⁶³ Berlant, 1999, Op. Cit., p. 77

feeling that readers are capable of articulating their personal accounts in a way that resonates with a collective conjuncture:⁶⁴

Will we coloureds always be the last in the queue? I've been on the waiting list for 18 years. I've been shunted around from one mayor to the next. From one council member to the next. From one rental unit to the next. From one backyard to another. Because it became more expensive to rent, I ended up in a squatter camp. Every year we have meetings and get pretty promises.⁶⁵

The neglect and lack of recognition experienced by coloured working-class communities' foster feelings and sentiments that the "government does not care for coloured people"⁶⁶ and that "coloured people are not seen."⁶⁷ That South Africans turn toward print commodities to uncover strategies of survival is not new. Narunsky-Laden argues that from the 1930s in South Africa, the coupling of print commodities with patterns of consumption contributed to registers of middle-classness, thereby "introducing new, and reshaping existing, senses of collective and individual identity among black South Africans in urbanising environments."⁶⁸ Print commodities have historically been significant in allowing marginalised South Africans to "constitute a sense of themselves"⁶⁹ through discourse and images.⁷⁰ Thus, the reader's personal experience with and

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 83

⁶⁵ S*n letters, 2008. 'Coloureds are being abused', *Die Son*, 14 April, p. 11

⁶⁶ Sonlesers. 2008. 'Regering gee nie om vir ons bruines om', *Die Son*, 27 June, p. 35

⁶⁷ Sonlesers. 2008. 'Regering gee nie om vir ons bruines om', *Die Son*, 27 June, p. 35

⁶⁸ Narunsky-Laden, S. 2008. "Identity in post-apartheid South Africa: 'Learning to belong' through the (commercial) media", *Power*, in Hadland, A., Louw, E., Sesanti, S., & Wasserman, H. (eds.) *Politics and Identity in South African Media*. South Africa: HSRC Press, pp. 131-2

⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 129

⁷⁰ C.f. Lacan, J. *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book XXII, L'identification*, 1961-62, unpublished, seminar of 6 December 1961.

articulation of injury has the capacity to forge solidarity and unite a collective in the face of what is seen as a fractured South Africa.

Die Son therefore offers a platform for coloured readers to recognise and identify with negotiations with what being ‘coloured’ means in post-apartheid South Africa.⁷¹ Historically, being ‘coloured’ has been mediated by state fueled perceptions of coloured identity as intermediary. Despite the rejection of the racial category of ‘coloured’ by people who had been classified as coloured under the Population Registration Act of 1950,⁷² and later by those in the Black Consciousness Movement, Mohamed Adhikari⁷³ has observed that the category of coloured as an identity has persisted in post-apartheid South Africa, specifically the Western Cape. Adhikari⁷⁴ argues that this is in part “due to a desire to project a positive self-image in the face of the pervasive negative racial stereotyping of coloured people,” as well as “a result of attempts at ethnic mobilisation to take advantage of the newly democratic political environment.”⁷⁵

Even attempts to negate coloured identity, such as by the community paper *Grassroots* launched in 1980, in a push towards a “nonracial, working-class consciousness”⁷⁶ during the anti-apartheid struggle failed. Thus, as Glenn and Knaggs, drawing from Lukas Opatrny, have argued, one of

⁷¹ Narunsky-Laden, Op. Cit., p. 142

⁷² Adhikari, M. 2005. *Not White Enough, Not Black Enough: Racial Identity in the South African Coloured Community*. South Africa: Double Storey Books, p. 8

⁷³ Adhikari, Op. Cit., p. 471

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 472

⁷⁵ The assertion of coloured identity has seen development within Khoisan movements in post-apartheid South Africa, which has been given some attention by *Die Son*.

⁷⁶ Switzer, L. 2000. “Introduction: South Africa’s Resistance Press under Apartheid”, in Switzer, L. & Adhikari, M. (eds.). *South Africa’s Resistance Press: Alternative Voices in the Last Generation under Apartheid*. Ohio: Ohio University Press, p. 51

the reasons this left-wing Cape Flat newspaper, aimed at a black and coloured working-class readership in Cape Town,⁷⁷ failed was due to “ideological ambivalence.” Initially, *Grassroots* failed to take off amongst Black South Africans due to it being perceived as a “coloured” paper.⁷⁸ Yet, after the launch of the United Democratic Front (UDF) in August 1983, many coloured readers moved away from the paper as it “gradually became a mouthpiece of the front,”⁷⁹ thereby failing to unite the coloured community behind the UDF/African National Congress (ANC) banner.⁸⁰ As the paper became more politicised by the UDF, *Grassroots* came to be regarded as a Black paper by coloured readers. While the UDF initially provided a political home to coloureds that was unavailable previously, coloureds felt that they lost this political home once the UDF joined mainstream politics: “there was no place for Coloureds as such but only for “Blacks.””⁸¹

Alternatively, *South*, launched in the Western Cape in 1987, sought to “articulate the grievances and aspirations”⁸² of working-class readers, but was read primarily by a middle-class coloured readership.⁸³ As with *Grassroots*, *South* became the mouthpiece for the UDF, situating the paper

⁷⁷ Van Kessel, I. 2000. “*Grassroots: From Washing Lines to Utopia*”, in Switzer, L. & Adhikari, M. (eds.). *South Africa’s Resistance Press: Alternative Voices in the Last Generation under Apartheid*. Ohio: Ohio University Press, p. 283

⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 306

⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 307

⁸⁰ Switzer, 2000, Op. Cit., p. 52

⁸¹ Ibid., p. 310

⁸² Adhikari, M. 2000. ““You Have the Right to Know”: *South*, 1987–1994”, L. Switzer & M. Adhikari, (eds), *South Africa’s Resistance Press: Alternative Voices in the Last Generation under Apartheid*. Ohio: Ohio University Press, P. 329

⁸³ Switzer, Op. Cit., p. 53

“firmly within the camp of the ANC.”⁸⁴ More so, those who worked for *South* were adamant that any acknowledgement of coloured identity was to give reality to the racial categories that the apartheid state had imposed on South Africans. Despite *South* subsuming coloured identity under the umbrella term “black,” the newspaper specifically targeted coloured readers. Adhikari states that the “contradiction did not escape anyone associated with the newspaper.”⁸⁵ The newspaper therefore came to be seen as a “coloured” newspaper. Yet, as with Koopman, editors from *South* denied that they were a coloured newspaper.⁸⁶ *South*’s eventual demise was as a result of not only being unable to compete with other print press at the time, but also due to the newspaper being unable to appeal to the working-class readership that it sought to write for.⁸⁷ The newspaper was consumed by a middle-class coloured readership and left-wing white readers in the Western Cape, who proved not to be a financially viable readership to keep the newspaper afloat.

Part of the failure of *Grassroots* and *South*, amongst other reasons, was therefore the negation of coloured identity: an attempt to resist the racial categories that the apartheid state coerced people into. The insecurities and anxieties accompanied by the negation and intermediary status of coloured identity, expressed by Zimitri Erasmus as “I was *not only* not white, but *less than white; not only* not black, but *better than black* (as we referred to African people),” are rooted in ideas and experiences that “being coloured often means having to choose between blackness and

⁸⁴ Adhikari, 2000, Op. Cit., p. 336

⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 351

⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 354

⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 365

whiteness,”⁸⁸ which often problematically inform and characterise coloured identity as “residual, in-between or ‘lesser’ identity.”⁸⁹

Zoë Wicomb⁹⁰ argues that due to the apartheid state making amendments to the category “Coloured,” where additional categories such as “Other Coloured” were introduced, worked to further nurture ideas of a “fragmented coloured subject.”⁹¹ Associations of fragmentation with coloured subjectivity often translate into a perception of coloured identity politics as being naturally or inherently characterised by lack, a negative. This perceived fragmentation is itself experienced and expressed in *Die Son* as an injury to the coloured subject. Davids, in a column in *Die Son*, gives recognition to coloured identity as an identity whose content is not in excess of “leftovers,” as Marike de Klerk⁹² once infamously claimed in an interview:

We are not all gangsters. We are good people. We have our own things that are not important to many other people, but to us [...] We are not just what you see on the news or read in the newspapers. It sometimes feels like the Cape is a place on its own in South Africa, as if what happens in the rest of the country, we are not really affected. It is as if Helen Zille is the president of a country within a republic. In the Cape, my life is always uncomplicated. Why, I do not know. But what I know is: It’s home, it’s me, it makes me human [*Ons is nie almal gangsters nie. Ons is goeie mense. Ons het ons eie goed wat nie vir baie*

⁸⁸ Erasmus, Op. Cit., p. 13

⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 15

⁹⁰ Wicomb, Z. 1998. “Shame and Identity: The Case of the Coloured in South Africa”, in Attridge, D. & Jolly, R. (eds.). *Writing South Africa: Literature, Apartheid, and Democracy, 1970-1995*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 101

⁹¹ Wicomb (1998:93) argues that the notion of a fragmentary coloured subject, accompanied by the adoption of different names and modes of identification at different historical moments has contributed to an understanding of coloured personhood as one that lacks fixity and unifying content.

⁹² C.f. Adhikari, 2005, Op. Cit., p. 13

*ander mense belangrik is nie, maar wel vir ons [...] Ons is nie net wat jy op die nuus sien of in die koerante lees nie. Dit voel soms asof die Kaap 'n plek op sy eie is in Suid-Afrika, asof dit wat in die res van die land gebeur, ons nie regtig raak nie. Dis asof Helen Zille die president is van 'n land binne 'n republiek. In die Kaap voel my lewe altyd ongekompliseerd. Hoekom, weet ek nie. Maar wat ek wel weet is: Dis huis, dis ek, dit maak my mens].*⁹³

Erasmus' viewpoint along with widespread perceptions that coloured identity is intermediary and marginalised has found expression in *Die Son* regarding coloured working-class identity and everyday life. Working against a representation of a homogenous notion of colouredness, *Die Son*, with its readers residing in a society of difference, recognises and dissolves multiple politicised “coloured micro-communities” and identities, “whose interests conflict and overlap.”⁹⁴

Wicomb⁹⁵ argues that the electoral behaviour of coloured citizens that has prevented the ANC from being able to secure itself in the Western Cape has coincided with the identity of “Coloured”: capitalised and consequently politicised. However, what the ANC failed to foresee in 1994 was that the then National Party would eventually energise and mobilise coloured working-class communities around promises to provide the “good life,” including the provision of housing, sanitation, and access to affirmative action.⁹⁶ That coloured citizens, particularly from working-class communities, feel that they have not been adequately recognised as historically disadvantaged, residing in a state of injury, nor benefiting from economic reform

⁹³ Davids, C. 2010. ‘Bruines se unieke ritme’, *Die Son*, 2 August, p. 6

⁹⁴ Wicomb, Op. Cit., p. 105

⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 93

⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 93

under the ANC government is voiced in *Die Son* as a sense of pain that is not being addressed nor recognised by the national government:

I just want to fall into the house with the door. I feel very sad to see that only the black people get homes. If you put on the TV, it's only black people who are made happy with a roof over their head. Did they forget about us coloured people? Here in Atlantis our people have it very hard. I stay in a small house that leaks and I have five children. Two of my children cannot even stay with me because the conditions here in Atlantis are just too hectic [*Ek wil sommer met die deur in die huis val. Ek voel baie, baie hartseer om te sien dat net die swart mense huise kry. Sit jy dit TV aan, dan is dit net swart mense wat happy gemaak word met 'n dak oor die kop. Het hulle van ons bruin mense vergeet? Hier in Atlantis kry ons mense baie swaar. Ek bly in 'n hokkie wat lek en ek het vyf kinders. Twee van my kinders kan nie eens by my bly nie omdat die omstandighede hier in Atlantis net te haglik is*].⁹⁷

Consider in this instance how the readers mention of a past injury or historical wound is accompanied by an affect signalled by the “object that fails to deliver its *promise*.”⁹⁸ The future for historically excluded citizens in South Africa was thus bound to making and keeping promises: “Promises are the uniquely human way of ordering the future, making it predictable and reliable to the extent that this is humanly possible.”⁹⁹ Precisely here we can consider expectation and its failure to materialise for many as being intimately bound to external people – and other sites of blame – responsible for making promises and the promise itself. The unfulfilled promise can therefore be read as the experience of the limit of the anticipated future.

⁹⁷ Briewebus. 2010. ‘Waar is bruines se hulp?’, *Die Son*, 3 September, p. 23

⁹⁸ Ahmed, S. 2010. *The Promise of Happiness*. Durham: Duke University Press, p. 42

⁹⁹ Arendt, H. 1972. *Crises of the Republic: Lying in Politics, Civil Disobedience, on Violence, Thoughts on Politics and Revolution*. New York: Harcourt Brace, p. 92, cited in Ahmed, *Ibid.*, p. 29

Here, I suggest that the perceived failure of hopes and promises of 1994 to materialise as well as the discourses of readers that accompany this perceived failure are intimately related to the boundaries of community and subjectivity.¹⁰⁰ As Hutchison¹⁰¹ argues, the capacity for injury to undermine collective identity often translates into a push to invoke a collective personhood that turns toward the past to face and piece together what has been taken from the collective:

It feels like yesterday when people were removed by apartheid laws from the Cape and surrounding areas to make way for white people. In Delft at the N2 Gateway housing project, the coloured people had to give up their homes to black children who have never been on a waiting list. [...] Coloured people's land claims are not being dealt with because the government wants to move them from the Western Cape to give their ground to black people [*Dit voel soos gister toe ons mense deur apartheidswette uit die Kaap en omliggende areas verwyder is om plek te maak vir wit mense. In Delft by die N2 Gateway housing project moes die bruin mense weer hul huise afstaan aan die swart kinders wat nog nooit op 'n waglys was nie [...] Bruin mense se grondeise word nie afgehandel nie, want die government wil hulle uit die Wes-Kaap verskuif om hul grond aan swart mense te gee*].¹⁰²

A reader wrote in summing up these sentiments as the future is black for South Africa's coloured people,¹⁰³ because “coloured people still struggle for example with affirmative action where the black candidate often gets preference” [*Die bruin mense kry steeds swaar met byvoorbeeld regstelende aksie wwar die swart kandidaat diskwels voorkeur kry*].¹⁰⁴ The hierarchy of redress that coloured people assume that they miss out on coupled with dismal living conditions

¹⁰⁰ Hutchison, E. 2016. *Affective Communities in World Politics*. UK: Cambridge University Press, p. 61

¹⁰¹ Ibid., p. 62

¹⁰² Son Briewe. 2011. ‘Bruin mense al die pad onderdruk’, *Die Son*, 7 April, p. 21

¹⁰³ Briewebus. 2010. ‘Blink (swart) toekoms vir SA se bruin mense’, *Die Son*, 19 November, p. 34

¹⁰⁴ Briewebus. 2010. ‘Blink (swart) toekoms vir SA se bruin mense’, *Die Son*, 19 November, p. 34

experienced by those in coloured working-class communities, are seen to be largely ignored by the ANC, exacerbating viewpoints that “coloured people have no future with the ANC government” [*Die bruin mense het geen toekoms met ‘n ANC-regering nie*].¹⁰⁵

In 2009, *Die Son* spoke to Allan Boesak,¹⁰⁶ Cope’s premier candidate for the Western Cape at the time, who stated that the Democratic Alliance (DA) had won 40% of Mitchells Plain’s vote, the birthplace of the UDF, pointing to the disaffection that coloured communities feel toward the ANC. A reader’s comment regarding the coloured communities’ relationship with the ANC and the DA respectively reflects this:

The Western Cape is everyone’s. But who will rule after the election? The DA. Mitchells Plain’s people have never voted for the ANC. They never will either because they aren’t stupid like you [*Die Wes-Kaap is almal s’n. Maar wie gaan dit ná die verkiesing reg regeer? Die DA. Mitchells Plain se mense het nooit ANC gestem nie. Hulle sal ook nie, want hulle is nie so dom soos jy nie*].¹⁰⁷

Johnston notes that this disaffection towards the ANC has been exacerbated by the arguably derogatory racial profiling of coloured people by the ANC mediated by figures such as the gangster, the “coon minstrel,” and the drug dealer, as well as perceptions that ANC attitudes, towards coloureds in this instance, cast, “doubt as to the ANC’s commitment to non-racialism in minority minds.”¹⁰⁸ While the DA is seen to give more attention to issues that directly affect working-class coloured communities, there is a perception expressed amongst *Die Son*’s readers that it is not only the ANC that exploits the working class, but that the DA is guilty of this, too:

¹⁰⁵ Briewebebus. 2010. ‘Blink (swart) toekoms vir SA se bruin mense’, *Die Son*, 19 November, p. 34

¹⁰⁶ Pretorius, M. 2009. ‘Bruines wás in struggle’, *Die Son*, 21 April, p. 6

¹⁰⁷ Briewebebus. 2009. ‘Bruin mense se oë is oop’, *Die Son*, 2 April, p. 18

¹⁰⁸ Johnston, A. 2014. *South Africa: Inventing the Nation*. London: Bloomsbury. p. 304

I have heard and seen so much of the DA. It is beyond my understanding that there are always coloureds who believe the DA's lie stories. People from the Western Cape, open your eyes and see what's happening to you. They only use us to fill their bags [*Ek het nou al so baie van die DA gehoor en gesien. Dit gaan my verstand te bowe dat daar nog altyd kleurlinge is wat die DA se liegstories glo. Mense van die Wes-Kaap, maak oop jul oë en sien wat om julle aangaan. Hulle gebruik ons net om hul sakke te vul*].¹⁰⁹

While predominantly coloured communities are concerned about the ANC's lack of commitment to non-racialism, Jason Lloyd, writing for *Die Son* and following Roy du Pré, argues that historically the “majority of coloureds 'political choices were exercised on the basis of race rather than political parties' policy documents,” and that, “it is safe to say the situation among some coloureds has not changed at all. Coloured political participation is in most cases affected by self-imposed fear, little self-confidence, an inferiority complex and the next person's racial or ethnic descent.”¹¹⁰ He further adds that:

The future therefore involves a DA with a black leader who sets up black majority interests or characteristics of a welfare state. The current political and economic climate (realpolitik) requires that the DA pursue social-democratic values instead of obsolete classical liberal values. Some coloured people who are victims of apartheid just like black people, are naïve, they do not realize how a welfare state can benefit them economically. For them, it's more about serving a white-controlled political party than the party's policy. At the Western Cape DA Congress, they preferred to vote for Patricia de Lille because she still believes “the Western Cape is the DA's cradle.” That's what she says after the party pulled most of the votes in Gauteng in 2014's election. Zille's forced retirement proves that the DA wants to play a bigger role as a

¹⁰⁹ Briewebebus. 2010. ‘Bruines glo steeds DA se leuens’, *Die Son*, 26 March, p. 27

¹¹⁰ Lloyd, J. 2015. ‘Bruines beleef weer ‘n politieke dilemma’, *Die Son*, 26 April, p. 9

black party. It also proves that the current white and coloured supporters cannot convert the DA into a future ruling party. The question is now: Will conservative coloured DA voters be prepared to serve in a new DA under a black leader?¹¹¹

By Lloyd thinking through the political dilemma facing coloured communities, we are invited to identify and muse along with Lloyd the various sites of blame (apartheid, the DA, coloured political participation) and consequently understand the collective injury of coloured communities that is both produced by and a reaction to conditions of exclusion and marginalisation. To illustrate this, consider that in 2010, *Die Son* quoted Grant Twigg,¹¹² a DA councilor at the time, as saying that the “[DA] is harder on coloureds,”¹¹³ which was later echoed by Frank Martin who stated that Twigg hit the nail on the head.¹¹⁴ The “political dilemma” facing coloured people, as Jason Lloyd put it, after the UDF was disbanded in 1992, has energized some to argue that coloured and black working-class majorities require a party of their own.

In light of disaffection towards existing political parties in South Africa, *Die Son* reported in 2015 that Bernard Jackson sought to establish a coloured party called the “Coloured Voice.” *Die Son* reported Jackson has stating that:

¹¹¹ Lloyd, J. 2015. ‘Bruines beleef weer ‘n politieke dilemma’, *Die Son*, 26 April, p. 9

¹¹² Grant Twigg is referring to the DA’s discrepancy in how the party dealt with Theuns Botha (whose open support for Lennit Max over Helen Zille to win as mayor, some felt, could have divided the party) and Lennit Max who Twigg described as being decried of as a bad leader and a disappointment to the DA when he opted to do something similar to Theuns.

¹¹³ Pretorius, M. 2010. ‘Party is harder op bruines’, *Die Son*, 19 February, p. 6

¹¹⁴ Pretorius, M. 2010. ‘Twigg reg, sê nóg lede’, *Die Son*, 23 February, p. 4

The Coloured man has a problem that the current government cannot solve. We have a high unemployment rate, we have massive social and economic problems and the highest school leaving rate. We can only solve this if we respond to it [...] I do not stay in Constantia. . . I stay in the community. I feel what our people are doing every day [...] Coloured people should stop pushing each other down and try to help each other. We have to get together. We are the most in the Western Cape. Why do not we make use of this benefit?¹¹⁵

Amongst other things, Jackson identifies coloured people themselves as a site of blame when he states that, “coloured people should stop pushing each other down”; implying a failure of sorts that seeks to “identify a reason within itself” or identify sites of blame external to itself. Identity¹¹⁶ is thus not only a reaction to internal understandings but is also a reaction to something outside of the community that identifies with one another through a collective injury. Expressing a similar viewpoint to Bernard Jackson, Edwin Lombard, *Die Son*’s previous editor, argued that coloured people are the majority in the Western Cape, and yet suggesting that the latter does not realise how much power it actually has. Lombard continues:

Because coloured people do not use their powers collectively, they cannot bring about the sort of change they want. Look at the leadership of the different parties. How many of them are led by coloured people? We can talk high and low about ethnic politics and that your skin colour does not make you a leader. Fact of the matter is: Ethnicity still dominates the landscape. And coloured people still fight to get their part of the cake [...] coloured people sell their voting rights with every election to people who do not bear their interests at heart.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁵ Cupido, U. 2015. ‘Man wil bruin party stig’, *Die Son*, 12 April, p. 6

¹¹⁶ C.f. Brown, 1995

¹¹⁷ Lombard, E. 2009. ‘Dis tyd vir bruin krag’, *Die Son*, 19 January, p. 6

While *Die Son* focuses on individual painful narratives, the collective wound gains coherence as readers recognise these narratives as their own personal story of feeling, thereby indexing the existence of an identity that appears unable to move on from injury.¹¹⁸ As Brown observes: when an identity's foundation is injury – premised on exclusion – demands for recognition do not reach for a future free of pain, but in fact re-establish the historical injury.¹¹⁹ Through the attention to the repetition of a constellation of injuries, *Die Son* marks experiences that appear outside of history precisely due to the fact that these experiences repeat themselves. *Die Son* is willing to acknowledge its readers' collective injury, while it appears disinvested in thinking through an alternative future. The tabloid powerfully gives expression to readers of working-class identity, attempting to tend to the wound and provide a sanctuary for the wounded. *Die Son* therefore does more than merely articulate its reader's past experiences, but rather uses the tabloid as a space for injury and pain to come to light that are still present in readers' current moment, evoking the spectre of Freud's description of melancholia as a partially "open wound."¹²⁰

Intimacy and the interior

So far, I have considered the claim to injury made by *Die Son* and its readers and how this is reconfigured into claims seeking recognition. The "national fantasy"¹²¹ that is accompanied by a discourse of and desire for democratic inclusion is perceived as a failure, as I have noted. The public feelings that are simultaneously private in *Die Son*, are pivoted around loss, reproduce

¹¹⁸ Brown, Op. Cit., p. 73

¹¹⁹ Ibid., p. 73

¹²⁰ Freud, 1917, Op. Cit., p. 253

¹²¹ C.f. Berlant, 1991

feelings and relations of intimacy. Yet, despite the heterogeneity of *Die Son*'s readership and its readers' identity politics, I again turn to *Die Son* itself to consider how the readers relationship with the tabloid constitutes a form of intimacy, whereby readers are able to find meaning in and identify with expressions that are not only relevant to the interior condition of their own lives, but others living in similar conditions. Rather than merely validating the rationality of the readers' reaction by presenting them with similar or identical complaints/stories – herein lies the virtue of the collective – *Die Son* acts as a kind of mirror through which the reader can perceive their social conditions and takes themselves as objects of self-examination. *Die Son* offers readers a space of intimacy in which they can satisfy feelings of self-recognition, particularly through humour.¹²² As I demonstrate, the humour that is characteristic of *Die Son* is not necessarily subversive.¹²³ Rather, the tabloid's humours functions, I argue, as a means of escape, often holding the serious and non-serious in tension.

Writing about a formerly Indian township in Chatsworth, outside of Durban, Thomas Hansen argues that mediums such as film and music marked a “zone of enjoyment,” of “cultural intimacy” that allowed Indians in South Africa to “indulge in things Indian without excuses”¹²⁴: an intimacy and culture more typically associated with working-class Indians but also consumed and enjoyed by the Indian middle class. Taking lead from Hansen,¹²⁵ I suggest that *Die Son* and its consumption and enjoyment by predominantly working-class coloured communities' works to produce a “closure” that foregrounds a shared collective sociality and intimacy, as remarked on

¹²² C.f. Herzfeld, M. 1996. *Cultural Intimacy: Social Poetics and the Real Life of States, Societies, and Institutions*. London: Routledge.

¹²³ Bakhtin, M. 1965. *Rabelais and His World*. Translated by Iswolsky, H. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

¹²⁴ Hansen, 2005, Op. Cit., p. 303

¹²⁵ Ibid.

by Hansen.¹²⁶ The closure gains recognisable boundaries as readers affirm the “we” in the everyday circulation and sharing of narratives of a life fraught with uncertainty, intimacy, belonging and discomfort.

Die Son’s endeavour to establish intimacy with its readers is closely related, I suggest, to the aesthetics of melodrama. When melodrama emerged in the first half of the 19th century in *Boulevards du Crime*, Paris, after the French Revolution, it had an enormous impact on the working class. In particular, Walkowitz argues that melodrama had an affinity with the working class due to the genre, “evoking the instability and vulnerability of their life in the unstable market culture.”¹²⁷ While melodrama was characterised by its tendency to be sensationalist – an excess – Singer notes that the events portrayed in melodrama, “correlated, even if only loosely, with certain qualities of corporeality, peril, and vulnerability associated with working-class life.”¹²⁸ By *Die Son* relying on features closely associated with melodrama¹²⁹ – “focus on everyday life, close relationships and family stories”¹³⁰ – the tabloid facilitates an imagined intimacy. For a community represented by and converging towards *Die Son*, this relationship is paradoxical: even though its virtue lies in the stability it offers the reader, vulnerability is the community’s pivot of inclusion.

¹²⁶ Ibid., p. 304

¹²⁷ Walkowitz, J. R. 1992. *City of Dreadful Delight: Narratives of Sexual Danger in Late-Victorian London*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, p. 86

¹²⁸ Singer, B. 2001. *Melodrama and Modernity: Early Sensational Cinema and Its Contexts*. New York: Columbia University Press, p. 53

¹²⁹ Strelitz & Steenkamp, Op. Cit., pp. 266-7

¹³⁰ Han, Q. 2016. *The Cinematic Representation of the Chinese American Family*. UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, p. 60

In this instance, the intimacy that *Die Son* offers its readers is delineated by the boundary of the collective and composed of the shared experience that makes up the interior of the collective. Thus, *Die Son*'s readers constitute an "intimate public"¹³¹ that connotes a sense of belonging to community, however precarious the limits of that community are. For Berlant, a public becomes an intimate public when it "foregrounds affective and emotional attachments" that are situated within the "fantasies of the common, the everyday, and a sense of ordinariness" as well a "space where the social world is rich with anonymity and local recognitions."¹³² It is through *Die Son*'s circulation of texts that employ personalised and sentimental stories that the belief of the existence of some kind of "collective sociality" is created and indeed sustained.¹³³ This is also achieved through the sharing of texts amongst readers themselves:

People often share the *Son*— we will divide the pages between ourselves. If I get home, someone will ask me if I bought the *Son*, or in a taxi on the way home, I will be sitting reading the *Son* and then someone will shout from behind "give it here quick, let me see!"¹³⁴

Thus, the communication does not operate in a bilateral way but rather in a trilateral one: between the tabloid and the reader and between the readers themselves. The latter demonstrates the existence of links articulated between the readers and shaping the collective. Through facilitated conversation as well as shared participation, readers come to recognise the text as their *common personal story*. The sense of intimacies that sharing a text produces assists in validating readers' experiences and feelings. Through the act of sharing, readers are able to be moved and

¹³¹ Berlant, L. 2008. *The Female Complaint*. Durham: Duke University Press, p. 10

¹³² *Ibid.*, p. 10

¹³³ C.f. Berlant, 1997

¹³⁴ Cited in Wasserman, 2010, *Op. Cit.*, p. 134

articulate feelings of belonging to a “locally situated intimate public.”¹³⁵ Hence, I argue that *Die Son* fosters feelings of belonging and a sphere of collective sociality by allowing its readers to tell their stories in their own words, thereby situating their everyday lives (as well as struggles) in a public text.¹³⁶ Thus, *Die Son*’s readers’ sense of belonging to a community is textually mediated by the tabloid, where the tabloid’s potential lies in its ability to manage the exposition of the stories and the problem.

Which is to say that through *Die Son* utilising specific strategies, including that of language, coupled with the stories that the tabloid chooses to write about positions its readers into a “general subjectivity”¹³⁷ that affirms the tabloid as a platform of intimacy and recognition. What constitutes a textually mediated collective is a “loosely organized” group of people that are “attached to each other by a *sense* that there is a common emotional world available to those individuals who have been marked by the historical burden of being harshly treated in a generic way.”¹³⁸ The tabloid is able to unite an audience against a common antihero with a particular focus on emotional experiences endured by readers, accompanied by an affective intimacy.¹³⁹ Thus, by focusing on coloured-working class issues, *Die Son* affirms a generic sense of “we” that can be nurtured and recognised in the face of experiences and feelings of being excluded from South Africa’s broader media sphere.

¹³⁵ Fuller, D., & Sudo, D. R. 2013. *Reading Beyond the Book: The Social Practices of Contemporary Literary Culture*. New York: Routledge, p. 212

¹³⁶ Wasserman, 2010, Op. Cit., p. 87

¹³⁷ Ibid., p. 10

¹³⁸ Ibid., p. 10

¹³⁹ C.f. Han, 2016

While *Die Son* aims to structure a feeling in relation to and an expression of its readers everyday working-class lives, it simultaneously seeks to find a “balance” between serious news and humour. This juxtaposition of humour and seriousness offer, I suggest, what Freud calls “psychical reliefs”¹⁴⁰ and the release of inhibitions. Writings on joke-work, Freud observes that for many French authors laughter is described in terms of *détente*¹⁴¹: a relaxation free of constraint and tension. Not unlike Freud’s analysis, the joke-work of *Die Son* is simultaneously providing a form of escapism and an experience of *détente* as Koopman gestures toward:

We try to give them news that they won’t find on television or another paper. You must pick up this paper and you must enjoy it. You must be able to laugh afterwards and feel good. But often we don’t get to do that, because there is so much crime in the country, so much trauma, we actually had a conversation about that, how can we make the paper a more readable experience. People don’t only want to read about doom and gloom, people want to feel good after they’ve read a paper. That’s why we have jokes every day. The girl on page three is also escapism, so [are] the funny celebrity stories. Like the Baby Jordan story—initially people were sad about the baby getting killed, but now they follow the court case and it’s like *Days of Our Lives*.¹⁴²

Days of Our Lives soap opera – a category of the melodramatic¹⁴³ – not only “deals with personal crises and the complexity of everyday relationships,” but it also takes the “form of a

¹⁴⁰ Freud, S. 1990 [1905]. “Jokes and the Unconscious”, in Strachey, J. (ed.). *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*. London: Hogarth Press, p. 156

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 180

¹⁴² Cited in Wasserman, 2010, Op. Cit., p. 162

¹⁴³ What is particularly enticing about this melodramatic device that *Die Son* utilises is that the stories that they follow over a period of time do not require intense concentration in order for a reader to be able to keep up with the story.

continuous serial of overlapping and fragmented narratives.”¹⁴⁴ Concerning the Baby Jordan case,¹⁴⁵ a reader stated that they would buy *Die Son* every day because they “want to know what happens with a story” and that they “want to follow a story from the beginning to the end.” The same reader emphasised that what appealed to them was that once the trial was finished and those accused had been sentenced, the reader could determine whether those sentenced got the punishment that they deserved.¹⁴⁶ This points to a crucial role of *Die Son*: the tabloid is able to provide the tools for the formation of a public opinion. Thus, *Die Son* represents a voice shared by thousands and instead of leaving the individual voice unheard, it regroups them into one loud and influential voice taking part in the formation of the collective.

Yet, *Die Son* does not only aim to provide comedic relief. The tabloid often presents readers with the serious and humorous simultaneously.¹⁴⁷ If life for *Die Son*'s readers is one permeated by loss and a state of woundedness, as I previously argued, the tabloid seeks to provide conviviality: an opportunity to “laugh at their misery”¹⁴⁸ and “acknowledge the utter absurdity of

¹⁴⁴ McGuigan, J. 2007. “The cultural public sphere”, in Benchimol, A. & Maley, W. (eds.). *Spheres of Influence: Intellectual and Cultural Publics from Shakespeare to Habermas*. Berlin: Peter Lang. p. 252

¹⁴⁵ In June 2005, Dino Rodrigues hired three hitmen to kill her ex-boyfriend's child, Jordan-Leigh Norton, that he had with another woman. Baby Jordan died as a result of a stab wound to the neck.

¹⁴⁶ Wasserman, 2010, Op. Cit., p. 141

¹⁴⁷ C.f. Cross, J. 2011. *Humor in Contemporary Junior Literature*. UK: Routledge

¹⁴⁸ Chikonzo, K., & Chivandikwa, N. 2015. “Laughing Off the Zimbabwean Crisis through Protest Theatre: An Analysis of *Final Push and High Rate High Risk*”, in Chitando, A., Chikowero, J., & Madongonda, A. M. (eds.). *The art of survival: depictions of Zimbabwe and the Zimbabwean in crisis*. UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, p. 163

misfortune.”¹⁴⁹ *Die Son* therefore aims to make its readers laugh as opposed to exacerbating the awareness of loss many readers have experienced. Although *Die Son* finds this “balance” difficult to maintain in the face of vulnerability and peril that characterises many readers’ lives:

We have moved away from the very wacky type of story. Unfortunately we have also moved a bit too much towards the heavy ones. I am trying very hard to get the fun back, the tongue in the cheek. The idea should be to bring people some cheer. Things are rough out there, you know. To brighten their day a little, to provide them with some diversion. But of course we have a serious element.¹⁵⁰

The humour – the “tongue in cheek – that *Die Son* deliberately includes aims to increase morale amongst readers. By providing light humour, *Die Son* does not attempt to make readers forget about layers of loss and hardship. Rather, the tabloid seeks to, “diffuse emotions of anguish, pain and despair” by providing readers with, “a little laughter.”¹⁵¹ In this way, the collective consumption of the joke-work by the tabloid lends itself to an intimacy by drawing off feelings of solidarity that are united against social ills facing *Die Son*’s particular readership. This reveals the influence and role of *Die Son* on the collective: more than simply uniting feelings of injury, the provoking of a shared laughter, a comedic *détente*, which ultimately strengthens the links of this trilateral relationship. Hence, *Die Son* is not simply a passive platform on which the collective can share its stories, it also adopts an active role when recognising the wound.

To illustrate this, consider when *Die Son* reported that Lieutenant general Arno Lamoer, the former Western Cape police commissioner, was suspended in 2015 on charges of corruption.

¹⁴⁹ Livingstone, J. 2012. *Improvising Medicine: An African Oncology Ward in an Emerging Cancer Epidemic*. Durham & London: Duke University Press, p. 147

¹⁵⁰ Koopman, cited in Wasserman, 2010, Op. Cit., p. 161

¹⁵¹ Chikonzo & Chivandikwa, Op. Cit., p. 174

The tabloid's headline read: "SAPD dalk in sy Lamoer weens skandaal."¹⁵² By *Die Son* sharing the play on words in the Afrikaans expression "moer" [beat up/angry] in "Lamoer", the tabloid provides an experience of community closure, indexing the boundaries of the "we."¹⁵³ In particular, *Die Son* provides comedic pleasure by "de-masking the pretense of being something other than what you actually are – something different from your own body and appearance [...]."¹⁵⁴ Thus, the joke about Arno Lamoer provides comedic pleasure to readers as the play on words is directed against someone who lays claim to authority, revealing Lamoer's fallibility.

That the tabloid possesses the capacity to provide comedic pleasure allows readers a space "for reflection on the past, the bewildering present, and a very uncertain future."¹⁵⁵ As Hansen remarks: the consumption, enjoyment and sharing of joke-work itself is a mechanism through which collectives come to be marked, particularly through an unadorned usage of language.¹⁵⁶ The combination of the language that *Die Son* employs coupled with who the joke is directed against involves the maintenance of a collective. Indeed, by *Die Son* providing a medium with shared humour, the tabloid "confirms, reinforces, and celebrates" readers' inclusion in the community.¹⁵⁷ Thus, the tabloid's joke-work may work to constitute a collective in moments as readers are bound by certain experiences, norms and values. Crucially, *Die Son*'s comedic pleasure is at the expense of someone outside the community, as the case with Lamoer,

¹⁵² Hendricks, C. 2015. 'SAPD dalk in sy Lamoer weens skandaal', *Die Son*, 19 April, p. 3

¹⁵³ C.f. Hansen, 2005

¹⁵⁴ Hansen, T. B. 2012. *Melancholia of Freedom: Social Life in an Indian Township in South Africa*. Princeton & Oxford: Princeton University Press, p. 94

¹⁵⁵ Hansen, 2012, Op. Cit., p.298

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 312

¹⁵⁷ Carrol, N. 2014. *Humour: A Very Short Introduction*. UK: Oxford University Press, p. 84

whose inefficiency is marked as being outside the collective.¹⁵⁸ While the tabloid cannot offer nor be a solution to Lamoer's transgressions, *Die Son* can provide a sense of "us" by making light of the former Western Cape police commissioner's corruption charges.

Die Son becomes a medium through which not only is the wound acknowledged and the object-loss is confirmed, it is also the space where the readers can get closer to understanding what they lost. All in all, the tabloid allows for a complete development of the collective "we," that is, the determination of its boundaries through differentiation, then through a common wound and finally a common healing.

¹⁵⁸ C.f. Carrol, 2014

II

Son sien 'n rapist! Son sien 'n lafaard! Approaching Abjection

On the afternoon of 28 February 2008, in Valhalla Park, thirty-two-year-old Angelo 'Boontjie' Petersen was accused of raping two-year-old Randoline Fortune to death. Dionick Fortune, Randoline's mother, details how her boyfriend and sister fetched her from work at 19h00, because she was concerned about Randoline staying at her neighbour Petersen. Upon arriving at Petersen's house, he was already waiting at the gate. Petersen proceeded to reassure Dionick that nothing was wrong with Randoline. However, Dionick's concerns were exacerbated as Petersen returned Randoline to Dionick wrapped in nothing but a red towel. Again, Petersen attempted to reassure the mother that Randoline had merely dirtied herself. All he had done was washed her. Petersen's explanations did little to comfort Dionick. She took Randoline home, where both she and her mother Mary noticed that something was visibly wrong with the two-year-old.

Dionick and Mary took Randoline to the Elsiesriver day hospital where a doctor later declared Randoline dead.¹ Dionick recounts how the doctor took her hand and described what had happened to her daughter as *dóódverkrág* [raped to death].² At the time, Dionick was too shocked to respond. She could do nothing but stare at Randoline's lifeless body on the hospital bed. The doctor gave Dionick a chair and closed the curtains around the hospital bed. Dionick sat and stared at her child and sobbed uncontrollably. It is at this moment that Dionick suddenly became aware of the bruises and hand marks all over Randoline's body. Petersen, who was out on R1000 bail, pleaded not guilty to the charges of rape and murder. He claimed that Randoline

¹ Menges, T. 2008. 'Frustrasie in die hof', *Die Son*, 7 Oktober, p. 6

² Krige, I. 2008. 'Dokter sê sy's doodverkrag', *Die Son*, 8 Oktober, p. 4

was often dirty and he repeatedly had to make this known to Dionick. He further argued that Randoline seldom had supervision, sometimes even playing in the street alone. Dionick denied that Randoline played in the street alone, stating that there was always at least one family member around to look after her. Petersen went on to claim that in the morning after the tragedy had occurred, six people had gone to his house with weapons to attack him. Dionick admitted that they had gone to Petersen's house, but denied that their intent was to attack him. She claimed that they were attempting to take him to the police station to talk. While the court considered the tragedy, Petersen was met with a public response along the lines of: *stuur die vark vir altyd tronk toe* [send the pig to prison forever].³

This was a story *Die Son* published over a few days in October 2009 of a young twenty-one-year-old mother whose daughter, the small victim, was allegedly raped to death. What do the publication of stories like Randoline's do? Do these stories indicate a society seeped with dangerous threats? A society in need of protection? Or do such stories inform behaviours structured by regulatory strategies that seek to counter perverse forms of sexual behaviour? Indeed, Randoline's story and the perverse excess of similar stories may even be considered banal.

One way to read Randoline's story is as *disgusting*, where disgust reminds us of a distance that needs to be maintained: that we should recoil at the contact between particular bodies. The tale of Petersen, as a brazen child rapist and killer, evokes disgust, experienced as the border of the skin pressing against, or nearing the body of another, not only in a violent manner without

³ Krige, I. 2008. 'Terug in die hof', *Die Son*, 9 Oktober, p.10

consent, but in an act that undoes the social sexual order of adults and children.⁴ In the case of Petersen, the metaphor of the pig is apt for communicating the qualities of disgust, because of the associations made with this animal. When writing about fascism, Adorno noted the comparison of out-groups with “low vermin” as a device to exterminate.⁵ dsex

In this chapter, I specifically consider abjection and how it manifests in disgusting forms in the pages of *Die Son*. Abjection, from the Latin, meaning to throw (*jacere*) away (*ab*); a rejection. Accordingly, I argue that *Die Son*'s use of abjection in the process of naming bodies, acts, places or things as objects of disgust plays a crucial role in the alignment of members within a community. Abjection is therefore a shared experience, as opposed to a solitary feeling. As Berlant states: “[...] bodies are continuously busy judging their environments and responding to the atmospheres in which they find themselves.”⁶ Building on this premise, I consider how objects of disgust do not always necessarily intrude into a community,⁷ but can also circulate within a community: an excess that threatens from within.⁸ The ability to locate the dangerous and abject body is thereby complicated. If the figure of the foreigner and of the police as the *wolf in blue* require *Die Son* to expose them, here the ‘object’ of disgust relies on the tabloid to be revealed. Although the ability to locate such a dangerous and abject body is arguably more

⁴ C.f. Jewkes, R., Penn-Kekana, L., & Rose-Junius, H. 2005. “If they rape me, I can’t blame them”: Reflections on gender in the social context of child rape in South Africa and Namibia. *Social Science & Medicine*, 61(8):1809-1820.

⁵ Adorno, Op. Cit., p. 147

⁶ Berlant, 2011, Op. Cit., p. 15

⁷ C.f. Graham, L. V. 2012. *State of Peril: Race and Rape in South African Literature*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 161-2

⁸ C.f. Tyler, I. 2013. *Revolting Subjects: Social Abjection and Resistance in Neoliberal Britain*. London: Zed Books Ltd.

complicated than before, since the outward signs of suspicion – whether in language or uniform – are not as apparent.

By way of imagining how communities come to be aligned, how might we understand the production of people as part of an excess? I suggest that one of the ways in which *Die Son* constitutes itself as an authority is through the rejection of disgusting forms: the abject. As William Pawlett claims: “excess refers to that which is dirty, pointless, terrifying, sickening, evil, or even something non-existent.”⁹ As I will later demonstrate, the sexual violation of children that *Die Son* reports on draws a clear line between good and evil.¹⁰ The production of an excess, and its subsequent rejection, allows people to align themselves in reaction to what they, as a community, deem unfit.

Building on Ahmed’s notion of the *skin of the community*, I argue that the abject becomes known through the pressing against the skin of the community, whereby the abject, in part, produces the surface that allows us to think of the abject as circulating within. The skin is a peculiar site with which to think through and come to know those who have been rendered abject as they are experienced as pressing against the *skin of the community*. Finally, I suggest that *Die Son*’s capacity to exclude through the naming of what is abject, in light of inefficient and unreliable policing,¹¹ allows the tabloid to assume a benevolent paternal figure in the eyes of their readership. Rearticulating Michael Warner’s notion counterpublics, I suggest that we think of

⁹ Pawlett, W. 1997. Utility and Excess: The Radical Sociology of Bataille and Baudrillard. *Economy and Society*, 26(1):92-125, p. 96

¹⁰ Posel, D. 2005. The scandal of manhood: ‘Baby rape’ and the politicization of sexual violence in post-apartheid South Africa. *Culture, Health & Sexuality*, 7(3):239-252, p. 241

¹¹ C.f. Moffet, H. 2006. “These Women, They Force Us to Rape Them”: Rape as Narrative of Social Control in Post-Apartheid South Africa. *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 32(1):129-144.

Die Son as occupying the figure of the counterparent, for which the rendering of the abject as an illegitimate category coincides with a mode of attachment to community and order.

Abjection and its disgusting forms

Does abjection operate in *Die Son* as a spectacular force? Does it act by including and excluding, is the abject manifested from a position of disgust? My point of departure in considering how *Die Son* uses the power of abjection is to reflect on the notion of the border. In *Powers of Horror*,¹² Kristeva argues that the abject resides in neither the subject nor the object: it is at once everywhere and nowhere. All we know of the abject is “that of being opposed to *I*.”¹³ Abjection “threatens from the outside”, but only “insofar as it is already within.”¹⁴ In abjection “the border has become the object.”¹⁵

Consider a story *Die Son* published on 26 November 2008,¹⁶ describing how Feziwe Goga was using a public bathroom in the informal settlement known as Sakazwane. She became alarmed when she heard an adult man whispering in the toilet cubicle next to her around 19h00. She heard him say: “Shut up. Shut your fucking mouth and sit still here on my bloody lap.” Goga describes how she could hear his breath becoming quicker and quicker. Alarmed, she ran to get help. She returned accompanied by another woman, and they began to knock loudly on the toilet door he was occupying. He refused to open. Goga peeped under the door and saw that the man’s pants and underpants were hanging around his ankles. They began to knock even louder. Upon

¹² Kristeva, 1982, *Op. Cit.*, p. 1

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 1

¹⁴ Ahmed, S. 2014. *Cultural Politics of Emotion*. Scotland: Edinburgh University Press, p. 86

¹⁵ Kristeva, 1982, *Op. Cit.*, p. 4

¹⁶ Pretorius, M. 2008. ‘In toilet verkrag’, *Die Son*, 26 November, p.4

hearing the loud knocking and screaming, more people approached and joined the two women in an attempt to get the door open. Eventually the thirty-seven-year-old man opened the door and threw a three-year-old little girl out of the toilet cubicle. She was wearing only her t-shirt, socks and shoes. Seconds later he kicked her underwear and pants out under the door.

Die Son's narrative shows that the border between the thirty-seven-year-old man and the three-year-old girl has been violated. Such reporting makes the man who violated the border into a pig [vark].¹⁷ The object that disgusts the readers can be understood as constituting the border itself. Thus, disgust does not constitute the person in question, but the border that emerges between “us” and “them.” It is the inability to contain the abject in neither subject nor object that amplifies feelings of hysteria. The economy of disgust is thus narrated by a border anxiety: an anxiety that comes into being through a language of “pigs.” Indeed, we are able to see how the evoking of the abject speaks to a community that needs to purge itself of these bodies. Here, as with Petersen and Randoline, we have a scenario of transgression.

We might note that *Die Son*'s intention to name particular bodies as abject produces what Bataille has called “wretched populations.”¹⁸ Achille Mbembe, considering the human in South Africa, has argued that waste, or the wretched, was conceptualized as “something produced bodily or socially by humans” which allows us to think of waste as “that which is *other than* the human.”¹⁹ This “other than the human” that emerges in the language of pigs and monsters enables us to imagine a figure capable of committing inhumane crimes. We might argue that

¹⁷ Pretorius, M. 2008. ‘Pig raped a toddler’, *Die Son*, 26 November, p. 4.

¹⁸ Bataille, G. 1999 [1936]. “Abjection and Miserable Forms”, in Lotringer, S. (ed.). *More & Less*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, p. 9

¹⁹ Mbembe, A. 2011. “Democracy as a community life” in Allen, A. & Mbembe, A. (eds.). *Johannesburg Workshop in Theory and Criticism*. The Johannesburg Salon, Volume 4.

these individuals named as pigs do not “even respect the law of the animal community.”²⁰ As Kearney and Semonovitch have asked: “How are we to know the human from the inhuman, the divine from the undivine, the welcome Stranger from the violent aggressor?”²¹

While the abject bodies that constitute the wretched population are excluded through mechanisms such as by naming these bodies as disgusting, they simultaneously intrude public life as disgusting forms put in circulation by *Die Son*.²² The situation that emerges is one in which there is an *excess* of what Bataille might have called *misérables*²³ that threatens from within, which the so-called system struggles to eradicate: “Abjection [...] is merely the inability to assume with sufficient strength the imperative act of excluding abject things (and that act establishes the foundations of collective existence).”²⁴ Abjection is therefore the horror experienced when one becomes conscious of the disintegration between self and other (this response of horror may be exacerbated when one realises how close the ‘other’ in fact is). We might also acknowledge that the system in effect requires this “excess” in order for borders to be constituted in the first place. Indeed, these prohibitions consist of a paradox: in order for a prohibition to exist in the first place, it must be continuously transgressed. As Ahmed formulated it: *maintenance-through-transgression*.²⁵ Hence, as Bataille has crucially argued, what we

²⁰ Derrida, 2011, Op. Cit., p. 19

²¹ Kearney, R., & Semonovitch, K. 2011. “At the Threshold: Foreigners, Strangers, Others”, in Kearney, R. & Semonovitch, K. (eds.). *Phenomenologies of the Stranger: Between Hostility and Hospitality*. USA: Fordham University Press, p. 20

²² C.f. Tyler, 2013

²³ Bataille, 1999, Op. Cit., p. 10

²⁴ Bataille, cited in Kristeva, 1982, Op. Cit., p. 56

²⁵ Ahmed, 2014, Op. Cit., p. 87

consider disgusting and who we consider as being part of the *misérables*²⁶ is contingent upon an authority that communicates it to the majority of the community.

Thus, abjection “does not declare ‘there are no boundaries’ but rather registers a sacred horror at the breaching of those boundaries.”²⁷ Abjection is therefore about the unsettling of a system:

What does not respect borders, positions, rules. The in-between, the ambiguous, the composite. The traitor, the liar, the criminal with a good conscience, the shameless rapist, the killer who claims he is a saviour... Any crime, because it draws attention to the fragility of the law, is abject, but premeditated crime, cunning murder. Hypocritical revenge are even more so because they heighten the display of such fragility.²⁸

Crucially, Kristeva relates abjection to the disintegration of borders and boundaries. Mary Douglas also suggests that what we find disgusting is related to the breakdown of borders. In *Purity and Danger*,²⁹ Douglas states that we find transgressions disgusting precisely because there is a breakdown of borders and boundaries. That is, the slippage of the (sexual) category of child and adult constitutes an evocation of disgust. An implication emerges that grounds disgust within a system of sorts that is concerned with borders (*behaviour out of line*). Consequently, disgust cannot be seen as an isolated event. Rather, it is part of a system that seeks to punish the transgressions of borders: an attempt to tidy any “untidy” behaviours. Abjection therefore takes

²⁶ Bataille, 1936, Op. Cit., p. 9-10

²⁷ Biles, J. 2014. A Story of Rats. *Performance Research: A Journal of the Performing Arts*, 19:1, 111-125, p. 116

²⁸ Kristeva, 1982, Op. Cit., p. 4

²⁹ Douglas, M. 1966. *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*. London: Routledge.

the form of defilement, exists as a mechanism to exclude, and constitutes what is considered transgressed.

Abjection, for Kristeva, is premised “above all”³⁰ on ambiguity. Ambiguous because abjection does not remove the subject in question from what threatens it, rather “abjection acknowledges it to be in perpetual danger.”³¹ But we can also read Kristeva’s ambiguity alongside the issue of the inability to locate the dangerous figure. Consider how *Die Son* will often attacks pastors as well as police, people occupying positions of authority, bringing to light their violations of trust. In effect, what *Die Son* achieves by continuously reminding its readership of hidden dangers is, I argue, to demonstrate that sexual perversion is not limited to one “type” of person: it could be anyone. When a young girl was raped by a security guard at Karl Bremer hospital, *Die Son* reported the father of the young girl as saying that the security guard “*is ‘n wolf in skaapklere*”³² [is a wolf in sheep’s clothing]. She was admitted as a personality-disorder patient and all patients, if they want to go on a smoke break, are required to be accompanied by a security guard.³³ Of course, we can see in this instance how the security guard now occupies the position of a wolf in sheep’s clothing.³⁴

In line with this panic over “it could be anyone,” *Die Son* featured a story of a twelve-year-old girl from Sir Lowry’s Pass who was molested by a pastor of her church.³⁵ The twelve-year old’s

³⁰ Kristeva, 1982, Op. Cit., p. 9

³¹ Ibid., p. 9

³² Jason, E. 2008. ‘By Hospitaal Verkrag’, *Die Son*, 15 December, p.1

³³ Jason, E. 2008. ‘Pa sê Wag Verkrag Dogter’, *Die Son*, 15 December, p.5

³⁴ Although the security guard does not embody law enforcement in the same manner as the police officer, we once again bear witness to the mutual characteristics of the wolf alongside the security guard, signalling a troubling resemblance (see chapter 3).

³⁵ Jason, E. 2008. ‘...Grabbed my koekie’, *Die Son*, 23 May, p. 4

aunt reacted by claiming that she “can’t believe that a man of God did something like that to [her] niece.” Again, in the letter section of the tabloid, one reader suggested that they were “so ashamed to see that the church of the Lord Jesus [was] now becoming an inhumane monster.”³⁶ In the particular issue of May 2008, *Die Son* coupled these stories with pleas such as: “Looking after Our Children.”³⁷ Consequently, the “pervert” and the “rapist” were now rendered unlocatable. The detachment of sexual perversity from a particular body can be read in conjunction with Ahmed’s argument where she argues that “[t]he impossibility of reducing hate to a particular body allows hate to circulate in an economic sense, working to differentiate some others from other others, a differentiation that is never “over,” as it waits for others who have not yet arrived.”³⁸ It circulates precisely because of the inability to locate it. Hence, to borrow Ahmed’s formulation, I suggest that the impossibility of reducing that feeling of disgust to a particular, locatable, body increases anxieties of bodies that are causing injury to the body of the community.

In John Lechte’s reading of Kristeva, he argues that hypocritical criminals reveal the abject more so than other types of criminals because it is “crime that pretends to be on the side of the law and is not.”³⁹ To illustrate how *Die Son* renders hypocritical crimes abject, let us consider *Die Son*’s coverage of the Marius Van der Westhuizen case. Marius was a former superintendent, a husband, and a father. One night, after allegedly getting into an argument with his wife Charlotte, Marius took a gun and shot their three children: Bianca (16 years old), Marius Jnr (6

³⁶ Son Letters, 2008, ‘Churchmen not performing’, *Die Son*, 7 May, p. 16

³⁷ Jason, E. 2008. ‘Looking after our children’, *Die Son*, 23 May, p. 4

³⁸ Ahmed, S. 2004. Affective Economies. *Social Text*, 22(2): 117-139, p. 47

³⁹ Lechte, J. 2011. “Crime, Abjection, Transgression and the Image”. in Nicol, B., McNulty, E., & Pulham, P. (eds.). *Crime Cultures: Figuring Criminality in Fiction and Film*. London and New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, p. 4

years old), Antoinette (21 months). For all intents and purposes, Marius points to what Siegel calls “perverted development,”⁴⁰ as someone like Marius should have never been a criminal due to his professional status. The abject and absurd nature of Marius’ case was later exacerbated when *Die Son* revealed that Marius was not deemed insane on the night of the murders.⁴¹ In fact, according to a forensic psychiatrist that testified in the court case against him, he was lucid and rational. The forensic psychiatrist, *Die Son* reported, considered the fact that Marius called a friend after shooting his three children to ask for forgiveness as evidence that Marius knew that he had done something wrong. While Marius had attributed to depression to his behaviour on the night he reportedly committed triple homicide, the psychiatrist claimed that Marius had only attempted to kill himself the moment he was surrounded by police. Once again, that Marius did not attempt to commit suicide prior to the arrival of the police points toward a coherent thought process able to foretell consequences. As with Siegel’s “perverted development,” Kristeva claims that, “the abject is related to perversion.”⁴² She writes:

The abject is perverse because it neither gives up nor assumes a prohibition, a rule or a law, but turns them aside, misleads, corrupts; uses them, takes advantage of them, the better to deny them.⁴³

Returning to Lechte’s reading of Kristeva, he argues that the perverse within abjection manifests itself clearly in corruption. Like Bataille’s *dégoût*,⁴⁴ what is considered ‘disgusting’ is often

⁴⁰ Siegel, J. 1998. *A New Criminal Type in Jakarta: Counter-Revolution Today*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, p. 69

⁴¹ Mfazwe, A. 2008. ‘Shrink cop weet dade is verkeerd’, *Die Son*, 10 December, p.6

⁴² Kristeva, 1982, Op. Cit., p. 15

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 15

linked to perversion. *Die Son*, like many tabloids, does not shy away from writing articles focusing on these “perverse impulses.” One article read: *Monster van ‘n pa* [Monster of a father]⁴⁵ to describe a father that had raped his own daughter. The article in question then cited a reader as stating that, “*Hoe die fok kan ‘n pa sy eie dogter verkrag?* [How the fuck can a father rape his own daughter?], thereafter lamenting that, “*die doodstraf [moet] terugkom. Dinge raak nou te erg*” [the death penalty needs to come back. Things are getting too bad].⁴⁶ These “monsters” constitute a threat not only to society, but also to the individual (reader).

What is the point of such stories? Do they shape ideas of right and wrong? Do they portray what bad behaviour is so that one is guided by what good behaviour is or is not? On 12 May 2008, *Die Son* published an article reflecting on whether the doors to perversion were in fact being opened. Sexologist Professor Johann Lemmer, cited in *Die Son*, raised concerns about the absurd frequency of sexually perverse behaviour. He claimed that if we were able to speak about sex more openly perhaps “the amount of rapes might decrease.” Lemmer furthermore argued that the repression of sexual feelings was not healthy, and asserted that “sex is not dirty and it is not a sin. People should become more comfortable with their sexuality.”⁴⁷

A mere three days later, on 15 May 2008, *Die Son* launched an awareness campaign known as: *Son sien ‘n rapist! Son sien ‘n lafaard!* [Son sees a rapist! Son sees a coward!]. This campaign slogan was coupled with an image of an eye. *Die Son* warned readers that the purpose of this

⁴⁴ In *Erotism: Death and Sensuality*, Bataille (1962:58) writes that, “nothing tangible or objective brings on our feeling of nausea; what we experience is a kind of void, a sinking sensation”. Bataille goes on to conclude that disgust and nausea are, for the most part, taught to us.

⁴⁵ Coetzee, H. 2008. ‘Monster van ‘n pa’, *Die Son*, 6 May, p. 4

⁴⁶ n.a. 2008. ‘Oor ditjies en datjies’, *Die Son*, 7 May, p. 16

⁴⁷ Bonthuys, L. 2008. ‘Seks is nie lelik nie – kenners’, *Die Son* 12 May, p. 5

campaign was not to sensationalize rape nor to shock. Rather, the campaign was to function as a reminder that “this EVIL” had “become an everyday horror.”⁴⁸ Pawlett writes that evil is used to express the “excessiveness of horror [...] an event so ‘bad’ it was ‘evil.’”⁴⁹ Nevertheless, disgust was to serve a pedagogical function. In a condemnatory tone, *Die Son* claimed that they would educate readers on what rape is, what reader’s rights were, how readers could take preventative measures, as well as allow readers to use *Die Son* as a site for recounting their own personal narratives.



Figure 2: Son sees a rapist! Son sees a coward!⁵⁰

Kristeva is once again helpful in this endeavour. In considering Louis-Ferdinand Céline and his work *Journey to the End of the Night*,⁵¹ she focuses on Céline’s account of suffering: “being as

⁴⁸ n.a. 2008, ‘Son focus on scourge’, *Die Son*, 15 May, p.8

⁴⁹ Pawlett, W. 1999. *Thinking excess: the radical sociology of Bataille and Baudrillard*. Doctoral Thesis. Loughborough University, p. 3

⁵⁰ Coetzee, H. 2010. “Rape-hel in tronksel”, *Die Son*, 16 November, p. 5

ill-being.”⁵² She suggests that we can think of Céline’s work as a narrative of suffering precisely due to the narrative being controlled by abjection “whose intimate side is suffering and horror its public feature.”⁵³ What function does abjection serve as a public feature? I propose that we think of these stories as doing more than informing, but, rather, that we consider *Die Son* as engaging their readers through an approach of abjection. More so, I argue that *Die Son*, as a spectacular force, is producing abject bodies that make up a waste population: an excess that threatens from within. This excess becomes the imagined pivot around which readers can understand their communities and themselves as included or excluded. Yet we must be careful not to position the excess, like the abject, as an object. As Pawlett⁵⁴ argues, it is an affect. Precisely because “affectivity tears open the subjectivity, so the subject as such is so unstable to assemble a stable comprehension [...]”⁵⁵ Such an affect “produce the very surfaces and boundaries that allow the individual and the social to be delineated as if they are objects.”⁵⁶

We have seen *Die Son* report on this issue in May 2015.⁵⁷ Erfaan Arendse was shot 17 times. Bullets continued to be fired despite that Arendse was already on the ground. What is the purpose of firing 17 bullets in a single victim? Siegel⁵⁸ speculates that it is about displaying force as well as demonstrating a willingness to use force. Thus, one of the ways in which *Die Son* produces an excess is by producing new types of criminal bodies. A further instance of the

⁵¹ Céline, L-F. 1983 [1932]. *Journey to the End of the Night*. Translated by Manheim., R New York: New Directions Publishing Corporation.

⁵² Kristeva, 1982, Op. Cit., p. 140

⁵³ Ibid., p. 140

⁵⁴ Pawlett, 1997, Op. Cit., p. 103

⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 103

⁵⁶ Ahmed, 2004, Op. Cit., p. 10

⁵⁷ Mfazwe, A. 2015. ‘Guns’ blaf, al is ou op grond’, *Die Son*, 11 May, p. 3

⁵⁸ Siegel, Op. Cit., p. 108

excess can be found in the story of Ellen Pakkies: a mother of three that strangled her youngest son Abie to death in 2007. While parents such as Marius who kill their own children are understandably rendered as bodies that communities need to purge themselves of, Ellen's case was distinct. Unlike with Marius, the response to Ellen was overwhelmingly sympathetic. This is because Ellen's son was a tik [methamphetamine] addict from who she had been suffering abuse for years. Coincidentally, Ellen's story coincided with an awareness campaign that *Die Son* was running at the time: *Oorlog teen Tik* [War Against Methamphetamine].

An account of the primary school Valpark in Valhalla Park illustrates the difficulty in disciplining the excess. A school that had been critically affected by *dwelm-mal tikkoppe* [drug-mad methamphetamine heads].⁵⁹ None of the school's classroom had electricity as a result of a robbery in which electric cables were stolen. Yet, as *Die Son* would often report, police did very little to help the communities affected. For example, a resident of Comet Street in Ocean View, Neville van Staden, told *Die Son* that "[t]he cops know about the tik houses but ignore our pleas ... I've been waiting for a year for a police van to come to my house after I phoned them about our problem. I fear for the safety of our children with all the scary characters who hang around here."⁶⁰ Signalling increasing frustration, the Mitchells Plain residents decided to take action of their own to deal with tik drug dealers.⁶¹ Residents sat outside known *tik huise* [methamphetamine houses] to prevent drug dealers from dealing as well as chasing anyone away that attempted to enter the homes. Perhaps what is most striking about this story is the image of residents standing together as a community, making an active attempt to expel the excess, while

⁵⁹ Jason, E. 2008. 'Kaal Gestroop: dwelm-mal tikkoppe terroriseer skool', *Die Son*, 15 July, p. 6

⁶⁰ Jason, E. 2008. 'Local has lots of Tik buddies', *Die Son*, 16 May, p.5

⁶¹ Prinsloo, C. 2009. 'Skoert!', *Die Son*, 28 January, p. 1

holding posters⁶² of *Die Son* that state: Unite Against Tik.⁶³ Hence, I suggest that having an excess to reject is crucial in constituting *Die Son* as an authority. This quickly becomes apparent when *Die Son* situates the police, figures the public who have been entrusted with authority by the public, as at times being part of the excess. It thereby undermines the police in instances as an efficient and reliable force to manage and expel the excess.⁶⁴ Comaroff & Comaroff write:

We have an inversion of the history laid out by Foucault in *Discipline and Punish*, according to which, famously, the theatricality of premodern power gives way to ever more implicit, internalized, capillary kinds of discipline. Indeed, it is precisely this telos – which presumes the expanding capacity of the state to regulate everyday existence and routinely to enforce punishment – that is in question in South Africa.⁶⁵

That it is not clear which police are managing the excess and which are part of the excess renders the abject once again ambiguous. Nevertheless, the police dismissed claims that they were useless. In particular, one metro police officer insisted that “[t]he negative – and sometimes one-sided reporting – definitely has a very negative influence on the rest of the members” and that “[a]s a result of these reports, there is a perception among the public that all Metro cops are useless,” which is “totally unfair to the majority of members who work very hard every day to

⁶² Andrew Koopman, in an interview with Herman Wasserman, claimed that *Die Son* uses objects such as posters not only as a means to gain publicity, but also as a mechanism of visibility in communities to demonstrate their support.

⁶³ Prinsloo, C. 2009. ‘M’ Plain Deal met Dealers’, *Die Son*, 28 January, p. 2

⁶⁴ As I demonstrate in chapter 3, *Die Son* explicitly expresses feelings of distrust in institution expected to represent the law. The uncertainty regarding which police are actually the police and which police are predators, and the subsequent symbolic collapse of the protector and predator, criminal and cop, is a source of anxiety, fascination and horror (c.f. Kristeva, 1982).

⁶⁵ Comaroff & Comaroff, 2004, *Op. Cit.*, p. 804

earn their money”⁶⁶ Of course, the insistence that “we’re not all like that guy” did little to comfort the public.

Coming too close

Die Son, as I have argued, uses abjection as a mechanism to secure a collective formation. I have also argued that what constitutes the abject is that which violates the borders, boundaries and rules. But how does one go about protecting oneself from the abject if the excess that threatens comes from *within*, circulating without being pronounced: “a rat in the shadows”?⁶⁷ It’s precisely this dilemma that *Die Son* highlighted in the rape and murder of a two-year-old child: Ayola Adonis.⁶⁸ It was initially thought that the culprits were foreigners. In the instance of foreigners, fear is made up of, as Ahmed has suggested, the “passing by”⁶⁹ of the stranger. Fear, in the futural sense, includes the possibility of strange (and potentially dangerous) bodies moving into a community. But what happens when the culprits, as *Die Son* referred to them, are “all homegrown”? In this instance we are reminded that abjection is not simply a matter of defending borders. But if it is not simply a matter of defending a border, then what is it about? I suggest that abjection is about aligning people within communities. And, in a very concrete way, in naming bodies as abject, *Die Son* is designating what and who belongs in a community. In many instances, what emerges is not an obvious ‘other,’ so to speak: someone overdetermined from within or without. Rather, the abject body, or criminal, is rooted in ambiguity.

⁶⁶ Eggington, S. 2008. ‘Daai lat pas nie op ieder se gat’, *Die Son*, 18 April, p. 5

⁶⁷ Biles, Op. Cit., p. 115

⁶⁸ Mfazwe, A. 2008. ‘Sinlose moord op 3-jarige’, *Die Son*, 14 October, p.5

⁶⁹ Ahmed, 2004, Op. Cit., p. 124

This ambiguity manifested clearly in the case of four-year-old Abranicia Pass.⁷⁰ Abranicia was sodomised, raped, and then strangled to death. *Die Son* wrote: ‘*n Siek monster het al weer ‘n lieflike, onskuldige kindjie vermoor* [A sick monster murdered a lovely, innocent child again].⁷¹ Once again, *Die Son* distances the abject, which provokes disgusts, from that which is human by portraying the criminal as “a sick monster.” Elize Pass, Abranicia’s mother, found the child’s lifeless body amongst reeds in the dam on the De Kromme Rivier farm. It emerged awhile later that she was raped and murdered by a man whom she apparently knew well and trusted. After Basil Anthony Williams raped, sodomised and murdered Abranicia Pass, he joined her parent’s search party looking for her.⁷² Abranicia’s story was not only troubling because of what Williams had done to her body, but also because he capitalised on her trust. Abjection, in Abranicia’s instance, articulates a fear of the inability to not only locate the abject body, but also to contain it. *Die Son* captured this fear rather well: *Die vyand is nie noodwendig buite in die straat nie. Somtyds kom kuier hy in jou huis* [The enemy is not necessarily outside in the street. Sometimes he is a visitor in your house].⁷³

Considering the significance of the notion of the neighbour in conflict, Stephen Brooks⁷⁴ articulates this as “the uncomfortable truth of resemblance.”⁷⁵ He writes:

The concept of neighbour is crucial. When Narcissus looked into the pool, he saw the reflection of someone whom he believed to be another but who was

⁷⁰ Pretorius, M. 2008, ‘Verdagte 2 vasgetrek’, *Die Son*, 10 November, p.6.

⁷¹ Pretorius, M. 2008. ‘Monster slaan toe’, *Die Son*, 29 October, p. 1

⁷² Pretorius, M. 2010. ‘Seks-monster gepos vir life’, *Die Son*, 18 June, p. 6

⁷³ Pretorius, M.. 2008. ‘Verdagte 2 vasgetrek’, *Die Son*, 10 November, p.6

⁷⁴ Brooks, S. 2002. “The Narcissism of Minor Differences: Reflections on the Roots of English Canadian Nationalism”, in Brooks, S. (ed.). *The Challenge of Cultural Pluralism*. USA: Praeger Publishers.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 39

also close by [...] We understand who we are in relation to those who are close by...⁷⁶

We can now articulate abjection as “a precondition of narcissism.”⁷⁷ Narcissism in the sense that one regresses “to a position set back from the other.”⁷⁸ More precisely, we can articulate narcissism here as a state embedded within a position of hostility. In other words, the fragility of the borders in question permit pain to be “born out of an excess of fondness and a hate that [...] is projected toward an other.”⁷⁹ *Die Son* continuously uses abjection as a means to produce new types of criminal bodies. In this way, *Die Son* foregrounds a body terrorized by other ambiguous bodies: “The biggest skollie [scoundrel] is not really the gangster in the road, but the seemingly decent chap who goes out to work every morning.”⁸⁰

Such a warning suggests that unspeakable horrors can likewise take place in homes. Quoting police director Jeremy Vearey, *Die Son* claimed that 90% of violence that occurred in Mitchells Plain can be characterised as domestic violence or between people that knew each other. The family, as Rosalind C. Morris has suggested, “is actually incapable of fulfilling the role of containment.”⁸¹ Listen to how *Die Son* frames this issue in a different moment: *Geweld se wortel lê in die huis* [violence’s root lies in the house].⁸² The family’s inability to contain is articulated as “*n gewelddadige samelewing se produk is gewelddadige kinders* [a violent society’s product

⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 41

⁷⁷ Kristeva, 1982, Op. Cit., p.13

⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 14

⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 60

⁸⁰ Rahman, F. 2008. ‘Huis jou kruis’, *Die Son*, 14 November, p.8.

⁸¹ Morris, R. C. 2006. “The Mute and the Unspeakable: Political Subjectivity, Violent Crime, and the “Sexual Thing” in a South African Mining Community”, in Comaroff, J. & Comaroff, J. (eds.). *Law and Disorder in the Postcolony*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, p. 86

⁸² Prinsloo, C. 2008. ‘Geweld se wortel lê in die huis’, *Die Son*, 28 August, p. 10

is violent children]. Indeed, Patric Solomons from Molo Songololo stated that, *die fokus moet nou streng op die ouers en hul rol van verantwoordelikheid in die opvoeding van hul kinders geplaas word* [The focus must now be placed strictly on the parents and their role of responsibility in the education of their children].

Headlines such as *Pa 'rape' eie kids* [Father rapes own children]⁸³ exacerbate an anxiety that the most part of violence occurs between people that intimately know each other. James Siegel writes that:

Once the family was the source of legitimacy; now the source is outside of itself. What is revealed in the reports of the crimes of incest and sexual abuse is the force that calls for the law. There is not only the supposedly inherent disgust that incest stimulates in those who discover it. There is also the path of communication that the discovery engenders, leading as it does outside the family to “others”. It passes through others to the police.⁸⁴

Thus, it is not necessarily the foreigner that is the stranger, as even familiar individuals that are intimately known can embody the figure of the stranger: the one we do not know nor recognize. Again, *Die Son* renders abjection everywhere and nowhere, complicating who constitutes the collective in the communities they report on.

I turn to Freud's concept of *narcissism of minor differences* in understanding how the individuals that *Die Son* reports on imagine themselves as part of a particular community. Significantly, what Freud acknowledges is that aggression moves not only back and forth out of a community, but also circulates within a community. Through campaigns such as *Son sien 'n rapist! Son sien*

⁸³ Jason, E. 2009. 'Pa 'rape' eie kids', *Die Son*, 19 January, p.9

⁸⁴ Siegel, Op. Cit., p. 87

'n lafaard! [Son sees a rapist! Son sees a coward!], a sense of solidarity develops in reaction to the transgressions of particular members of the community.

To demonstrate what I mean by a “sense of solidarity,” let’s consider a story *Die Son* covered on Heinz Park, Philippi: a neighbourhood that paramedics claimed to be frightened to enter. Yet, Viola Botto,⁸⁵ a mother of a five-year-old boy, pushed a child she did not know out of the way of gangster’s bullets that were headed straight for the child. She later died of her injuries. This brave act was met with a headline that read: *My kind is jou kind* [my child is your child],⁸⁶ communicating a social responsibility that is forged out of shared vulnerability. The implied social responsibility coupled with the shared vulnerability speaks to what Ahmed and Fortier have framed as the ‘moral community’ thereby referring to “a community of people who ‘care’ about their community.”⁸⁷ However, Henry Giroux has articulated this point as people coming to be aligned through “shared fears rather than shared responsibilities.”⁸⁸ Alongside Botto’s act of bravery, *Die Son* situates children repeatedly as the crux of the nation. Similarly, Posel notes that the sexual violation of children, particularly babies, was “metaphorically constituted as a moral violation of the new nation.”⁸⁹ Thus, it is in communities’ best interests to be “caring citizens.”

The love for children or love for communities constitute a “pulling power” insofar as it is articulating what should not be loved.⁹⁰ Hence, our love and our care for communities aligns

⁸⁵ Afrika, B. 2015. ‘Dapper mammie sterf vir kind’, *Die Son*, 1 April, p.2

⁸⁶ Afrika, B. 2015. ‘My Kind is jou Kind’, *Die Son*, 1 April, p.1

⁸⁷ Ahmed, S., & Fortier, A. M. 2003. “Re-imagining communities”. *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, 6(3): 251–259, p. 253

⁸⁸ Giroux, H. 2002. Patriotism and the Culture of Fear: Beyond the Discourse of Moral Absolutes”. *Politics and Culture*, 4:1-5

⁸⁹ Posel, Op. Cit., p. 241

⁹⁰ C.f. Ahmed, S. 2003. In the Name of Love. *Borderlands e-journal*, 2:3.

people within communities more closely as we move closer to those respecting a particular ideal, and we move away from those who allegedly violate the ideal object of love: the community. The high frequency of attacks on children, which *Die Son* explicitly positions as the foundation of the nation, allows a defence of the “nation against others, who threaten to ‘steal’ the nation away.”⁹¹ In doing so, *Die Son* reconfigures sexual violence against children as a “symbol of, and mirror upon, the fragile normative foundations of the post-apartheid order as a whole.”⁹²

The reportage of criminality within particular communities, whether it’s imagined or real, aligns members within a community more closely. Precisely because the community seeks to protect themselves from those abject bodies that threaten to tear them apart. That explains why, for Freud, attitudes of hostility emerge more easily in reaction to those we are related to more intimately. Such a provocation suggests that we secure ourselves against people we consider closest to ourselves. Consequently, aggression and contempt for abject members of a community become a way for identities and communities to form. This not only strips us of any belief that we are autonomous, but it exposes our relation to and dependence on others.⁹³

Surface of the skin

I have argued that *Die Son*’s linking of certain stories to abjection plays a crucial role in the formation of borders. And I have also suggested that the effect of the border has implications for the alignment of members within a community, specifically reflecting on how this alignment

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Posel, Op. Cit., p. 241

⁹³ C.f. Butler, J. 2004. *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence*. London & New York: Verso.

might take place, and considering that those who cause pain often threaten from within. At this point, I focus on Sara Ahmed's notion of the *skin of the community*.⁹⁴ Skin that responds to affective states: an involuntary response to disgust, for example. Skin that manifests as "an effect of the alignment of the subject with some others and against other others."⁹⁵ That is, the alignment of members within a community "temporarily 'surfaces' as the skin of a community."⁹⁶ Ahmed's formulation allows us to think through how the skin as *lieux de mémoire* might come to bear traces of emotions. Biles suggests that due to the circulatory nature of abjection, we only come to know the abject by its traces and marks of its absence.⁹⁷ Or what Ahmed has called 'impressions' whereby the skin "record[s] past impressions, past encounters with others."⁹⁸ Thus, in this section, I want to reflect on how the abject surfaces and transgresses the skin of the community, which allows *Die Son* to use abjection as a means to articulate what is undesirable in the community.

I suggest that communities, through the surfacing of the skin, *remember* the past impressions and past encounters as well as the absence of such impressions and encounters. Through the recollection of impressions, communities can make decisions thereby reacting faster to transgressions. In light of this, let's turn toward the story of Lelethu 'Lele' Xabakashe.⁹⁹ Lelethu was reportedly attacked in her yard by an unknown man who hit her with a plank and thereafter

⁹⁴ Ahmed, S. 2005. "The Skin of the Community: Affect and Boundary Formation", in Chanter, T. & Ziarek, E. P. (eds.). *Revolt, Affect, Collectivity: The Unstable Boundaries of Kristeva's Polis*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 104

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 104

⁹⁷ Biles, *Op. Cit.*, p. 116

⁹⁸ Ahmed, 2004, *Op. Cit.*, p. 30

⁹⁹ Jardine, Y. 2015. 'Rou ou 'steel' meisie', *Die Son*, 23 April, p.13

hit her face with a brick until she fell to the ground. The man then grabbed Lelethu by her braids and dragged her across the yard. When the community residents of Delft-South heard about Lelethu's assault and subsequent kidnapping, *Die Son* reported that residents were so upset that they wanted to get involved immediately and search for Lelethu from house to house. Here we can imagine how the pain that accompanies what happened to Lelethu might leave an impression, as well as an absence, on the skin of Delft-South's community: an impression in which residents remember and react to. This impression gestures towards how pain indexes and mediates collective life. Thus, collectivity is sought after through a discourse of disgust: a narrative guided by a logic of abjection that binds people together.

In the face of repeated tragedies in Bredasdorp, one resident said: *[A]l die ou wonde wat besig was om te genees, is in 'n oogwink weer oopgekrap* [All the old wounds that were busy healing are scratched open in the blink of an eye].¹⁰⁰ In this instance, words such *wonde* [wounds] and *oopgekrap* [scratched open] are suggestive of the surfacing of a skin that remembers through marks and traces "past impressions" and "past encounters."¹⁰¹ Affect, including trauma and disgust, are described in terms of skin sensations. Trauma is recounted as a wound on the skin that has not had sufficient time to heal. Here we can return to exclamations of disgust: "My skin crawled" or "I got goose bumps" as references to the way in which individuals orient themselves after registering skin sensations.

In the making of an affective border, the surfacing of skin, it should be noted that disgust does not produce the skin in question. It is, rather, the moment of being conscious of disgust that a

¹⁰⁰ Meyer, C. 2015. 'Moet ons kids nie seermaak', *Die Son*, 26 April, p.8

¹⁰¹ Ahmed, 2004, Op. Cit., p. 30

skin can come to be established.¹⁰² Hence, the surface of the body (of the community) only comes to be made conscious and felt in moments of the skin being pressed against. Jacques Rancière, while speaking about politics and aesthetics, argued that what is common to all people is sensation. Hence, “human beings are tied together by a certain sensory fabric [...] which defines their way of being together; and politics is about the transformation of the sensory fabric of ‘being together.’”¹⁰³ The ‘sensory fabric’ of the skin becomes a medium through which communities can communicate their suffering and struggle. Rancière has cautioned nonetheless against imagining this sensory fabric as formed through a shared feeling such as, let’s say, disgust. Rather, it is “a frame of visibility and intelligibility that puts things or practices together under the same meaning, which shapes thereby a certain sense of community.”¹⁰⁴ Skin does not simply exist, but it emerges in those moments of being pressed against.

For example, if this pressing against the skin is met with feelings of disgust it may be followed with a moving away from what disgusts us. It is indeed these attempts to move away that allows for the surface of the skin to take effect. Hence, we are only conscious of our skin when it is in contact with other bodies, objects or things. In considering how the skin surfaces and emotions align members within a community, let us consider *Die Son*’s coverage of Lee-Andrea Pienaar¹⁰⁵ who went temporarily missing. Pienaar’s father was wrecked with worry that his fourteen-year-

¹⁰² Ahmed, S. 2005. “Skin of the Community: Affect and Boundary Formation”, in Chanter, T. & Ziarek, E. P. (eds.). *Revolt, Affect, Collectivity: The Unstable Boundaries of Kristeva’s Polis*. Albany: State University of New York Press, p. 101

¹⁰³ Rancière, J. 2009. “Contemporary Art and the Politics of Aesthetics”, in Hinderliter, B., Kaizen, W., Maimon, V., Mansmoor, J., & McCormick, S. (eds.). *Communities of Sense: Rethinking Aesthetics and Politics*. Duke University Press: Durham & London, p. 56

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 31

¹⁰⁵ Pretorius, M. 2008, ‘Vermiste toe hele tyd by familie’ *Die Son*, 6 October, p.6.

old daughter had possibly become a victim of the sex slave industry operating in his area. The father reported about how a dealer had once offered a sexual service of two girls amounting to R100. *Die Son* named the area from which the sex ring was operating: ‘*n Nes van onheil* [A nest of evil]:

Dag na nag dwaal hier verskeie pragtige jong meisies rond [...] Hulle sit openlike en skaamteloos hier op die sypaadjies en rook hul dagga en tik [Day after night numerous beautiful young girls wander around here [...] They sit openly and unashamedly on the pavements smoking their marijuana and methamphetamine].¹⁰⁶

Shortly after the story was published, Lee-Andrea Pienaar felt obliged to return home upon seeing her face in *Die Son*. She had been staying by family members the entire time.¹⁰⁷ While Lee-Andrea returned home unharmed and in good health, the prospect of her having become a “sex slave” was nevertheless wrought with emotion. This *nes van onheil* is an object of disgust insofar as it threatens *I*. More so, that we can consider the sex ring as a threatening object, an object making and unmaking the borders of the community: we can read Pienaar’s father’s intent to condemn the *nes van onheil* as an affective movement in which the dealers’ bodies are read as hated, and their practices as disgusting. This flow of hatred toward the dealers’ bodies and the space that they inhabit unifies those who feel collectively disgusted. Consequently, emotional ties are developed that are situated within positive attachment. This distancing gives effect to an emotion that becomes a border.

If we return to the notion of skin, the skin surfaced at the moment in which Pienaar’s father became conscious of his negative emotions at the prospect that his daughter would be involved

¹⁰⁶ Pretorius, M. 2008. ‘Pa: kamp vol kid seksslawe’, *Die Son*, 2 October, p. 5

¹⁰⁷ Pretorius, M. 2008. ‘Vermiste toe hele tyd by familie’, *Die Son*, 6 October, p. 6

in sex trafficking. In other words, the skin became a border through the ‘disgusting’ pressing against of the *nes van onheil* against Pienaar’s household and community at large. What Lee-Andrea’s story additionally does is to raise questions about *who* we share a space with, thereby disturbing the distinction between inside and outside. It is a reminder of how easily the skin can be assaulted. But more so, that disgust resides in the object: the border. Disgust is not an unattached, abstract feeling.¹⁰⁸ This allows disgust to be experienced as a texture that is felt as the pressing against the surface of the skin, making the community conscious of the objects of disgust circulating amongst them. How does *Die Son* situate itself in relation to stories like Lee-Andrea’s? How do communities read *Die Son*’s position?

I want to suggest that we think of *Die Son* as taking effect as a paternal benevolent figure for its readership, one that offers a resolution to the excess of abjection. Namely, using the narrative as a method to recount the suffering of their readership: “fear, disgust, and abjection, crying out, they quiet down, concatenated into a story.”¹⁰⁹ Through a message of love for communities, these stories suggest that abject bodies should be despised. The negative attachments develop in response to what is abject, thereby cultivating positive attachments to those imagined to be united in protecting the community, including *Die Son*. As one reader wrote: “For the first-time people of colour feel that in the new era they too have a right to voice their opinions, through *Die Son* on issues such as oppression, suffering, unfairness [...] millions of people, especially from the underprivileged areas, will forever view and experience *Cape Son* as their benefactor/saviour.”¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁸ C.f. Miller, W. 1997. *The Anatomy of Disgust*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

¹⁰⁹ Kristeva, 1982, Op. Cit., p. 145

¹¹⁰ Sonlesers. 2008. ‘Lank lewe spreekbuis ‘Son’’, *Die Son*, 22 May, p. 18

A counter-like parent

The approach to abjection that I have outlined in *Die Son* is one in relation to which the latter assumes a paternal figure. My question is what happens when *Die Son* assumes an emotional role as a parent that derives its legitimacy from “the people”? Complicating this notion, as I have argued, is that those who *Die Son* recognizes as abject are also part of the very people that it defends. The brazen rapist, the child killer, the *abject* is thus at once part of and separate from the people.

In order to characterise *Die Son* as a parent, I turn to Michael Warner’s distinction between *publics* and *counterpublics*. Warner argues that what constitutes the pretext *counter* is not necessarily a difference in mode of address, but, rather, that the mode of address would be regarded with hostility given another context. Crucially, Warner argues that *counterpublics* are socially marked by their participation in this kind of discourse: “a public of subalterns is only a counterpublic when its participants are addressed in a counterpublic way.”¹¹¹ This materializes in *Die Son*’s writing in a racially marked idiom. *Die Son* is acutely aware of the ability of slang to ensure the reception of emotions: “Slang is a language of hatred that knocks the reader out very nicely.”¹¹² That *Die Son* uses slang as a method of including but also excluding, as not everyone understands it, is a peculiar dividing practice. In addressing and naming the abject, *Die Son* manages to invoke deep emotional responses by relying on only what slang can achieve: to make emotion heard.¹¹³ I re-articulate Warner’s *counterpublics* to suggest that *Die Son* be thought of as a *counter-parent*. In other words, *Die Son* assumes affect, an emotional role, through

¹¹¹ Warner, Op. Cit., p. 424

¹¹² *Entretiens avec le professeur Y*, cited in Kristeva, 1982, Op. Cit., p. 191

¹¹³ C.f. Kristeva, 1982

addressing and participating with its readership in a socially marked discourse, with the pretext counter pointing to its participation in a socially marked discourse.

The participation in this marked discourse lends itself to an affect of feeling together. I suggest that *Die Son*, occupying the figure of the counter-parent, coupled with its readership constitute an intimate public. Berlant argues that what is specific about an intimate public is the “collective mediation through narration,” which “might provide some routes out of the impasse and the struggle of the present.”¹¹⁴ Through campaigns such as *Die Son Gee Om* [The Sun Cares] and their moments of listening, voices can be heard and establish grounds for attachment/s.

Following this, I suggest that we consider the naming of bodies and behaviours as abject when they coincide with a development of attachment. Here lies, I argue, the significance of Bataille’s claim that abjection “is merely the inability to assume with sufficient strength the imperative act of excluding abject things (and that act establishes the foundations of collective existence).” Although Kristeva has been accused of positioning the “imperative act” to exclude as weak,¹¹⁵ for Bataille the imperative act is strong because of how it can constitute a collective. What emerges for Bataille is a patriarchal figure, unlike Kristeva’s figuration of the maternal, whose constitution is only possible under the condition that it has something to reject. The abject is not, in the phenomenological sense, bound to substances.¹¹⁶ A body or behaviour is *produced* as abject insofar as it has been designated as something to reject. Practices of exclusion are what constitute the abject. Attachment is therefore only possible because *Die Son* produces the

¹¹⁴ Berlant, 2011, Op. Cit., p. 226

¹¹⁵ C.f. Kristeva, J. 1999. “Fetishizing the Abject”, in S. Lotringer, (ed), *More & Less*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, p. 23

¹¹⁶ C.f. Biles, 2014

criminal as an abject category and forges a positive attachment in reaction to the negative affect that abjection circulates.

The impossibility to exclude what is abject is what allows *Die Son* to constitute an intimate collective. Due to the incapacity of the state to contain and discipline bodies produced as abject, particularly those *within* the border of the community, *Die Son* does something crucial. While acknowledging that the excess is geographically and socially part of the interior of the community, it simultaneously re-positions the excess as something morally exterior. As one letter published in *Die Son* read: “Cape Son really gives support to communities when they need it most.”¹¹⁷ Thus, the tabloid’s preoccupation, or perhaps obsession, with crime gives rise to what Monica Wilson called a “standardized nightmare,”¹¹⁸ whereby the figures and people that *Die Son* renders abject function like a camera obscura for its readership to situate and understand itself. The now standardized nightmare relies on the frequent coverage of drugs, murder and rape. The conditions under which the nightmare is produced, and the conditions under which the ill-defined criminal is rendered abject allows a moment of production to take place. In other words, the nightmare of the ill-defined criminal becomes a way for *Die Son* to “manufacture truth by evoking terror.”¹¹⁹ We learn that police shoot their own children, children are raped by people that they know well and trusted, and that parents and pastors violate children in their care. *Die Son*’s obsessions and desires around crime are therefore incredibly productive: we learn “truths” through the ability of crime to demonstrate the vulnerability of borders (or the skin).

¹¹⁷ Sonlesers. 2008. ‘Toeskouers raak nou meer’, *Die Son*, 16 October, p. 18

¹¹⁸ Wilson, M. 1951. “Witch Beliefs and Social Structure”. *American Journal of Sociology*, 56(4):307-313.

¹¹⁹ Comaroff & Comaroff, 2004, Op. Cit., p. 816

What *Die Son* as the counterparent does with a language of love? How the language of love may facilitate readers' attachment to the tabloid? Ahmed claims that "love then becomes a form of dependence on what is 'not me', and is linked profoundly to the anxiety of border formation, whereby what is 'not me' is also part of me."¹²⁰ The 'not me' can be read here as what *Die Son* has produced as abject and subsequently rejected. Additionally, Ahmed argues that we come to align ourselves through a process of identifying with an ideal, whereby the ideal emerges in the face of those who have failed to live up to the ideal.¹²¹ Thus, through the failures of particular individuals in the community to live up to the ideal as well as the questionable capacity of the state to discipline the excess, an attachment emerges facilitated by a language of love that positions *Die Son* as an ideal to be aligned with. Indeed, following Ahmed,¹²² the identification process is not a linear process, but is rather indicative of a desire to become closer to those that we identify with. Just as the abject is produced, so is the ideal. The figure of the monster or the pig are evoked as challenges that the community ideal faces. Such figures are deemed unworthy of love insofar as they do not live up to the community ideal. Through the failure to live up to the community ideal, such figures, in a very concrete way, align individuals to ideal collectives more closely: love has a "pulling power" against the "pulling away" from what we do not love because it is 'not me.'

Building on the notion of "pulling power," *Die Son* will repeatedly highlight their pulling power to demonstrate how influential they are as a tabloid coupled with their readership. To illustrate, *Die Son* boasted about what they called *Son-Krag* [Sun-Power]. Rosalind Pargiter¹²³ was found

¹²⁰ Ahmed, 2004, Op. Cit., p. 125

¹²¹ Ibid., p. 124

¹²² Ibid., p. 126

¹²³ Johnston, S. 2009. 'Terug Danksy Son-Lesers', *Die Son*, 19 January, p. 4

and returned to her parents on the same day *Die Son* published an article stating that she was missing. Soon after the article was published, *Die Son* received multiple phone calls regarding information to her whereabouts. After putting all the information together, *Die Son* called Rosalind's father telling him to speak to Rosalind. Rosalind then returned home with her father. *Die Son's* ability to wield influence, or demonstrate its pulling power, lies not only its capacity to align people through a language of love; but to also *pull people* together. This may be a reunion after a period of absence, a collective feeling of disgust at negative transgressions, or a shared optimistic attachment.¹²⁴ *Die Son's* incredible pulling power to bring people together and simultaneously reject ubiquitous criminals lends credibility to its slogan: *Die Son Sien Alles* [The Sun Sees Everything].

Die Son drags us through the dirt of everyday existence showing us what we do not want to see because it should not have happened. The production of the abject does not necessarily lie in the fear that so often accompanies stories of crime. Rather, stories like Randoline's, Abaranicia's or Ayola's, all small victims to incomprehensible crimes, are abject precisely because what happened to them should never have happened. *Die Son*, in an attempt to make sense of the everyday, resorted to using the figure of the criminal as the imagined pivot around which to include and exclude. I have suggested that the often-inefficient capacity of the state to punish is perceived and portrayed as playing a critical role in allowing *Die Son* to emerge as an alternative authority. More so, I argued that the naming of the abject coincided with a development of attachment allowing *Die Son* to align itself with its readership as an intimate public. These forms of caring, coupled with intimacy with its readership, enable us to imagine *Die Son* as a counter-

¹²⁴ C.f. Berlant, 2011

parental figure, one that shows compassion for struggle and allows for affective attachments to take place.

III

Wolwe in Blou: The Figure of the Criminal and the Cop

On 14 July 2010, *Die Son* reported that two policemen were accused of raping a woman. *Die Son* called the two police officers the “wolves in blue” [*wolwe in blou*]. The figure of the *wolf in blue* is suggestive of the one being the other, or the one becoming the other. The wolf as beast, accompanied by unrestrained sexuality, is a productive association in order for *Die Son* to make sense of the attack on the woman. Indeed, the image of the wolf housing the figure of the police officer signals an impression that holds in the imaginary of readers of *Die Son*: those esteemed with producing order, symbolized by their uniform, no longer possess the capacity to discipline and enforce the authority of the law.



*Image 1: The Wolf in Blue*¹

¹ Jason, E. 2010. “Wolwe in Blou: Gattas in hof oor rape”, *Die Son*, 14 July, p.1

In this chapter I approach the unstable boundary, the morphing, of the criminal and the cop in *Die Son*. By way of tracing the entanglements between what Comaroff and Comaroff call “law-making, law-breaking, and law-enforcement,”² I read the reciprocal haunting of the criminal and the cop through the figure of the *wolf in blue*. I argue that the language employed in *Die Son* to describe the criminal and the cop does not work to necessarily differentiate the two. Rather, the language used often compares the criminal and the cop. As a result, the police are not only seen as incompetent and as unable to enforce the law but also as contributing to disorder.

I suggest that *Die Son* bringing the *wolf in blue* to light can be understood as an uncanny experience. One of the features that I draw attention to is the Freudian concept of “the compulsion to repeat.” By way of demonstrating this, I sketch a brief history of the relationship between police officers and police dogs, paying particular attention to the peculiar attraction that the apartheid state paid to wolves. More specifically, I consider how the police bred wolves during apartheid and how the present-day police officers that *Die Son* writes about occupy a shared position of being-outside-the-law. Thus, by displaying the mutual characteristics of the wolves alongside police officers’ behaviour, I argue that these shared characteristics allow these two figures to call on one another, thereby amplifying their “troubling resemblance.”³

By approaching *Die Son*’s language employed to describe the *wolf in blue* – or the police more generally – as uncanny, light is shed on how *Die Son* represents what they think is happening within its readers, to its readers and South African society more generally.⁴ As it was articulated in *Die Son*: the tabloid is *amper soos ‘n beeld van die sogenaamde nuwe SA* [is almost like the

² Comaroff & Comaroff, 2016, Op. Cit., p. 36

³ C.f. Derrida, 2011

⁴ Royle, N. 2003. *The Uncanny*. UK: Manchester University Press, p. 2

image of the so-called new South Africa].⁵ While each story about a police officer's transgression(s) are different, I will reflect on a strange pattern that shows how this figure of order in South Africa can easily become a figure of disorder.

Finally, I argue that for many readers of *Die Son*, the belief in the state's responsibility to protect them, and the reported failure of the state to do so, contributes to the corrosion of trust that many readers express towards state agents such as the police. By revealing authorities' periodic participation in transgression, *Die Son* endeavours to reveal the source of and the actors involved in disorder. By doing so, the tabloid repositions (temporarily) the locus of stability from the police force to itself while providing responses for the cops' lack of discipline. Thus, examining *Die Son's* role in and impact on its readership becomes fundamental as its influence grows.

The wolf and sovereignty

That *Die Son* evokes the wolf, a fantastic figure, seems apt for our political imagination: a figure that "mediates between two orders."⁶ Indeed, a figure that is imagined to be outside of the city and its laws. This mode of being-outside-the-law:

[...] fascinates the crowd, even when he is condemned and executed, because along with the law, he defies the sovereignty of the state as monopoly of violence; be it the being-outside-the-law of the sovereign himself ... the beast, criminal and the sovereign have a troubling resemblance: they call on each other and recall each other, from one to the other; there is between sovereign, criminal, and the beast a sort of obscure and fascinating complicity, or even a

⁵ Briewebus. 2009. 'Ons land is in 'n gemors', *Die Son*, 25 May, p. 13

⁶ Derrida, 2011, *Op. Cit.*, p. 80

worrying mutual attraction, a worrying familiarity, an unheimlich, uncanny reciprocal haunting.⁷

In this context, the site where the police officer and the wolf collapse and collide, I suggest, is the mouth: “The mouth is the site not just of sovereign speech but also of bestial devourment.”⁸ Bodily signs such as the mouth,⁹ the belly,¹⁰ and the phallus¹¹ are sites of power around which politics unfold between the state’s agents, such as the police officer, and the citizen.¹² Reference to the mouth, the belly and the phallus are, as Mbembe¹³ has pointed out, statements about the human condition in the post-colony.¹⁴ As the mouth enters into a system of signs,¹⁵ it becomes a

⁷ Derrida, 2011, Op. Cit., p. 17

⁸ Danta, C. 2014. “‘Might sovereignty be devouring?’ Derrida and the Fable”. *SubStance*, 43(2):37-49, p. 39

⁹ C.f. Ogude, J. 1998. “Ngugi’s The Devil on the Cross, the Body and Power”. *Alternation*, 5(1):3-12.

¹⁰ C.f. Bayart, J. F. 1993. *The State in Africa: The Politics of the Belly*. New York: Longman Publishing.

¹¹ C.f. Mbembe, A. 2001. *On the Postcolony*. California: University of California Press.

¹² Blunt, R. 2016. “Corruptus interruptus: the limits of transactional imaginaries in Moi’s Kenya”. *Social Dynamics*, 42(3):377-394, p. 382

¹³ Mbembe, A. 1992. “Provisional notes on the postcolony”. *Journal of the International African Institute*, 62(1):3-37, p. 7

¹⁴ In *Provisional Notes on the Postcolony*, Achille Mbembe (1992:7) argues that the mouth, the belly and the phallus – as well as the body more generally – play a central part in people’s political humour in the post-colony. In a similar vein, James Ogude (1998:7), drawing off Mbembe (2001:107), argues that mentioning the mouth, the belly and the phallus are not sufficient in an effort to point to the obscene in the post-colony. Instead, Ogude (1998:7) reminds us that they are “active statements about the human condition” and are integral to the “making of political culture in the post-colony.” Consequently, it is a “discourse on the world.”

¹⁵ By ‘system of signs’, I am referring to the signs and symbols that permit us to interpret and reinterpret human experience. These signs may carry traces of the past with them, where they may be recycled and reinterpreted to layer additional meaning. Thus, these signs are readily interpreted “because of the shared typology of meaning between the signs and their interpreters” (Ogude, 1998:6). They may then

crucial locale for depicting power. Associating a body part with that of an animal, or with animal form more generally, helps to compose the uncanny image of the police officer's body. The *wolf in blue* consequently signals an unstable sign, image or marker.¹⁶

In an effort to produce clear borders and categories, that is, to draw a clear line between the interior and exterior, inside and outside, what belongs and what does not belong, *Die Son's* production of the figure of the *wolf in blue* undoes any traditional conceptual pairing. In a similar vein, Louise Green, considering the wolves housed at the Tsitsikamma Wolf Sanctuary, argues that:

It is not easy to categorize these wolves neatly. Perhaps what is most interesting about them is the way they lurk on the fringes of discourse, partly in the shadows, and in a typically sly wolfish way, observe, challenge, and threaten the clear lines of established categories.¹⁷

Indeed, the *wolf in blue* complicates any recognisable categories of order and disorder. Instead, this figure is a rich suggestion of a hidden threat. Claims such as “a wolf in sheep's clothing” index the possibility that figures of order are not always what they appear to be. The inability to identify clean categories of order and disorder – interior and exterior – is what Lacan called *extimité*. The dimension of *extimité* “points neither to the interior nor to the exterior, but is located there where the most intimate interiority coincides with the exterior and becomes

be organised as a popular trope or function as “images and mirages, parables and allegories” (Mbembe, 2004).

¹⁶ Mbembe, 2001, Op. Cit., p. 8

¹⁷ Green, L. 2016. “Apartheid's wolves: political animals and animal politics”. *Critical African Studies*, 8(2):146-160, p. 149

threatening, provoking horror and anxiety.”¹⁸ Accordingly, I argue that the *wolf in blue*, characterised by *extimité*, is in one word: uncanny. As Freud writes: “[...] the term ‘uncanny’ (*unheimlich*) applies to everything that was intended to remain secret, hidden away, and has come into the open.”¹⁹

Now that *Die Son* places the *wolf in blue* at its reader’s front door, where does this uncanny figure come from? I argue that the uncanny dimension of the figure of the *wolf in blue* is closely related to the role of the police and police dogs during apartheid. That is, a figure that we do not consider a member of the household: *unheimlich*. Thus, I am concerned with an uncanny experience that “haunts from the inside.”²⁰ Hugh Haughton, in the introduction of Freud’s *The Uncanny*, suggests that haunting experiences often communicate to us that the “alien begins at home, wherever that may be.”²¹ Building on this, I situate *Die Son*’s production of the *wolf in blue* in post-apartheid South Africa.

By situating the *wolf in blue* in post-apartheid South Africa, I am concerned with a “distinctive regime of violence”²² that is made up of situations where the truth of images, markers and signs disappear and dissipate. Mbembe²³ argues that this allows for a condition of “regularised violence”²⁴ to emerge whereby “state agents, like the police, violently attempt to prop up and

¹⁸ Dolar, M. 1991. “I Shall Be with You on Your Wedding-Night”: Lacan and the Uncanny. *The MIT Press*, 58:5-23, p. 6

¹⁹ Freud, S. 2003 [1919]. *The Uncanny*. Translated by D. McLintock. Introduction by H. Haughton. New York: Penguin Group, p. 132

²⁰ Dolar, Op. Cit., p. 7

²¹ Haughton, H. 2003. “Introduction”, in *The Uncanny*. New York: Penguin Group, p. xlix

²² Mbembe, 1992, Op. Cit., p. 3

²³ C.f. Mbembe, 2001

²⁴ Blunt, Op. Cit., p. 381

enforce their believability.”²⁵ Mbembe’s argument regarding the enforcement of signs resonates with Aretxaga’s argument regarding the spectral quality of the state (and the law as empty of content).²⁶ Aretxaga²⁷ argues that the lack of legitimacy of the law reveals something: “[A]t its foundation the rule of law is sustained: by the force/violence of a tautological enunciation— ‘the law is the law.’”²⁸ For Aretxaga,²⁹ the violence of the law becomes “ghostly”, and this ghostly form of power manifests in the police. The effects of this are experienced as “disappearances, corpses, arrests, and internments but whose identity remains mysterious, as objects of constant speculation, rumor, and fear.”³⁰

Of laws and the prohibition

The *wolf in blue* is “diagnostic of uncertain times,”³¹ revealing a gap between the law as a promise and the law as experienced by readers of *Die Son*. Comaroff and Comaroff, considering the pressing question of law and order in the face of apartheid’s geography being undone, ask: “Where, under these conditions, do South Africans look for an answer to the problem of law and disorder that plagues them?”³² Here, I want to suggest that readers of *Die Son* turn toward the tabloid as a site to reflect and explain the problem of law and disorder. Andrew Koopman, editor

²⁵ Ibid., p. 382

²⁶ Aretxaga, B. 2003. “Maddening States”. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 32:393-410.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 406

²⁸ Santner E. L. 1996. *My Own Private Germany: Daniel Paul Schreber’s History of Modernity*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, p. 10

²⁹ Aretxaga, Op. Cit., p. 406

³⁰ Ibid., p. 406

³¹ Comaroff & Comaroff, 2016, Op. Cit., p. 105

³² Ibid., p. 105

of *Die Son*, has stated that there have been incidents where readers will call the tabloid instead of the police:

People call us often. “Come and look, the city council is evicting us [from our homes]” or “the police are beating us” and then we go out. It’s actually tragic how much pain the people we work with have to go through. And they are people that are still not in count. And they see *Son* as a way of bringing out their voice, of being heard. Often people phone us and say “we went to the police but the police didn’t help us.” The police are now also anti-*Son* because people come to us, we are their watchdog. Everywhere I go, I hear that people aren’t saying “we are going to take you to the police” anymore, but instead “we are going to take you to *Son*.” So *Son* is used as a threat.³³

By recounting how readers on several occasions would rather call *Die Son* than call the police, Koopman demonstrates how the tabloid derives its legitimacy as an authority.³⁴ To illustrate, in January 2010, *Die Son* reported that police had to be threatened with their tabloid before they would respond to pleas to reunite a missing son with his mother.³⁵ According to Suster Magda Kleyn from the Tehillah Centre in Elsiesriver, Enrico van Wyk had been staying at the Centre since August 2009. James Louw from the Centre told *Die Son* that Samaritans had brought van Wyk to the Centre after he was recognized as a missing person. Kleyn and Louw had been calling the Philippi police station to alert the police that van Wyk was with them. Kleyn stated that they received no response from the police. Eventually, in January of 2010, Kleyn called the

³³ Koopman, cited in Wasserman, 2010, Op. Cit., p.40

³⁴ Herman Wasserman (2010:139) writes: These responses indicate a level of trust in the tabloids that one might expect to be reserved for public institutions like the police, the courts, and the government. Readers’ claims that they would phone the tabloids with matters concerning crime and/or social evils confirm tabloid editors’ remarks that readers would call them before they would call the police—resulting in tabloid reporters often arriving at crime scenes well before the authorities would.”

³⁵ Prinsloo, C. 2010. ‘Polisie ‘reageer nie’’, *Die Son*, 22 January, p. 12

police and threatened them with *Die Son* and within 20 minutes the police had arrived at the Tehillah Centre. The following week van Wyk was reunited with his mother. Here already, *Die Son* can be seen as a counterbalance to the police's inefficiency. However, their perceived role does not limit itself to these incremental achievements.

Die Son, in response to the overwhelming presence of “tik” (methamphetamine) in local communities, ran a campaign known as *Oorlog Teen Tik* [War Against Methamphetamine].³⁶ Campaigns such as *Oorlog Teen Tik* are testimony to *Die Son*'s interests being oriented toward the community. The negative feelings aimed at gangs and drugs becomes externalized and, as such, a weapon of war. In other words, affect, or negative feelings more generally, gain force in *Die Son* thereby making these feelings available as a political resource. Here, I suggest that readers call for law and order become integral to campaigns such as *Oorlog Teen Tik*. *Die Son*'s language of “skollies” [scoundrels] to describe the problem of drugs and gangsters that focuses almost exclusively on disorder comes to be associated with certain areas and populations.³⁷

Unsurprisingly, the government responded to the rhetoric of war employed not only by *Die Son*, but other groups such as PAGAD (People Against War and Drugs) by enacting the images of war.³⁸ *Die Son*, signalling gangsters and drug dealers as unstable forces that pose a problem of

³⁶ Based on fieldwork in the *banlieues* of Paris, Didier Fassin (2013:40) argued that the rhetoric in slogans such as “war against crime” – or “oorlog teen tik” in this instance – legitimizes the perception that the police hold and influences the type of order that they impose. Fassin posits that this rhetoric can do more harm than good “leading to excesses that affect not only the criminals targeted,” but also “citizens who have done nothing wrong.”

³⁷ Writing about a neighbourhood in Malaysia, Braxstrom (2008:135) states that, “the gangster required local residents to engage how others characterized “them” and how these images of their “place” in turn structured that place and those that lived there.”

³⁸ Fassin, D. 2013. *Enforcing Order: An Ethnography of Urban Policing*. UK: Polity Press, p. 41

lawlessness, ran a publication on 22 October 2008 stating that the government had declared a war on gangsterism and drug dealers.³⁹ For the first time, all the departments, including the army, would be working together to fight the stronghold gangsters and drug dealers had on affected communities. Patrick McKenzie, the Western Cape's minister of community safety, argued that the action-plan would also pay particular attention to children: *Ons moet ingryp by die jonges, die kinders wat verlei word. Dis 'n saak van dringendheid* [We must intervene with the young ones, the children that are being misled. This is an urgent issue]. As a result, there is a concentrated concern for the control and protection of children.

Importantly, the events surrounding local gangsters and drug dealers do not only enter *Die Son's* interests during moments of culminations of excess or intensity of lawlessness. Rather, *Die Son* derives legitimacy and authority from their ongoing engagement with the livelihoods of their readers.⁴⁰ *Die Son*, Wasserman argues, is "called upon by their readers to provide legitimacy and authority to their causes by attaching their names to them."⁴¹ Hence, I argue that *Die Son* not only derives its legitimacy from its capacity to exclude by naming what is abject (chapter 1); but it also derives legitimacy from its potential to be a site where a particular type of call for order can be consistently found. Here, however, a word of caution: *Die Son* does not compensate for what the law promises and eventually does not provide. Hence, it would be incorrect to see *Die Son* as a solution to the problem of law and order, albeit that the tabloid is seen as a stable force that calls out to the law encouraging order. Rather, I suggest that readers turn toward the tabloid

³⁹ Eggington, S. 2008. 'Regering verklaar oorlog teen bendes, rope ook weermag in', *Die Son*, 22 Oktober, p. 2

⁴⁰ Wasserman, 2010, Op. Cit., p. 88

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 89

as a platform that confirms and recognises their experiences of disorder relentlessly exposing the police as operating outside the law.

The scenarios of excess and transgression allow readers of *Die Son* to see themselves as an ordered and/or disordered body as well as simultaneously providing a “lucid lens onto a historically specific social condition of twenty-first century neoliberalism.”⁴² Although law seems opposed to disorder, I suggest that it requires transgression to define itself. Slavoj Žižek, deliberating Richard Wagner, emphasizes the relationship between the Law and transgression: “what it conceals is the very excess on which it is grounded.”⁴³ Reading Bataille⁴⁴ alongside Žižek, I suggest that law and transgression, or prohibition and offence, constitute one another. In other words, law and transgression are not diametrically opposed, but complete each other.⁴⁵ If transgression is central to prohibition, how might we describe sovereignty? For Georges Bataille, what is significant about sovereignty is how it operates around limits: “of laws and of the *prohibition*.”⁴⁶ This was expressed in *Die Son*, although the formulation differs: *Ek dink sommige cops kan nie anders as om geweld toe te pas in die uitvoering van hul pligte nie* [I think some cops can only use violence in the execution of their duties].⁴⁷ In a line of thought that complements Bataille, the reader asked whether the police resorted to violence because they are met with violence.⁴⁸ Hence, in order to bring about order, the police need to violate a prohibition.

⁴² Dubbeld, Op. Cit., p. 81

⁴³ Žižek, S. 2005. “Why is Wagner Worth Saving?”, in T. Adorno’s *In Search of Wagner*. Translated by Livingstone, R. London & New York: Verso, p. xi

⁴⁴ C.f. Bataille, 1991

⁴⁵ Bataille, G. 1962. *Erotism: Death and Sensuality*. San Francisco: City Lights Books, p. 63

⁴⁶ Bataille, 1991, Op. Cit., p. 220

⁴⁷ Briewebus, 2011. ‘Cops se ‘geweld’ is soms net fermheid’, *Die Son*, 20 May, p. 28

⁴⁸ C.f. Genet, J. 1997. ‘Violence et Brutalité’, *Le Monde*, 2 September, pp. 1-2.

While for Bataille sovereignty has many forms, what is crucial is the “strength to violate the prohibition against killing, although it's true this will be under the conditions that customs define.”⁴⁹ As Achille Mbembe has claimed, Bataille treats sovereignty as the violation of prohibitions.⁵⁰ Indeed, while those esteemed with sovereignty produce order, they simultaneously challenge order through excess and the transgression of limits. In other words, sovereignty functions outside the limits it establishes, reminiscent of Jacques Derrida’s “being-outside-the-law.”⁵¹ Bataille⁵² reaffirms that sovereignty rids itself of the limit of death, a limit that would ensure a peaceful life: “sovereignty celebrates its marriage with death.”⁵³ Accordingly, the concern for sovereignty that not only fails to produce order, but is simultaneously uncontrollable can be read alongside Comaroff and Comaroff’s work on law and order in the post-colony: “the reach of the state is uneven and the landscape is a palimpsest of contested sovereignties, codes, and jurisdictions—a complex choreography of police and paramilitaries, private and community enforcement, gangs and vigilantes, highwaymen and outlaw armies.”⁵⁴ This complexity is crucial when measuring the state’s legitimacy. Indeed, with various groups challenging its sovereignty, the state’s legitimacy emerges from its ability to and efficiency in (re)establishing stability and hoarding the monopoly of violence.

If disorder accompanies transgressions, is it possible for disorder to exceed the transgression? That is, is it imaginable that the law, which completes and transcends the transgression, capitulates to our disorderly impulses? By way of answering this, I argue that *Die Son*, by

⁴⁹ Bataille, 1991, Op. Cit., p. 220-221

⁵⁰ Mbembe, A. 2003. Necropolitics. *Public Culture*, 15(1): 11-40, p. 16

⁵¹ Derrida, 2011, Op. Cit., p. 17

⁵² Bataille, 1991, Op. Cit., p. 221

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 211

⁵⁴ Comaroff & Comaroff, 2006, Op. Cit., p. 9

habitually drawing attention to and circulating histories of lawbreaking, works to delegitimize institutions of order.⁵⁵ Indeed, we can postulate that it is the sovereign, a figure of authority, who is charged with managing the bounds of disorderly impulses. As with the *wolwe in blou* [wolves in blue], what if figures of authority cannot always confine disorder within bounds, rendering the law impotent? This begs the question as to how we can expect figures such as the *wolwe in blou* [wolves in blue] to bound disorderly urges in the outside world, if they cannot manage their own disorderly impulses. The circulation of repeated expressions and histories of disorder, I argue, positions *Die Son* as a body of order.

The police dog and wolf in South Africa

On July 17, 1964, Malcolm X delivered a speech to the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in Cairo, Egypt. Conjuring the figure of the wolf, Malcolm X claimed that:

South Africa is like a vicious wolf, openly hostile toward black humanity. But America is cunning like a fox, friendly and smiling, but even more vicious and deadly than the wolf. The wolf and the fox are both enemies of humanity, both are canine, both humiliate and mutilate their victims. Both have the same objectives, but differ only in methods.⁵⁶

That Malcolm X coupled South Africa with the wolf, a beast, seems to be historically symptomatic of an alliance, attraction or resemblance. Earlier I suggested that the uncanny dimension of the figure of the *wolf in blue* is closely related to the role of the police and police dogs during apartheid. I now want to draw attention to the historical role dogs have played in

⁵⁵ C.f. Caldeira, 1992

⁵⁶ Malcolm X, 2007 [1964]. “Appeal to African Heads of State, in Martin”, M. T. & Yaquinto, M. (eds.). *Redress for Historical Injustices in the United States: On Reparations for Slavery, Jim Crow, and their Legacies*. Durham: Duke University Press, p. 582

South Africa in enforcing order and managing disorder. While the South African Police (SAP) were almost always at the forefront of enforcing apartheid's repressive laws, dogs came to be intimately associated with the role of the police. Dogs, as a result, were and continue to be central to maintaining order.

In South Africa, dogs were employed to maintain and police boundaries during apartheid.⁵⁷ Prior to apartheid, dogs were first employed by police in Natal in 1909.⁵⁸ Fear and terror associated with the dog, particularly the wolf, made these animals suitable for social control purposes.⁵⁹ As a result, police sought to capitalise on these features, which produced an animal that was "a hunter and fighter of humans who act in certain ways or intrude into certain places."⁶⁰

The year after the first police dogs were employed, the South African Police (SAP) was established from the Act of Union of 1910.⁶¹ However, it was only in the 1920s that Members of Parliament repeatedly demanded and made a case for the employment of more police dogs.⁶² It

⁵⁷ Dogs, as an icon of authority, have been utilised to defend private property. Breeds such as the *boerboel*, the epitome of the colonial dog, were employed for farms and homes. The *boerboel* is imagined to be the ultimate defender and protector, suitable for watch duty. In the current moment, this breed is considered an apt method in deterring crime (van Sittert & Swart, 2003:30).

⁵⁸ van Sittert, L., & Swart, S. 2003. "Canis Familiaris: A Dog History of South Africa". *South African Historical Journal*, 48(1):138-173, p. 163

⁵⁹ C.f. Lilly, J. R., & Puckett, M. B. 1997. "Social control and dogs: a sociohistorical analysis". *Crime & Delinquency*, 43, 123-47.

⁶⁰ Koehler, W. R. 1967. *The Koehler Method of Guard Dog Training*. New York: Howell Book House, p. 67

⁶¹ Cawthra, G. 1993. *Policing South Africa: The South African police & the transition from apartheid*. London: Zed Books, p. 8

⁶² Shear, K. 2007. Police Dogs and State Rationality in Early Twentieth Century South Africa, in van Sittert, L. & Swart, S. (eds.). *Canis Africanis: A Dog History of Southern Africa*. Leiden: Koninklijke Brill, p. 204

appears that the Members of Parliament recognised and sought to capitalise on the potential of dogs to act as agents and enforcers of order and control. Dogs instinctive capabilities – including hearing, smelling, speed and wolf-like savagery – made them apt companions for police. The 1926 South African Police Commission went as far as to refer to the police dogs’ actions as “a specialised form of criminal investigation work.”⁶³ The employment and presence of dogs stood out for many Black South Africans, unsurprisingly, as emblematic of their violent experience of the apartheid state.⁶⁴

By 1964, around the time Malcolm X had delivered his speech to the OAU, dogs were being used by police in South Africa for two years already to patrol ‘urban’ areas. Their primary role was to act as assistants to police seeking to contain the growing youth rebellion and Black nationalists.⁶⁵ In the same year that Malcolm X delivered his speech, the apartheid state established its first military dog unit. The dog unit sought to refine the aggressive role already assigned to police dogs, and, at the time of the counter-insurgency wars, they shaped the dogs’ instinctive and physical capabilities to inflict violence and fear and to assist the army with tracking down guerrillas.

By the 1970s, police dogs’ role expanded to include the detection of narcotics and explosives. At this point, dogs had been integrated into the apartheid police’s operations rendering them “participants.”⁶⁶ It was not uncommon to have dogs lined up with police officers barking at Black South Africans and, at times, being set on and attacking people. Additionally, Black South Africans were also exposed to the capabilities of the police dog. Typically, Black men would be

⁶³ Ibid., p. 204

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 193

⁶⁵ van Sittert & Swart, 2003, Op. Cit., p. 163

⁶⁶ C.f. Lilly & Puckett, Op. Cit., 1997

chased by dogs in a demonstration only to be savagely bitten by the dog until called off by the handler. What emerges is an enduring association between dogs and the role of control and containment. Indeed, historians have argued that there is a correlation between the amount of police dogs employed and the escalation of rebellion against the apartheid government.⁶⁷ The numbers of dogs in law enforcement rose from 167 in the 1960s to over a thousand by the 1980s in South Africa, when the police dog school trained 300 dogs per annum.⁶⁸

While experimentation with existing dog breeds was not new, in the 1970s the police dog school began to experiment with Canaan dogs from Israel.⁶⁹ Shortly thereafter Roodeplaat Breeding Enterprises and SADF began experimenting with a wolf-dog. According to Peet Coetzee,⁷⁰ the SADF Dog School received a male Siberian wolf from the High Noon game reserve farm as a donation. The male Siberian wolf, known as Red, was enrolled in the defence force primarily for crossbreeding purposes. The SADF considered deploying Red on the border. However, Dr Istwan Larendler, a zoologist from the University of Budapest, explained that such an idea was unrealistic as the “wolf is by nature a shy creature” and that animals like Red” suffered from the so-called ‘wild syndrome.’”⁷¹ Dr Larendler reportedly informed the SADF Dog School that the crossbreeding of wolves with German Shepherds, if successful, would only reap results after five generations. Peet Coetzee notes that:

⁶⁷ van Sittert & Swart, 2003, Op. Cit., p. 163-64

⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 165

⁶⁹ van Sittert, L., & Swart, S. 2008. “*Canis Familiaris: A Dog History of South Africa*”, *Canis Africanis: A Dog History of Southern Africa*. Leiden: Koninklijke Brill, p. 29

⁷⁰ Coetzee, P. 2011. *Dogs of War: Memoirs of the South African Defence Force Dog Units*. Noorsekloof: Self-published, p. 42

⁷¹ Ibid., p. 144

Things that [Johan Roux] could remember were those unfriendly yellow eyes that seemed to follow one everywhere. They never barked, and he remembers their not being obedient at all. They only allowed their handler near their kennels. Even the other handlers were rather cat-foot around those yellow eyed devils.⁷²

Furthermore, Coetzee, presumably on the advice of Dr Larendler, stressed that “by implementing a proper breeding programme a possibly superior and first-rate type of dog could be bred containing genes required and ideal for future needs.”⁷³

The SADF’s story about how the wolves came to South Africa differs from that of the Roodeplaat Breeding Enterprises. In 1980s, those working at the Roodeplaat Breeding Enterprises also aspired to breed and develop a wolf-dog,⁷⁴ where they began their project by purchasing 200 wolves from North America. Their intention was to breed the wolves with dogs to create a hybrid “wolf-dog” that would be used primarily for border wars.⁷⁵ The wolf-dog, with its enhanced senses, was to be used to track down freedom fighters, particularly from the then banned ANC, who sought to infiltrate the border of South Africa. In November 1989, an article⁷⁶ appeared in the *Weekly World News* stating that “cops in South Africa are now armed with a fearsome weapon.”⁷⁷ The new police dogs were described as “incredible beasts” that were “larger, faster and far more powerful than their German shepherd forebearer.” A trainer from the

⁷² Ibid., p. 214

⁷³ Ibid., p. 145

⁷⁴ Jungle, born in 1978, was the first wolf-dog to emerge from Roodeplaat’s breeding experiments (Grady, 1989:43).

⁷⁵ C.f. Aronson, 2011; Green, 2016

⁷⁶ Grady, R. 1989. ‘Breed’s bigger, faster & a whole lot meaner... New police dogs howl – because they’re wolves!’, *Weekly World News*, 21 November, p. 43

⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 42

Roodeplaas Breeding Enterprises, emphasising the heightened capabilities of the wolf, claimed that “they have very long teeth which go right through normal padding.” The trainers had to wear special padding developed to protect themselves from the wolf’s “enormously powerful jaws.”⁷⁸

Coetzee⁷⁹ notes that Dr Landler’s point made in 1982 that the hybrid wolf-dog would not be successful was proven correct after a number of problems arose. The wolf-dog proved to be difficult to train and their paws were far too soft for the South West African terrain. Eventually the wolf-dogs were given special ‘booties’ to protect their paws.⁸⁰ More so, the wolf-dog’s thick coats coupled with the suffering the animals endured with regard to the heat and thorns rendered them unsuitable for the South West border region.⁸¹ Perhaps the biggest problem was that the wolf-dog did not assume a leadership position, but deferred authority to their handler.⁸² Thus, they failed to take the lead during the counterinsurgency wars.

While the wolf-dog project had been abandoned in the 1980s, due to the dogs’ failure to become a usable state apparatus, the figure of the wolf was not yet dead. On 15 November 1988, Barend Strydom, a former policeman, opened fire on a crowd of Black South Africans in Strijdom Square, Pretoria. The choice in location had to do with JG Strijdom who had strong apartheid ideals. It’s difficult to get hold of precise numbers of how many people died and how many people were injured, but the numbers indicate around 8 that died and 16 that were injured.

⁷⁸ In addition, Rose Grady (1989:41) explains that the wolf dogs have “five times the stamina of any other canine breed used in tracking and guard work”. Curiously, Grady emphasises that unlike other canine breeds which bark, the wolf dogs howl.

⁷⁹ Op. Cit., p. 147

⁸⁰ Stapleton, T. J. 2015. *Warfare and Tracking in Africa, 1952–1990*. New York: Routledge, p. 116

⁸¹ Coetzee, Op. Cit., p. 147

⁸² Green, Op. Cit., p. 155

Strydom later testified that he was looking for “someone black to kill.”⁸³ Strydom, as the self-proclaimed leader, claimed the attack in the name of the right-wing terrorist group *Wit Wolwe* [White Wolves].⁸⁴

The wolf therefore acts as an “extension of the apartheid state’s violence, while remaining outside the law.”⁸⁵ The dog, or the wolf more specifically, functions as an irrational enforcer of power. Police officers, along with their dogs, are haunted by a history of suspicion. What *Die Son* reveals on various occasions is an aspiration to redeem the police in post-apartheid South Africa. Thus, *Die Son*’s production of the figure of the *wolf in blue* generates a double between past and present exposing the same inability to establish discipline and order. This, as I demonstrate next, manifests itself simultaneously as a distrust toward and desire for the police.

Spectres of the criminal and the cop

“The jackal marries the wolf’s wife,”⁸⁶ writes Christo Davids in *Die Son*. Playfully, he states that the dangerous marrying the sly is almost like the government. Davids reminds readers that while stories like the Jackal and the Wolf are children stories, they are written by people because they are in fact so close to reality. He continues:

⁸³ Phipps, A. 2015. “What is Revealed by the Absence of a Reply? Courtesy, Pedagogy and the Spectre of Unanswered Letters in Mandela’s Trial”, in Allo, A. (ed.). *The Courtroom as a Space of Resistance: Reflections on the Legacy of the Rivonia Trial*. New York: Routledge, p. 260

⁸⁴ Guelke, A. 1997. “The Quiet Dog: The Extreme Right and the South African Transition”, in Merkl, P. H. & Weinberg, L. (eds.). *The Revival of Right Wing Extremism in the Nineties*. London & New York: Routledge, p. 258

⁸⁵ Green, Op. Cit., p. 155

⁸⁶ Davids, C. 2010. ‘Jakkals trou met wolfie’, *Die Son*, 8 November, p. 6

There are jackals and there are wolves in our midst. Who is which one and which one is who, we do not know, but that they wander in our midst is a fact like a cow. There are those who pose a danger to you. When you come close to him, he will hurt you. That's Wolf. He stands there ready to bite you if you make one wrong move. So stay where you are, dead straight and dead quiet. In this way, you save yourself a lot of heartache. He doesn't hide the threat that he poses. You can see it in his eyes and hear that growl he makes when you move too close toward him.⁸⁷

Davids provides readers with a fable-like story comprised of two fantastic human-beasts: The Jackal and the Wolf. The fantastic human-beasts evoke fear, thereby designating their position in the “realm of the frightening.”⁸⁸ Can *Die Son*'s acknowledgement of the complicity and resemblance between the criminal and the cop, manifested in the *wolf in blue*, be regarded as uncanny?⁸⁹

In order to answer this question, it is important to consider again how Freud distinguishes the uncanny from fear in general, in other words, what allows us to read the *wolf in blue* as uncanny as opposed to merely fearful or frightening? Freud argues that what distinguishes the uncanny from fear is that the uncanny is a “species of the frightening that goes back to what was once

⁸⁷ *Daar is jakkalse en daar is wolwe in ons midde. Wie is watter een en watter een is wie, weet ons nie, maar dat hulle al twee in ons midde dwaal, is 'n feit soos 'n koei. Daar is dié wat 'n gevaar vir jou inhou. As jy naby hom kom, gaan hy jou skade aandoen. Dis Wolf. Hy staan daar, slaggereed om jou seer te byt as jy een verkeerde beweging maak. Só bly maar waar jy is, penregop en tjoepstil. Op dié manier spaar jy jouself baie hartseer en terugslae. Hy steek nie die gevaar wat hy vir jou inhou weg nie. Jy kan dit sommer in sy oë sien en daardie grom hoor as jy ten a aan hom beweeg.*

⁸⁸ Freud, S. 2003 [1919]. *The Uncanny*. Translated by D. McLintock with an introduction by H. Haughton. New York: Penguin Books, p. 123

⁸⁹ Similarly, criminals dressing up and pretending to be cops indexes an additional uncanny experience.

well known and had long been familiar.”⁹⁰ Drawing from Schelling, Freud argues that the uncanny is what we might call “everything that was meant to remain secret and hidden and has come into the open.”⁹¹ Crucially, unintended repetition is a powerful factor that turns the frightening into the uncanny. Building on this, I ask along with Freud:⁹² under what conditions does the familiar become uncanny? Does the “openness” that *Die Son* purports to offer produce the uncanny effect of exposing the police as both agents of safety and insecurity and even fear?

Consider the following claim published in a letter in *Die Son*: *As polisie nie na hulself kan kyk nie, wat van mense?*⁹³ [If police can’t look after themselves, what about people?]. This question was asked by Lennit Max, the Western Cape Minister of Community Safety, after a “cop shop” was broken into right under the noses of the police.⁹⁴ Residents of Steenberg claimed that they believed a cop was involved in the robbery. However, police spokesperson, November Filander, told *Die Son* that at that stage there was no evidence to suggest that a cop was involved in the robbery. Computers containing information about cases under investigation, two computer cases and a memory stick were amongst the goods reported stolen. An anonymous source informed *Die Son* that all the stolen goods could be found in a man’s home known as Brian Farmer. The anonymous source stated that one of the cops could be linked to the burglary, which the source speculated might have been part of a motive to make cases disappear.

With the headline *Dié Bloues Slaap* [The Blues Sleep] as a backdrop, *Die Son* details how they visited the suspect Brian Farmer’s home. This information is followed by an announcement

⁹⁰ Freud, 1919, Op. Cit., p. 124

⁹¹ Ibid., p. 132

⁹² Ibid., p. 124

⁹³ Jason, E. 2010. ‘Cops moet let op beeld’, *Die Son*, 26 March, p. 5

⁹⁴ Jason, E. 2010. ‘Dié bloues slaap’, *Die Son*, 24 March, p. 5

declaring that, *die gesteelde goedere is na bewering in Farmer se besit gevind* [The stolen goods were allegedly found in Farmer's possession]. Farmer was not present at the time that *Die Son* visited his home. *Die Son* concludes this story by reminding readers that two weeks prior to the publication of *Dié Bloues Slaap* [The Blues Sleep], they had also run a publication about Steenberg police who, during a drug raid, had stolen R10 000 from a Somalian shop.⁹⁵ By revealing the theft activities performed by police officers, *Die Son* expresses a feeling of distrust in the institution expected to represent the law.

Lennit Max visited the Steenberg police station after *Die Son* exclusively reported on the incident. Max claimed that, *dit skep 'n slegte beeld van die polisie, wat nie eens na hulself kan omsien nie, wat nog te sê van die gemeenskap* [It creates a bad image of the police, who cannot even care for themselves, what to say about the community?].⁹⁶ Further, Max lamented that, *die kriminele elemente het toegang tot die perseel en kan kom en gaan soos hulle wil* [the criminals have access to the premises and can come and go as they please]. The story about *Dié Bloues Slaap* [The Blues Sleep] is significant for two reasons. First, because this story raises questions about the police's ability to protect; and second, because this story simultaneously raises questions about which police are protectors and which police are predators. The instability and symbolic collapse of the protector and predator, criminal and cop, is a source of anxiety, fascination and horror.⁹⁷

What happens when someone no longer plays the role they are expected to; or, to speak like Lennit Max, when someone does not live up to the expected image of themselves, thereby

⁹⁵ At the time *Die Son* announced this, the case was still under investigation.

⁹⁶ Jason, E. 2010. 'Cops moet let op beeld', *Die Son*, 26 March, p. 5

⁹⁷ C.f. Kristeva, 1982

obscuring our ability to find them?⁹⁸ The mirror-image is thus one of the motifs capable of producing an uncanny effect. As such, the *wolf in blue* leaves one with a feeling of being betrayed by looks. According to Mladen Dolar,⁹⁹ the effect of the double occurs when an object *a*, the criminal in this instance, is included to the mirror-image (of the police officer). Hence, the double is the same as oneself plus the object *a*. I suggest that the *wolf in blue* is uncanny because of the double effect. With reason, we can argue that the uncanny effect, fraught with anxiety, occurs because the imaginary, the wolf, collides with the real, the police officer. Thus, to re-articulate Dolar's formulation: the *wolf in blue* is uncanny because of the presence of the double effect.

A reader wrote to *Die Son* suggesting the legibility of the tabloid and the illegibility of the police, when it was claimed that, *dit is vir my 'n groot dankbare gevoel om Son te lees en te sien hoeveel stront wat onder die komberse gedoen word, aan die lig gebring word deur Son wat alles sien* [I feel extremely grateful to read *Son* and see how much of the shit that happens under the covers is brought to the light by *Son* that sees everything].¹⁰⁰ Thereafter, the reader stated he caught a police officer drunk and physically assaulting the woman with whom the police officer had a child with. The police force was called to the scene. After arriving, the police, according to the reader, did little to nothing to assist. *Die Son's* authority contrasts that of the police. Despite not compensating for the police, *Die Son* acts on a different level by being a space of stability and consistency (unlike police officers) in unveiling societal dysfunctions. The tabloid takes the role of determining which behaviour is acceptable and which is not. Hence, the law appears enforced not by crime prevention or punishment, but by *Die Son's* constant reminder of what is

⁹⁸ C.f. Derrida, 2011

⁹⁹ Dolar, Op. Cit., p. 13

¹⁰⁰ Briewebus. 2010. 'Deesdae se polisie 'laat veel te wense'', *Die Son*, 2 February, p. 16

acceptable. The tabloid therefore challenges the police's inefficiency and even participation in the problem by amplifying the citizen's affected voice.

In La Fontaine's fable *The Wolf and the Lamb*,¹⁰¹ there is an association made between the wolf and cruelty. La Fontaine describes the wolf as "the cruel beast." Now note how Justin Boer¹⁰² describes his experience with the police to *Die Son*. Justin claims that the police burst into his home looking for guns. He claims that the more he told the police that he had no knowledge about the guns, the more the police insisted that the guns were buried in his garden. The police grabbed Justin by the neck and took him outside into his garden. One of the police took five bullets out of his magazine and told Justin that he was going to be framed if he did not say where the guns were. Justin describes how he dug in the garden on his knees while the police hit him with a pipe and kicked him. After he was beaten, the police took him to the Delft hospital and told him that he was to hand himself over to the police the following day. Albeit about a different police assault, a reader posed a question that applied to Justin's experience with the police: *Hoe moet 'n mens die gereg vertrou as hulle nie eens die gemeenskap kan beskerm nie?* [How is a person supposed to trust law enforcement when they cannot even protect the community?].¹⁰³

Reading how Justin describes his experience with the police, we see that no trial took place deliberating his involvement with the guns. Instead, we hear a story about brute force. Jonathan April's question in *Die Son*, albeit about a different case of alleged police assault, is relevant here: "Do we as ordinary citizen's safety mean nothing to those who maintain law and order?"¹⁰⁴

¹⁰¹ Fontaine, J. 2014. *Selected Fables*. Translated and Introduction and Notes by C. Betts. Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 14

¹⁰² Afrika, B. 2015. 'Manne in blou 'pypkan hom'', *Die Son*, 29 April, p. 4

¹⁰³ Briewbus. 2010. 'Korrupte polisie moet goeie les geleer word', *Die Son*, 7 July, p. 14

¹⁰⁴ Briewebus. 2009. 'Cops moet ophou aanrand', *Die Son*, 13 August, p. 16

The unrestrained anger that comes to be associated with police, through repeated reports of assault to person and property in *Die Son*, turns the image of police into that of the wolf. Recall here how Socrates in *The Republic* claimed that those who had tasted even a single human victim were destined to become wolves:

[..] the protector of the people is like him; having a mob entirely at his disposal, he is not restrained from shedding the blood of kinsmen; by the favourite method of false accusation he brings them into court and murders them, making the life of man to disappear, and with unholy tongue and lips tasting the blood of his fellow citizen; some he kills and others he banishes, at the same time hinting at the abolition of debts and partition of lands: and after this, what will be his destiny? Must he not either perish at the hands of his enemies, or from being a man become a wolf—?¹⁰⁵

Plato's emphasis on the devouring mouth, of "lips tasting the blood of his fellow citizen," through the apparition of the wolf, reminds us not only of the wolf's savagery, but also that their existence constitutes a threat to the city (polis). Associating an untamed and wild component with the police, an anonymous reader wrote to *Die Son*, in response to Jonathan April's letter, that police needed to behave civilised.¹⁰⁶ In particular, the anonymous reader stated that they agreed with Jonathan April regarding police brutality and barbarity [*polisiewreedheid en barbaarsheid*].

¹⁰⁵ Plato. 2010. "The Republic", in Jowett, B. (ed.). *Dialogues of Plato: Translated into English, with Analyses and Introduction*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, p. 404

¹⁰⁶ Briewebus. 2009. 'Cops moet beskaafd optree', *Die Son*, 28 August, p. 27

The impression that police behave inhumanly was again evoked in response to the clashes between police officers and Hout Bay squatters.¹⁰⁷ The reader argued that the image of cops emptying their magazine rounds on poor people was one that belonged in the Hector Pieterse Apartheid Museum, adding that these kinds of images of the 80s where children are helplessly watching their parents being beaten up by police, and doors being kicked open where women are dragged by their hair down staircases by “manics with bulletproof vests”¹⁰⁸ are still fresh in people’s memories. Indeed, the reader claimed that the police should hang their heads in shame because of the manner in which they recalled the filthy past. For many readers, the police in post-apartheid South Africa are *erger as die apartheid-gattas* [worse than the apartheid police].¹⁰⁹ Here, I suggest, the language used to describe the criminal (chapter 1: barbaric, savage, *vark*¹¹⁰) is also the same language used to describe the police. Indeed, this language is wholly negative. Thus, as Theresa Caldeira has argued elsewhere, instead of the cop and the criminal being opposed, they are compared.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁷ Briewebeus. 2010. ‘Geskok deur polisie se ‘onmenslik optrede’’, *Die Son*, 23 September, p. 37

¹⁰⁸ Briewebeus. 2010. ‘Geskok deur polisie se ‘onmenslik optrede’’, *Die Son*, 23 September, p. 37

¹⁰⁹ Jason, E. 2009. ‘Cop in ‘n vrot mood skiet my’’, *Die Son*, 10 November, p. 1

¹¹⁰ Compare this to the image of the pig that is evoked in moments of disgust with readers, similarly, imagining the police as pigs: “vark-cops maak my mal” (pig police make me mad) followed with a provocation that “cops maak ‘asof ons honde is’” (cops make as if we’re dogs). How, to use Schmitt’s words, “in the name of the human, of human rights and humanitarianism, other men are then treated like beasts, and consequently one becomes oneself inhuman, cruel, and bestial?” (cited in Derrida, 2011:73).

See: Prinsloo, C. 2009. ‘Vark-cops maak my mal’’, *Die Son*, 22 October, p. 1; Prinsloo, C. 2009. ‘Cops maak ‘asof ons honde is’’, *Die Son*, 22 October, p.2

¹¹¹ Caldeira, Op. Cit., p. 186

Kevin Dykers also describes his experience of the police to *Die Son*. Kevin, a former police officer himself, claims that he was beaten up merely for trying to assist the police.¹¹² He states that he was repeatedly kicked in the face, resulting in a cracked skull, while he was busy chasing a thief.¹¹³ That people are beaten by the police raised the question in the tabloid whether *ons [is] dan steeds in die ou Suid-Afrika* [we are still in the old South Africa].¹¹⁴ The reader pleaded: *Konstabel, ek vra mooi, moenie in 'n monster verander sodra jy daai blou uniform aantrek nie. Bly eerder 'n goeie mens en hou by etiese reëls wat julle sekerlik daar in die polisie moet hê* [Constable, I'm asking nicely, please don't turn into a monster when you put on that blue uniform. Rather stay a good person and keep to the ethical rule that you must surely have in the police]. The shape-shifting of the police into monsters involves a recognition that the sovereign might suspend the law—might at any time belie the democratic rule-based order—and morph into something that can use this force for any end. This has affinity to the wolf.

The terror of suspending order

Which features characterize the wolf as bringing together the specular image of the criminal in the cop, and the cop in the criminal? In *The Prince*,¹¹⁵ Machiavelli claims that: “You must know there are two ways of contesting, the one by the law, the other by force;¹¹⁶ the first method is proper to men, the second to beasts; but because the first is frequently not sufficient, it is

¹¹² Jason, E. 2009. ‘Cop raak skopmal’, *Die Son*, 13 November, p. 1

¹¹³ Jason, E. 2009. ‘Polisieman’ kraak man se skedel’, *Die Son*, 13 November, p. 2

¹¹⁴ SONBriewe. 2010. ‘‘Monster-cops’ moet mooi gaan dink’, *Die Son*, 8 November, p. 9

¹¹⁵ Machiavelli provides guidelines to a prince of a state. Even though it's not strictly about law enforcement, he does contribute to the debate about law and order.

¹¹⁶ It is necessary to enforce law (legitimate transgression being monopolized by the state), but I would suggest that force used for unlawful ends is not what Machiavelli had in mind.

necessary to have recourse to the second.”¹¹⁷ Now, consider the apparition of force that is associated with the wolf that goes by in the language employed in *Die Son: Cop-tornado tref familie* [cop-tornado hits family].¹¹⁸ We see, as *Die Son* describes it, that the police chose the method of force; the method proper to beasts. For the police, *is niks anders as ‘n spul gewapende rowers in uniform nie* [are nothing but a group of armed robbers in uniform], who break everything and leave with money. This is a return to Machiavelli’s logic that the method of the law is insufficient – or impotent, if you will – and that it is necessary to resort to the method of force. One must utilise the method of the law *and* the method of force. Recall here the phrasing “to enforce the law.”¹¹⁹ Derrida suggests this phrase carries with it a justification of authorized force, albeit that “this justification may be judged from elsewhere to be unjust or unjustifiable.” What does nonviolent force look like then? Can violence be separated from the legitimate enforcement of authority or law?¹²⁰

The injunction to “behave as a beast” does not mean that man is a beast. Rather, this is akin to say that man should behave as though he were a beast. When the law appears to be impotent, “then *it is necessary* to behave as a beast.”¹²¹ Hence, when *Die Son* presents the police officer as a “wolf in blue,” muddying the legibility of the police officer, it’s not to say that police *are*

¹¹⁷ Machiavelli, N. 1993 [1515]. *The Prince: The Famed Renaissance Treatise on the Politics of Power*. Foreword by Stone, N. Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Editions Ltd, p. 137

¹¹⁸ Jansen, E. 2009. ‘Cop-tornado tref familie’, *Die Son*, 31 December, p. 2

¹¹⁹ Derrida, J. 2002. “Force of Law: The ‘Mystical Foundation of Authority’”, in Anidjar, G. (ed.). *Acts of Religion*. New York & London: Routledge, p. 233

¹²⁰ C.f. Benjamin, W. 1978. “Critique of Violence”. Edited and with an introduction by P. Demetz. Translated by Jephcott, E. *Reflections: Essays, Aphorisms, Autobiographical Writings*. New York: Harcourt, Inc.

¹²¹ But always having the establishment and the respect of law as an objective. Order as a constant objective, whatever the means necessary. This is where bad cops differ from good cops.

wolves. Rather, the police are behaving as though they were wolves. Hence, they are *like* wolves,¹²² ruled by their (lawless) appetites and desires.¹²³ In turn, appetites and desires are strongly linked by readers to a sense of moral decay. *Die Son* provides countless examples of the sense of moral decay in figures of authority, like police charges of corruption.

Lieutenant general Arno Lamoer, the former Western Cape police commissioner, was suspended in 2015 for alleged corruption. *Die Son* reported that the charges of corruption were indicative of police being rotten from the top.¹²⁴ *Die Son* claimed that due to the charges of corruption, Lamoer's career of 30 years was a thing of the past. Dr. Johan Burger, police expert from the Institute for Security Studies, stated that cases against police create "a very negative situation for public confidence, especially with the police who want to take a strong stand against crime, but their bosses are charged with crime themselves" [*Dit skep 'n baie negatiewe situasie vir openbare vertroue, veral met die polisie wat sterk staandpunt teen misdaad wil inneem, maar hul base word self vir misdaad aangekla*].¹²⁵ Burger added that morale amongst the police was low as a result of police seeing their bosses going to court for criminal charges. In response to the Lamoer controversy, a reader wrote to *Die Son*: "Can you blame the ordinary person on the street for taking the law into their own hands to catch thugs?" [*Kan 'n mens die gewone mens op straat blameer daarvoor dat hy die reg in eie hande neem om boewe vas te vat?*].¹²⁶ Clearly affected by corruption, the unity and cohesion of the police force is fragmented which appears to

¹²² In *Abject Attachments*, it will be suggested that criminals are not like pigs, but *are* pigs. Whereas here, the police are not imagined to be wolves, but *like* wolves.

¹²³ Arruzza, C. 2016. "Philosophical Dogs and Tyrannical Wolves in Plato's *Republic*", in Arruzza, C. & Nikulin, D. (eds.). *Philosophy and Political Power in Antiquity*. Leiden: Koninklijke Brill.

¹²⁴ Hendricks, C. 2015. 'Polisie in sy Lamoer', *Die Son*, 19 April, p. 1

¹²⁵ Hendricks, C. 2015. 'SAPD dalk in sy Lamoer weens skandaal', *Die Son*, 19 April, p. 3

¹²⁶ Briewebebus. 2015. 'Hele polisediens kranklik', *Die Son*, 26 April, p. 22

be a factor of its inefficiency. Consequently, for *Die Son*, this void gives space not only to criminality but to vigilantism as well.

It has been suggested on a number of occasions in *Die Son*, although not necessarily by *Die Son*, that the reason police are corrupt is because police officers are not remunerated adequately. *Die Son* spoke to a dissatisfied inspector who had been in the police force for 27 years. The anonymous police officer told the tabloid that, *ek weet nie hoe daar van my verwag kan word om gemotiveerd te bly as ek deur die gat getrek word nie* [I do not know how it is expected of me to stay motivated when I'm being mistreated]. That the inspector cannot be a bigger financial pillar to his family is, *een van die redes waarom cops korrup raak of hul families uitwis* [one of the reasons that cops become corrupt or eradicate their families].¹²⁷ The inspector ended by saying that, *mens raak mismoedig, kwaad en glad nie lus om gemeenskappe se veiligheid te versker nie* [one becomes discouraged, angry and no longer desirous to ensure the safety of the communities]. In the letter section of the tabloid, one reader reacted to this claim pointing out that *hoogs betaalde staatsamptenare is dan by misdaad betrokke* [highly paid civil servants are involved with crime],¹²⁸ and that, *as iemand by misdaad betrokke raak, het hulle nie die nodige kundigheid om as staatsamptenaar te dien nie* [if someone gets involved in crime, they do not have the necessary expertise to serve as government officials].

The belief that police are corrupt due to their low salaries can be read in interesting ways alongside Plato's *Republic*. Socrates, in dialogue with Adeimantus, speculated that "corruption spreads like wild fire" and that we need "another law that compels people to be good."¹²⁹ He

¹²⁷ Jason, E. 2010. 'G'n wonder cops raak skelm', *Die Son*, 9 April, p.4

¹²⁸ Briewebus. 2009. 'Moenie salaris die blaam gee vir crime', *Die Son*, 29 October, p. 22

¹²⁹ Plato. 2001. *Plato's Republic: The Theatre of the Mind*. Benjamin Jowett's translation revised by Albert A. Anderson. Millis, MA: Agora Publications, Inc, p. 310

goes on further to claim that, “their only concern is making money, and they are as indifferent to goodness as are the beggars.”¹³⁰ Indeed, “if a republic is a weak republic, it takes little to provoke illness” and if the republic gets sick, it may wage war on itself.¹³¹ Who, then, watches over those who are esteemed with watching over the city and its citizens? I suggest that for readers of *Die Son*, the tabloid functions as a mechanism to exercise surveillance over public institutions, such as the police, to ensure that they function efficiently and properly.¹³² Indeed, what must be emphasized is *Die Son*’s virtue of holding law enforcement accountable.

Through *Die Son*’s habitual signalling of instances where police are involved in transgressions and violations of the law, the tabloid undermines the police as an efficient and reliable force that can manage and expel crime. In response to *Die Son*’s publication of stories focusing on police brutality on several incidents, Senior Superintendent Elize Jacobs stated that “when certain individuals in the SAPS act violently, it’s usually announced to the world” and that, as a result, “all the cops are then portrayed as ill-disciplined thugs.”¹³³ Jacobs emphasised the psychological difficulties involved with being a police officer. She stated that police officers are usually over-reported and found guilty of abuse of power and the ones more often making headlines. Indeed, Jacobs argued that “this kind of negative publicity diminishes the police’s public image.” She reminded readers that police were “merely human beings” who work under stressful conditions. In a similar vein, Jacob Zuma, in his 2015 speech for the National Commemoration Day of the South African Police Service, celebrated the “noble task” of police officers, “performed under difficult conditions.” Zuma further stated that the “violent history” of South Africa was a “result

¹³⁰ Ibid., p. 310

¹³¹ Ibid., 310-11

¹³² Wasserman, 2010, Op. Cit., p. 91

¹³³ Eggington, S. 2008. ‘Suffer stress’, *Die Son*, 10 April, p.5

of apartheid colonialism” which had “created a fertile ground for violent crime.” Furthermore, he stated that the “police represent the authority of the State” and that they “form the bulwark between order and anarchy.”¹³⁴

While I acknowledge that the working conditions of police officers are difficult and stressful, do we nevertheless not expect police to police each other? Granted there are not only corrupt cops, and indeed, several articles in *Die Son* present the police as efficient and reliable. Despite its systematic denunciation of police misconduct, *Die Son* regularly attempts to show police officers’ “other side.” To illustrate, police officers reminded readers that police *het ook harte en kry ook mense jammer* [also have hearts and feel sorry for people] and that *as ons verdagtes arresteer, is dit nie omdat ons cruel is nie* [If we arrest suspects, it’s not because we’re cruel].¹³⁵ However, in those instances where readers are confronted with overwhelming images of corrupt cops, how are readers to trust the police force when they cannot tame fellow police officers?¹³⁶ By exposing the transgressions of cops, *Die Son* brings the police officer back to a human level, a citizen who has been entrusted with the ability to have the legitimate use of violence.

Crucially, we repeatedly see how police are associated with elements that compose the figure of the wolf: animalistic, barbaric, brutal, cruel, ignorant of their public role, and uncivilised.¹³⁷ Again, the wolf is an apt figure to capture the threat that rotten cops pose to the city. *Die Son*

¹³⁴ Zuma, J. 2015. Address by President Zuma on the occasion of the National Commemoration Day of the South African Police Service, SAPS Memorial, Union Buildings, Pretoria, *The Presidency: Republic of South Africa*, 6 September.

¹³⁵ Bonthuys, L. 2009. ‘Polisie wys hulle het harte’, *Die Son*, 17 August, p. 7

¹³⁶ In Plato’s *Republic*, Socrates compares the dog with the wolf asserting that, unlike the wolf, dogs can be trained. Here, Plato had the guardians in mind whom he imagined to be like dogs that could be tamed and should be trained.

¹³⁷ C.f. Caldeira, 1992

published a story that detailed how police were being investigated for marijuana smuggling in the Wynberg court cells, involvement in a credit card scam to buy alcohol, for possession of illegal weapon, as well the rape of a woman in police custody.¹³⁸ *Die Son* summed up the issue of the wolves playing the shepherd [*wolwe wat skaapwagter speel*]¹³⁹ in the police rank as the: “servants of justice now serve crime” [*dienaars van gereg dien nou misdaad*].¹⁴⁰

Continuing in this vein, *Die Son* wrote: *’n Klomp cops is die week in hegtenis geneem op sake wat wissel van diefstel tot dwelmverwante klagte* [A lot of cops were taken into custody this week for issues ranging from theft to drug-related charges].¹⁴¹ *Die Son* relayed to readers that two police constables had been taken into custody for theft charges. Citing Capt. Pierre Jordaan, a police spokesperson, *Die Son* explained to readers that a case was made by suspects who claimed that their goods, which should have been given back, were never returned to them. In between, *Die Son* mentions another police constable that was taken into custody for drug related charges. All readers are told about the drug related charges is that small amounts of Mandrax, marijuana and methamphetamine were found in said police constable’s possession. Jordaan told *Die Son* that, in addition, empty *tik-lollies* (methamphetamine lightbulbs) were found in the police constable’s car. *Die Son* ends the story about the “long fingers of the law”¹⁴² by signalling to readers that, additionally, R43 000 had disappeared from the police safe in Cloetesville police station in Stellenbosch. This story emerged barely a week after the news broke that Capt.

¹³⁸ Johnston, S., & Prinsloo, C. 2009. ‘Fô-cops in blou’, *Die Son*, 13 October, p. 1

¹³⁹ Johnston, S., & Prinsloo, C. 2009. ‘Dienaars van gereg dien nou misdaad’, *Die Son*, 13 October, p. 5

¹⁴⁰ Johnston, S., & Prinsloo, C. 2009. ‘Dienaars van gereg dien nou misdaad’, *Die Son*, 13 October, p. 5

¹⁴¹ Prinsloo, C., & Nelson, A. 2010. ‘Lang arm van law kry cops beet’, *Die Son*, 7 January, p. 2

¹⁴² Prinsloo, C., & Nelson, A. 2010. ‘Lang vingers van die gereg’, *Die Son*, 7 January, p. 1

Princess Benjamin, Macassar's police chief, and police constable, Mosipho Sweetness Pikini, would be appearing in court for fraud, theft, dealing in marijuana¹⁴³ and obstruction of justice.

One thing that can be inferred from *Die Son*'s story about Benjamin and Pikini is that crime is a matter of authority,¹⁴⁴ whereby the proliferation of crime can be judged to be an indication of weak authority. Residents from Mitchells Plain restated how fed up the community was with corrupt cops after residents Bradley Hess and Marlo Abrahams were tortured into confessing to the murder of Mervyn Jacobs, Mitchells Plain street committee.¹⁴⁵ Here, what matters ultimately, is that *Die Son*'s repeated publications of corrupt cops disparages the image of the police and demonstrates its incompetence. More alarming is that police officers' role in the increase of crimes are twofold: first as a lack of prevention and protection, and then as a participation in criminality. Authorities such as the police, Caldeira says, are responsible for controlling and containing evil.¹⁴⁶ Evil, then, as a force opposed to reason.

The crisis of legitimacy that readers of *Die Son* express about public institutions is often accompanied with a desire for the death penalty. Indeed, a desire that seeks to have any muddiness of the borders eliminated. Jonathan April¹⁴⁷ wrote to *Die Son* asking why the government was hesitant to bring the death penalty back. A few days later, an anonymous reader¹⁴⁸ detailed to *Die Son* that if the death penalty was abolished because everyone had the

¹⁴³ According to *Die Son*, a total of R1.1 million of marijuana was smuggled out of the police station in Macassar. Due to the events that had unfolded, *Die Son* goes on to mention that all members of the involved police station would shortly be undergoing lie detector tests at the time of the report.

¹⁴⁴ Caldeira, Op. Cit., p. 90

¹⁴⁵ Rahman, F. 2009. "Cops het hulle glo ge-torture", *Die Son*, 12 November, p. 2

¹⁴⁶ Caldeira, Op. Cit., p. 91

¹⁴⁷ Son Briewe. 2010. 'Regering moet doodstraf terugbring', *Die Son*, 15 December, p. 32

¹⁴⁸ Son Briewe. 2010. 'Bring asseblief die doodstraf terug', *Die Son*, 20 December, p. 10

right to life, what can be said for the toddlers, children and adults that are raped and murdered daily in South Africa. Do they not have the same right to life? In an angry tone, the reader asked whether the death penalty had been abolished to spare the lives of criminals. This response to criminality is often imagined to be pedagogic,¹⁴⁹ as well as posing a promise to create order and disorder as clean and mutually recognizable categories.

Picking up on the trail of expressed concerns about incompetence and inefficiency in legal institutions, it was suggested in *Die Son* by a reader that the *verslapte wetgewing en die opheffing van die doodstraf maak misdadigers net meer houtgerus en spoor hulle aan om te maak soos hulle wil* [Weakened legislation and the lifting of the death penalty make criminals merely more unfazed and encourage them to do what they want].¹⁵⁰ That criminals sit in prison for short periods of time with the possibility of quickly getting parole, the reader argued, allows criminals to continue their reign of terror. Richard Wilson suggests that “the post-1994 regime has not been able to recover from the crisis of the legal order”¹⁵¹ during apartheid. Thus, the failure of legal institutions in South Africa, such as the police, can be assessed as arising from a history of “past state brutality.”¹⁵² Here, in the context of police impunity, the death penalty is imagined to punish and deter a *wolf in blue*.

Die Son's depiction of the police force in South Africa operates like a “dysfunctional locale” that is simultaneously a “lawless space” where “generally accepted rules do not apply, and

¹⁴⁹ Caldeira, Op. Cit., p. 364

¹⁵⁰ SONBriewe. 2011. ‘Boewe minag polisie, wette en straf’, *Die Son*, 30 May, p. 9

¹⁵¹ Wilson, R. 2001. *The Politics of Truth and Reconciliation in South Africa: Legitimizing the Post-Apartheid State*. UK: Cambridge University Press, p. 160

¹⁵² Ibid., p. 160

transgression reigns.”¹⁵³ This, in turn, allows *Die Son* to emerge as a watchdog over public institutions for its readers. Certainly, *Die Son*’s recognition of the *wolf in blue* as an object of terror is rooted in the collapsing of the familiar with the unfamiliar, or *extimité*, that evokes the feeling of the uncanny.¹⁵⁴

The uncanny, as Nicholas Royle has pointed out, involves an emphasis on the eye as a visual apparatus: “what comes to light” because it “comes out of the darkness” is thereby “revealed to the eye.”¹⁵⁵ Elmarie Dupper, a reader of *Die Son*, articulates this as “Son sees everything and lets us see everything, too.”¹⁵⁶ She added that: *dit is beter om realisties te wees en te besef wat werklik in ons gemeenskappe aangaan sodat ons kan weet hoe om dit te hanteer* [It is better to be realistic and to realise what is going on in our communities so that we can know how to handle it]. Bearing *Die Son*’s slogan *Son Sien Alles* [Sun Sees Everything] to mind, I propose that through making the invisible visible, the *wolf in blue* is rendered uncanny. Thus, it is through the *wolf in blue* that *Die Son* disturbs the borders of the categories of inside and outside, of order and disorder, thereby bringing to light to its readers what would have remained hidden.

¹⁵³ Bond, H. 2012. *Lacan at the Scene*. London: MIT Press, p. 65

¹⁵⁴ Houghton, H. 2003. “Introduction”, in S. Freud’s *The Uncanny*. Translated by D. McLintock. New York: Penguin Books, p. lii

¹⁵⁵ Royle, Op. Cit., p. 108

¹⁵⁶ Brieweibus. 2010. ‘Son’ sien alles en laat ons almal ook als sien’, *Die Son*, 31 December, p. 23

IV

Ons Plek is Vol 'Daai Mense': Xenophobia and Perilous Proximity

In a similar fashion to Nietzsche's parable of the madman, who reveals to the world the implications of killing God, *Die Son* details how a madman [*mal man*] from Philippi prophetically declared to Francis Muganguzi, a Congolese national, that he needed to be careful because, "a new De Klerk is rising and this time he is after the blood of foreigners" [*'n Nuwe De Klerk is besig om te verrys en dié keer is hy agter die bloed van uitlanders*].¹ The madman's words were uttered a few weeks before the eruption of xenophobic violence in Johannesburg. Unlike the madman from Nietzsche's parable whose burden was that he had arrived too soon, the madman from Philippi had arrived at precisely the right moment. The prophetic warning was received by Muganguzi and other foreign nationals. In late May 2008, Muganguzi, demonstrating that he acknowledged the madman's timely proclamation, stated: "What happened was shocking, but not surprising" [*Wat gebeur het, was skokkend, maar geen verrassing nie*]. The narrative of the madman from Philippi with his "crazed ideas" [*waansinnige idees*] about a "new De Klerk" who is "after the blood of foreigners" is one of *Die Son*'s mechanisms for revealing both the limits of the collective self and how precarious those limits are.

In this chapter, I examine *Die Son*'s engagement with and descriptions of the xenophobic attacks of May 2008 (of which a third of the fatalities were South African nationals).² and how it

¹ Verster, C. 2008. 'Xenofobie-aanvalle: 'Daar was tekens', *Die Son*, 28 May, p. 5

² Gqola, P. D. 2016. "Intimate foreigners or violent neighbours? Thinking masculinity and post-apartheid xenophobic violence through film". *Agenda*, vol. 30. No 2: 64-74, p. 64

presents xenophobia as an expression of collective hatred. This form of presentation relies on a particular kind of socio-political force, which defines the boundary between insider and outsider and mobilizes affect to create and amplify this distinction. That is, this distinction is realised and strictly enforced through practice: affect is materialised in practice in the world. It is no longer merely a feeling, but a force that people collectively act upon. Collective affect therefore has a distinct kind of reality.

Die Son's depiction of disjointed insights and snapshots onto the xenophobic attacks provide an intimate lens from which to gain an understanding of the violence of proximity. *Die Son* reveals how hatred is simultaneously a mechanism and an outcome of a desire to remove, or to destroy, an embodied threat located in one's intimate sphere. This desire, as I show, is expressed in *Die Son* as xenophobia in the form of a collective affect. I demonstrate how the work of such collective hate transformed neighbours – within shared social spaces – into foreigners. That is, differences that mattered little were remade into characteristics of those who become objects of violence who needed to be expelled from the social body. Under what conditions, I ask in this chapter, were neighbours produced in *Die Son* as foreigners or objects of hate? To answer this question, I turn to the conditions (and language) of intimacy – as opposed to distance – to suggest that intimacy is a 'measure of closeness' that, following like Niza Yanay, made (and unmade) the African foreign national.³ I show how those who came to be marked as 'objects of hate' were not outsiders but already doubly within.⁴

³ Antwi *et al* (2013:4), drawing from Ahmed, refer to this as "alienated intimacy," which refers to the "profound violence impressed upon bodies made to feel out of place."

⁴ Yanay's formulation of "doubly within" refers to the tension between a feeling of familiarity and a mode of non-recognition. She further states that this tension is the same logic used by Freud when he

In an effort to reveal the mechanisms that transform an individual into a collective, whereby the ones considered part of the collective are clearly marked, I rely on both Freud's remarks on affect and group formation⁵ and Adorno's theorisation of fascist propaganda⁶ to suggest that through a process of identification, *feelings* hold the collective together in *Die Son*, however ambivalent that collective may be.

In order to avoid reducing xenophobia merely to an affective intensity such as hate that runs the risk of framing xenophobic attacks as abnormal and irrational,⁷ I also consider the historicity of the figure of the foreigner in South Africa in three distinct moments. In doing so, I historicise the conditions of perilous proximity thereby signalling the continuation of ideologies, policies and practices from the past that remain in the present as some bodies are deemed more hateful than others.

Finally, I consider how the social and economic conditions constituted the "resident" and the "foreign refugee" as sharing a classed position, thereby signalling these two figures' similarity in certain respects. This, I argue, translated into hatred and violent hostility exacerbated by the intimacy of proximity. The violence directed towards and impressed on African foreign nationals acted as a mechanism of status control, distinguishing citizens from non-citizens. Thus, I am

argued that love and hate often co-exist in the most intimate relations. Feelings develop together to exaggerate differences in order to maintain a sense of separateness.

⁵ Freud, 1921

⁶ Adorno, 1951

⁷ I suggest we take Adorno's (1951:136) remarks on this matter seriously when he states that: "For us it would be enough to say that in a group the individual is brought under conditions which allow him to throw off the repressions of his unconscious instincts". Formulated differently: Individuals in the group display primitive attitudes that are *contradictory* to their rational thoughts and behaviours, but whose attitudes cannot be reduced to the realm of the abnormal and irrational.

concerned with how hate came to be constituted as well as outline subjects (resident/refugee; citizen/non-citizen). In *Die Son*'s depiction of the May 2008 xenophobic attacks where hatred worked to not only constitute identity, but also disrupt and destroy the world of the hated object.

Aesthetics of hatred

In late May 2008 *Die Son* reported on the xenophobic attacks that had erupted in Du Noon, Milnerton, in what the tabloid described as “hate attacks” that had “spread like wildfire” across Cape Town.⁸ *Die Son* stated that what was supposed to be an open meeting in Du Noon quickly turned into a nightmare for foreign refugees when they were forced to flee their homes and businesses in the area. According to *Die Son*, residents from Du Noon had vandalised and looted the shops and houses of foreign refugees. The mode of encounter that *Die Son* outlines to its readers demonstrates the way in which hate and fear secures a relationship between affected bodies. In this instance, between what *Die Son* referred to as the residents of Du Noon and foreign refugees. Hate and fear are indissociable from the notion of proximity as they establish distance between citizens and non-citizens, insiders and outsiders, residents and refugees. Here Yanay states that:

[...] hatred, we must note, speaks as a borderline language. Hatred speaks in one voice but with many hyperbolic sublanguages: the language of death and desire, exclusion and inclusion, detachment and attachment, and it always breaks out in the space between convention and the violation of the rules.⁹

⁸ Ford, N. 2008. ‘Vlugtelinge vlug wéér’, *Die Son*, 26 May, p. 4-5

⁹ Yanay, 2013, Op. Cit., p. 12

Hatred erupts and moves along the fault lines of the categories of inclusion and exclusion. I analyse (negative) intimate sentiments (such as South Africa is “full of those people/*vol daai mense*”)¹⁰ together with the expressions from *Die Son*’s readers that imagine African foreign nationals’ proximity to be threatening to take something away from the South African national. The tensions of intimacy, including of difference and similarity, I suggest is imagined as an “invasion.” A reader, who did not reveal their name, but who identified as and stipulated that “South Africa is for South Africans” wrote:

I am very unhappy about the fact that our people suffer and have nowhere to go but suffering people from elsewhere come to our country. Nigerians, Malawians, Somalis and Pakistanis flee to our country. They start businesses here but live on the minimum – which means they leave the country with all the money. They add nothing to our country’s economy and communities, donate nothing to our schools or welfare societies.¹¹

In the reader’s imagination, the foreigner benefits from being inside the country but does not contribute to the community and is thus considered outside the body of the nation. Here we witness a re-writing of history in which not only the labour of African foreign nationals is concealed, but also the hospitality of neighbouring African countries to exiled South Africans during apartheid is erased.¹² It is through the re-writing of history where African foreigner nationals’ proximity is imagined as threatening and to be taking something away from the nation that allows for an affective reading of African foreign nationals as something to be “feared, hated and distrusted.”¹³ The (ambivalent) negative attachment developed towards African foreigner

¹⁰ Son Briewe, 2010. ‘Ons plekke is vol ‘daai mense’’, *Die Son*, 26 November, p. 39

¹¹ S*n Letters, 2008. ‘Foreigners send all the money home’, *Die Son*, 9 May, p. 25

¹² Ahmed, 2004, Op. Cit., p. 117

¹³ Matsinhe, Op. Cit., p. 302

nationals is simultaneously imagined as a positive attachment towards the category of “citizen.” Thus, the imaginary of the reader reveals an understanding of the “way in which things stand between”¹⁴ people. We might ask at what moment the investment in the particularity of “I” the ‘citizen’ comes into conflict with the expectation that the investment in “I” must be given up, resulting in a kind of re-writing of history.

Tension ruptures between the particular “I” and the universal “we” at the moment the “I” becomes politicized, thereby differentiating “us” from “them.”¹⁵ The politicized “I” premised on the perceived fiction of inclusion post-apartheid differentiates itself from not only the “we” but also “them” through continual assessment and classification of bodies. Given the desire for recognition expressed by *Die Son*’s readers, we may enquire into whether the harnessing of hate is a response to an imagined assault on the post-apartheid community that produces an ensemble of collective identities. Indeed, what are the implications of politicising the category of “citizen” as the one who should be recognised as deserving rewards and rights in light of the universal rainbow nation discourse? When readers of *Die Son* push for their recognition, what is being asked to be recognized?

In addition to the formation of citizen and non-citizen through ambivalent attachments and investments, we must be cautious not to position hatred as an object. Rather, hatred is an affect that produces the very surfaces and boundaries that allow an individual to be outlined as if they were an object, taking on ‘tragic visibility’ in this instance. It’s through affect’s ability to produce boundaries that hate has the capacity for its object to ‘stand for’ or ‘stand in for.’ We see

¹⁴ Du Plessis, I. 2011. “Nation, Family, Intimacy: The Domain of the Domestic in the Social Imaginary”. *South African Review of Sociology*, Vol. 21, No. 2:45-65, p. 46

¹⁵ Brown, Op. Cit., p. 56

this in readers' production of categories of non-citizens (foreigners, refugees, il/legal immigrants, aliens) through categories (criminal) potentially produces non-citizens as these categories. To understand this claim better, consider the relation between affect and narrative within the previously mentioned reader's letter.¹⁶ The relation does something crucial. Namely, it delineates the contours of the insider that, in the process, aligns the national subject with the body of the nation. In turn, the interplay between affect and the narrative leads to the exclusion of those who are seen as causing injury to the body (criminal/illegal activities) or taking something away (housing, jobs) from the nation. Narrative therefore brings the 'object of hate' closer, allowing it to enter into our lives. That *Die Son* gives readers' the capacity to narrate in some shape or form assists in the formation of the collective identity of those who are identified as insiders.

To further illustrate what affect combined with narrative *does*, consider how the sense of loss and threat that emanates from the reader's letter also does significant symbolic work in the form of coupling. African foreign nationals come to be associated with the loss of housing, stolen jobs and opportunities and with the imagined failure of not contributing to the South African nation. It is through this symbolic work of coupling that the proximity of African foreign nationals within the community is read as an invasion. Sara Ahmed articulates this as a form of "metonymic slide" where the coupling "become[s] readable" as forms of plague or an outbreak."¹⁷ The language of invasion, therefore, references various spaces and sites that are signalled as not-home for the African foreign national and as being-at-home for the South African national.¹⁸

¹⁶ C.f. Kristeva, 1982

¹⁷ Ahmed, 2004, Op. Cit., p. 44

¹⁸ Ahmed argues that hatred is distributed across various figures unevenly. The emotional reading of others, often accompanied by a narrative of injury, results in particular figures – mixed race couple, the

Insofar as the “pathos of nearness,”¹⁹ to invoke Walter Benjamin, is intimately bound with the configuration of hatred with the foreigner, we must venture to acknowledge that neither intimacy nor proximity are the cause of hatred itself. Rather, as Yanay puts forth, intimacy and proximity connect with hatred when relations of dependency are not reciprocally recognized nor mutual.²⁰ In other words, groups of people that live in proximity can enter into a relation of what Kelman²¹ has termed negative interdependence when people’s competing interests and needs are set up as “either/or contestation.”²²

I feel bad about what happened to the foreigners, but similar things are happening a lot on the Flats. You take a tenant, he stays in your yard and after a year you struggle with him. Because then he thinks it’s his house and he does not want to leave. So too with the illegal immigrants [...] Yet nothing is done to prevent fires in squatter camps. But thousands of rands are spent on them – for tents, blankets, food and medical supplies. The attention has now been given to them – while our people die in winter [*Ek voel sleg oor wat met die uitlanders gebeur het, maar sulke goed gebeur baie in die Vlakte. Jy vat 'n loseerder in, hy bly in jou jaart en ná 'n jaar sukkel jy met hom. Want dan dink hy dis sy huis en hy wil nie uit nie. So ook met die onwettige immigrante [...]* Tog word niks gedoen om brande in plakkerskampe te verhoed nie. Maar duisende rande word op hulle uitgegee – vir tente, komberse, kos en mediese

foreigner – embodying threats of loss. There is a metonymic slide in the sense that bodies become readable as an invasion. The metonymic slide therefore constructs a relation of resemblance.

¹⁹ Benjamin, W. 1999. *The Arcades Project*, trans. H. Eiland & K. McLaughlin. Cambridge & London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, p. 545

²⁰ Yanay, 2013, Op. Cit., p. 98

²¹ C.f. Kelman, H. C. 1999. “The Interdependence of Israeli and Palestinian National Identities: The Role of the Other in Existential Conflict”. *Journal of Social Issues*, 55(3):581-600.

²² Yanay, 2013, Op. Cit., p. 78

*voorrade. Die aandag is nou op hulle gevestig – terwyl ons mense sterf in die winter.]*²³

The either/or contestation is often marked by a linguistic signifier such as “but,” simultaneously revealing a recognition of similarity (but one in which difference is marked). Notice how the reader does not think of the needs of “our people” as separate to the needs of the African foreign nationals. It is the language of our/their or us/them that underscores relations of negative interdependence. Thus, the concept of negative interdependence involves the belief that one “can acquire their national rights and identity only by refusing to acknowledge their adversary’s identity and right to self-determination.”²⁴ Indeed, the more determined one is to distinguish and separate oneself from others, the more (negatively) attached and dependent we become on them.

Nevertheless, for Yanay, there is more at stake than the insider/outsider schema that underlies negative interdependence.²⁵ She argues that what Kelman fails to recognise is that the linguistic split between us/them is an “illusion”²⁶ that consists of two possibilities. By this, Yanay seeks to highlight that the linguistic split can evolve either into “murderous hatred” or a “good neighbourhood.”²⁷ Freud similarly recognizes such identification as ambivalent: “Identification, in fact, is ambivalent from the very first: it can turn into an expression of tenderness as easily as into a wish for someone’s removal.”²⁸ To recognise that hatred is not only generated under

²³ Sonlesers, 2008. ‘Immigrante suig land leeg’, *Die Son*, 1 July, p. 16

²⁴ Rubin, C., & Auerbach, C. F. 2009. “Identity Changes in Former Combatants Involved in Israeli-Palestinian Reconciliation Activities”, in Salinas, M. F. & Rabi, H. A. (eds.). *Resolving the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: Perspectives on the Peace Process*. New York: Cambria Press, p. 164

²⁵ Yanay, 2013, Op. Cit., p. 79-80

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Freud, 1921, Op. Cit., p. 679

certain conditions of intimacy, but constitutes a “form of intimacy” itself is to demonstrate how “hatred is ambivalent.”²⁹ Indeed, it is this possibility, not inevitability, which is at stake.

Considering Heinrich von Kleist’s play *Penthesilea*, Deleuze and Guattari argue that feelings become externalized and, as such, become weapons of war.³⁰ As feelings such as love or hate gain force, they become affect.³¹ That is, the forces of affect punctuate the affected spaces with a distinct rhythm characterized by rushes and a sense of urgency. Affect is therefore produced by proximity and movement. Hatred, as affect, threatens the borders of identities. Concerning the manner in which affect works to align different figures together, Ahmed writes that, “hate does not *reside* in a given subject or object. Hate is economic; it circulates between signifiers in relationships of difference and displacement.”³² Hatred, when harnessed, can destroy the world of its object, undoing its object “like weapons.”³³

That the foreigners are outlined as an object of hate is not due to any intrinsic property of the ‘foreigner.’ Rather, it is due the foreign body’s capacity to affect and be affected. Can we imagine hate, then, as a form of attachment and investment? Ahmed suggests that “to consider hatred as a form of intimacy is to show how hatred is ambivalent; it is an investment in an object (of hate) whereby the object becomes part of the life of the subject even though – or perhaps because – its threat is perceived as coming from outside.”³⁴ Although hate seems to distance the

²⁹ Ahmed, 2004, Op. Cit., p. 50

³⁰ Deleuze, G., & Guattari, F. 1987. *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. B. Massumi, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, p. 356

³¹ C.f. Ahmed, 2014

³² Ahmed, 2004, Op. Cit., p. 44

³³ Deleuze & Guattari, Op. Cit., p. 400

³⁴ Ahmed, 2004, Op. Cit., p. 50

subject from the object, the subject defines himself in relation to the object. The subject thus becomes inseparable from the object of hate.

The conditions of collective hate

I begin with the question initially asked by Freud and which Adorno offers us in his text: “[I]n the spirit of true enlightenment: what makes the masses into masses?”³⁵ Freud himself is the first to caution us against considering a mere collection of people as a group or a mass.³⁶ Adorno takes note of Freud’s observation that the bond which unites a collective is libidinal in nature. In other words, for Freud what constitutes the “essence” of the group are “love relationships” or “emotional ties”³⁷ more generally. Unlike in Adorno’s focus on fascism – a leader group – xenophobia for our purposes will be considered a leaderless group. In the instance of a leaderless group, “an idea, an abstraction” or “a wish in which a number of people can have a share”³⁸ functions as a substitute for a leader. In xenophobia, the dominant idea or abstraction, which is wholly negative, serves as a unifying mechanism³⁹ that feeds on destructiveness.⁴⁰ This often manifests itself so disastrously in the persecution of weak and helpless minorities, expressed as a

³⁵ Adorno, Op. Cit., p. 135

³⁶ Freud, 1921, Op. Cit., p. 677

³⁷ Ibid., p. 674

³⁸ Ibid., p. 677

³⁹ Freud (1921:677) acknowledges Schopenhauer’s famous figure of the freezing porcupine paradox whereby “no one can tolerate a too intimate approach to one’s neighbour.”

⁴⁰ Adorno, Op. Cit., pp. 146-7

“hatred against those outside.”⁴¹ The libidinal function in such a unifying principle “acts as a negatively integrating force.”⁴²

Through a language of self-love, including expressions of human rights, *Die Son*’s readers signal how African foreign nationals threaten the “preservation of the individual”⁴³ and challenge the limits of the collective self. Significantly, Adorno concerns himself with the specific psychological mechanisms that transform primary sexual energy into *feelings* which hold the masses together.⁴⁴ Adorno, along with Freud, identifies the mechanism which transforms libido into the bond between followers themselves as that of *identification*,⁴⁵ where “identification is the earliest expression of an emotional tie with another person, playing a part in the early history of the Oedipus complex.”⁴⁶ Thus, the feelings of hatred and hostility that were expressed in relations between South African nationals and African foreign nationals co-exists with what Freud would term “expressions of self-love,”⁴⁷ or alternatively: narcissism.

Adorno acknowledges the “role of narcissism in regard to the identifications which are at play in the formation of fascist groups,”⁴⁸ arguing that the pattern of identification through idealization is a collective one.⁴⁹ Notably, he suggests that the distinction between the “beloved in-group” and the “rejected out-group” comes to be regarded as “self-evident to such a degree that the

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 412-422

⁴² Ibid., p. 144

⁴³ Freud, 1921, Op. Cit., p. 677

⁴⁴ Adorno, Op. Cit., p. 137

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 139

⁴⁶ Ibid., pp. 139-40

⁴⁷ Freud, 1921, Op. Cit., p. 677

⁴⁸ Adorno, Op. Cit., p. 140

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 140

question of why people love what is like themselves and hate what is different, is rarely asked seriously enough.”⁵⁰ The identification with the in-group and the rejection of the out-group in xenophobia, expressed through violence and utterances tainted by hatred, is ambivalent as I will show later. Ambivalent because “an expression of tenderness” can quickly turn “into a wish for someone’s removal.”⁵¹ In *Die Son*’s case, ambivalence of identification was best illustrated by the oscillation between readers’ rejection of African foreign nationals and the desire for African foreign nationals, who owned shops in particular, to return to communities.⁵²

Building on Adorno and Freud’s argument, I suggest that hatred becomes a unifying mechanism that functions as an “emotional tie,” establishing a ground for new collectives to be forged. In what proceeds, I will not hold onto the sharp distinction made by some between affect and emotion.⁵³ While this distinction has its merits, I use the terms interchangeably to not only hold onto its “aesthetic productivity,”⁵⁴ but to also think through how the capacities (to affect and be affected)⁵⁵ are always “collectively formed.”⁵⁶ Which is to say that the individual in the group, however un/stable, undergoes an intensification of an ability to affect and be affected.

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 143

⁵¹ Freud, 1921, Op. Cit., p. 679

⁵² Mfazwe, A. 2010. ‘Mense sal Somaliërs beskerm’, *Die Son*, 15 July, p. 5

Mfazwe, A. 2010. ‘Gemeenskap kan nie cope sonder Somaliese winkels’, *Die Son*, 16 July, p. 8

⁵³ Gilles Deleuze and Brian Massumi are well known for theorising a distinction between affect and emotion.

⁵⁴ Ngai, S. 2005. *Ugly Feelings*. Cambridge & London: Harvard University Press. p. 28

⁵⁵ Deleuze has done significant theoretical labour with Spinoza’s distinction between affectio (affection) and affectus (affect). In an effort to specify the distinction between affection and affect, Deleuze (1978) stipulates that non-representational thoughts can be considered affect. To clarify this claim, what one hates is an object of representation insofar as it has form in idea. In other words, to say affect is non-representational is, on the other hand, to say affect is about ontologies of becoming —The

In this optic, the difference between hatred as an affect and emotion is considered to be a “modal difference of intensity or degree” where “affects are *less* formed and structured than emotions, but not lacking form or structure altogether.”⁵⁷ In particular, Ben Anderson argues that “in practice affect, feeling and emotion are indistinguishable” and that “affects and emotions are always-already entangled with one another in encounters.”⁵⁸ Thus, I suggest that affect is always collectively formed as it acts as a unifying mechanism, producing emotional ties amongst people, who are considered part of the in-group through a process of identification.

If hatred is affective, where does affect emerge and how is it enveloped in conditions of intimacy and proximity? Thus, in rejecting the proximity of certain objects, we articulate places of belonging and non-belonging, being-at-home and not-being-at-home for objects and subjects alike. Hatred therefore generates objects under conditions of proximity and intimacy. On a cautionary note, when I conceptualise hatred as affect, I do not assume that affect is autonomous and that its place of residence is in objects.⁵⁹ It is rather, as I have suggested, under conditions of perilous proximity that subjects come to be outlined as if they were objects (of hate).

body’s perpetual becoming, its potential, its openness emerges from Spinoza’s much cited formulation that, “None has yet determined what the body can do”. If we were to attempt to interrogate hatred through this argument, Deleuze might posit that in order to hate it is necessary to have an idea of what is hated, “however confused it may be”. Proceeding from this claim, the idea of what is hated and hatred as affect are not irreducible to one another. Rather, they enter into a relation where the idea (of what is hated) has primacy over (hatred as) affect.

⁵⁶ Anderson, B. 2014. *Encountering Affect: Capacities, Apparatuses, Conditions*. UK: Ashgate Publishing Limited. p. 9

⁵⁷ Ngai, Op. Cit., p. 27

⁵⁸ Anderson, 2014, Op. Cit., p. 84

⁵⁹ Crucial to Brian Massumi’s work is that he equates affect with *intensity* (1995:84). By Massumi equating affect with intensity we witness how he is suggesting that affect resides in things (objects):

A negative attachment is developed in reaction to what is rejected because it is affecting us (a “bad encounter”). In turn, a positive attachment is developed to those we identify with.⁶⁰ The formulation of negative and positive attachments might point to what Massumi would call the *intensity* of affective attachments.⁶¹ In this line of reasoning, hate crimes involve structures of attachment. In Barbara Perry’s work on hate crime,⁶² she defines hate crimes as:

A mechanism of power intended to sustain somewhat precarious hierarchies, through violence and threats of violence (verbal or physical). It is generally directed toward those whom our society has traditionally stigmatized and marginalized.⁶³

As Perry notes, this definition of hate crime suggests that a crime was committed as a defence to a perceived injury.⁶⁴ Hence, hate crimes become a mechanism to assert one’s right to belong as a signifier of privilege. In this way, hate crimes remind people of “their place,” thereby establishing and reinforcing boundaries. It is through hate and violence being *directed* towards

“Affects are virtual synesthetic perspectives anchored in (functionally limited by) the actually existing, particular things that embody them [...] Actually existing, structured things live in and through that which escapes them (96-97)”; c.f. Massumi, B. 1995. “The Autonomy of Affect”, *The Cultural Critique*, No. 31: 83-109.

⁶⁰ Adorno, 1951; Ahmed, 2014

⁶¹ Massumi, Op. Cit., 1995

⁶² Perry, B. 2001. *In the Name of Hate: Understanding Hate Crimes*. London: Routledge.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 3

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 3

groups that people are forced into an identity.⁶⁵ Indeed, hateful encounters work to seal people into identities that are affective.⁶⁶

In Althusser's notion of *interpellation* – or *hailing* – the police officer's utterance "Hey, you there!" socially constitutes the individual into a subject when the subject responds to the police officer's hail.⁶⁷ It would be tempting to argue that the type of utterances that so often accompany hate crimes interpellates subjects into an identity. This kind of subject formation process would be entirely performative as the subject is initiated into an identity through linguistic techniques. Clearly African foreign nationals' identity formation is constituted through more than the infamous hail *makwerekwere*, for example. This is not to say that the hail of *makwerekwere* has not come to haunt African foreign nationals. However, I would caution against considering the African foreign national as being socially constituted primarily by (hateful) utterances: that is, I am arguing against a word that makes flesh or a subject that is "‘spoken' into existence."⁶⁸

With this caution in mind, I suggest that we consider how specific utterances like *makwerekwere* might hail a subject in Althusser's sense, but are also affective, as Ahmed⁶⁹ has argued, due to

⁶⁵ Ahmed, S. 2001. Communities that Feel: Intensity, Difference and Attachment, in E. Larreta, (ed), *Identity and difference in the global era*, p. 350

⁶⁶ While I am suggesting that people are sealed into identities through affective encounters, this is not to say that affect resides in the subject. Rather, hate comes to be directed towards certain groups thereby sealing them into an identity by opening up histories of association and exclusion. Thus, as William Mazzarella (2009:293) has suggested, the "senses, like the self, have their histories."

⁶⁷ Althusser, L, 1971. Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses, in Althusser, L. (ed.). *Lenin and Philosophy and other Essays*. New York: Monthly Review Press, p. 174

⁶⁸ Butler, 1997, Op. Cit., p. 5

⁶⁹ C.f. 2004

the capacity of words to *stick*⁷⁰ to subjects. The hail is affective insofar as it not only sticks to the subject, but sticks different subjects together. As Jean-Paul Sartre writes: “I want to get rid of the viscous and it sticks to me, it draws me” and “clings”⁷¹ to me. If affective utterances stick to subjects, I argue that affectively charged speech works to “draw” the subject, outlining them as an object of hate. Thus, if speech gives any indication of how individuals feel about other individuals, I suggest that affective utterances works to outline a collective. Hence, by paying attention to the contexts, sites and utterances in which hatred gains intensity, *Die Son* shows the “narcissistic *gain*”⁷² that people obtain from being in the in-group. In other words, that one is more entitled and is somehow better or more deserving than those excluded.

While we might object along with Ruth Leys⁷³ that affect theory fails to overcome the promises that it purports to have made, the excerpts from *Die Son* of the May 2008 xenophobic violence show how affect – hatred more precisely – offers an account of forces and intensities that reveal the “folds of belonging (or non-belonging) to a world.”⁷⁴ Yet, at the same time, I am aware that the reduction of xenophobia solely to hate potentially limits understandings of xenophobia as well as ways to challenge it.⁷⁵ I want to begin by considering the missing “ideologies, policies,

⁷⁰ In part IV of *Being and Nothingness* (1943), Jean-Paul Sartre attempts to theorise stickiness and sliminess through an exploration of *visqueux* in the nature of things.

⁷¹ Sartre, J. P. 2003 [1943]. *Being and Nothingness*. Translated by Barnes, H. E. London & New York: Routledge Classics, p. 629

⁷² Adorno, Op. Cit., p. 145

⁷³ Leys, R. 2011. “The Turn to Affect: A Critique”. *Critical Inquiry* Vol. 37, No. 3: 434-472.

⁷⁴ Gregg, M., & Seigworth, G. J. 2010. “An Inventory of Shimmers”, in Gregg, M. & Seigworth, G. J. (eds.). *The Affect Reader*. Durham: Duke University Press, p. 16

⁷⁵ C.f. Omi, M. 2001.” Rethinking the Language of Race and Racism”. *Asian American Law Journal*, 8(7):161-167.

practices in a variety of institutional arenas”⁷⁶ that exacerbated the xenophobic violence of May 2008. Indeed, as I will demonstrate, hate – and other affects – have their histories.

Histories of hate

There have been several institutions, systems and bureaucracies that have shaped and sought to assign meaning to the African foreign national. The first is *apartheid* that was premised on discrimination, exclusion and segregation of Black Africans, which permeated every aspect of their lives. The second was the *1937 Aliens Act* that indexed Black South Africans as “unwanted immigrants” within their own country whereas African foreign nationals were labelled as “migrants.” The third concerns how the South African *migrant labour system* was at the core of redefining citizenship in post-apartheid South Africa.

If we contend with Harold Wolpe’s thesis for a moment that apartheid in South Africa entailed more than the expression of a racial ideology and ostracization,⁷⁷ we can observe that, for Wolpe, apartheid was primarily a form of labour control that was secured through the cheap labour offered by the migrant labour system, where this arrangement was made to work through segregation acts and policies in a bid to harness “the instruments of labour coercion.”⁷⁸ While there are objections that have been put forth regarding Wolpe’s thesis,⁷⁹ I begin with Wolpe to

⁷⁶ Omi, M., & Winant, H. 2014. *Racial Formation in the United States*. 3rd Ed. New York: Routledge, p. 128

⁷⁷ Wolpe, H. 1995. “Capitalism and Cheap Labour Power in South Africa: From Segregation to Apartheid”, in Beinart, W. & Dubow, S. (eds.). *Segregation and Apartheid in Twentieth-Century South Africa*. London & New York: Routledge

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 61

⁷⁹ C.f. Glaser, D. 2001. *Politics and Society in South Africa: A Critical Introduction*. London: Sage Publications, p. 52

privilege the migrant labour system. I do so to note that while African foreign migrant labourers, along with Black South Africans, were committed to not only liberation, but also unionisation,⁸⁰ there has been a push for the abolition of migrant labour in post-apartheid South Africa. Indeed, that apartheid was seen merely as a form of labour control and not also as a state, lead to the impression that the demise of apartheid simultaneously required the demise of the migrant labour system.⁸¹

Additionally, central to the apartheid state was the ability to exclude and expel Black South Africans by only allowing them into “White” areas as migrant labourers, who were expected to return to the “homelands” afterwards.⁸² Through mechanisms of exclusion, including racial division and segregation laws, the apartheid state produced Black South Africans into ‘foreign natives,’ thereby excluding those it categorized as ‘foreign natives’ from the urban centres.⁸³ According to Landau, Black South Africans were designated to live within the confines of the ‘homelands’ or ‘Bantustans,’ and should they stray be rendered “guests of the South African Republic.”⁸⁴ As a result, nationality during apartheid was considered strictly urban.⁸⁵ That

⁸⁰ Neocosmos, M. 1999. “Strangers at the Cattle Post: State Nationalism and Migrant Identity in Post-Apartheid South Africa”, in Palmberg, M. (ed.). *National Identity and Democracy*, p. 287

⁸¹ Neocosmos, M. 2006. *From ‘Foreign Natives’ to ‘Native Foreigners’: Explaining Xenophobia in Post-Apartheid South Africa: Citizenship and Nationalism, Identity and Politics*. Dakar: CODESRIA, p. 48

⁸² The apartheid state further governed and controlled the movement of Black Africans through the pass system. Migration was thus considered a threat to the apartheid state, which sought to control it vigorously. Landau (2010:220) suggests that the suspicion and concern for those who move between areas has continued in post-apartheid South Africa;

⁸³ C.f. Landau, L. B. 2010. “Loving the Alien? Citizenship, Law, and the Future in South Africa’s Demonic Society”. *African Affairs*, 109(435):213-230, p. 219

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 219

⁸⁵ Neocosmos, 2006, *Op. Cit.*, p. 22

human movement (from rural to urban, for example) is imagined as threatening those who are outlined as insiders is one of the historical continuities and socio-political factors that shaped the events of May 2008.

As a result of being categorised as non-citizens, or subjects, Black South Africans were subjected to the same legislation which controlled and managed the entry of non-South Africans.⁸⁶ However, Neocosmos argues that it was only when the 1937 Aliens Act was introduced, in order to prevent Jewish immigrants from entering South Africa, the notion of “alien” became readable as an unwanted immigrant.⁸⁷ While the 1937 Aliens Act was originally intended as an Anti-Semitic mechanism to curb the immigration of Jews from Germany into South Africa, it was simultaneously utilized to produce Black South Africans as “aliens.”⁸⁸ Thus, the notion of “alien” is rooted in a history of colonial rule.

That the apartheid state attempted to de-nationalise a significant portion of its own citizens has reproduced the citizen/subject division in post-apartheid South Africa, whose formulation now makes a distinction between citizen and non-citizen. The categories of non-citizens (foreigners, refugees, il/legal immigrants, aliens) are now subject to and experience the “law as arbitrary,

⁸⁶ Ibid, p. 29

⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 29

⁸⁸ Neocosmos (2006:30) notes that: “While some white foreigners were classified as aliens, black foreigners were not classified as such during much of the apartheid period. The reasons for this had mainly to do with the dependence of the South African economy on migrant labour from surrounding states and because of the centrality of race, [Peberdy and Crush] argue, rather than nationality as such as the basis of discrimination. Black foreigners were wanted as sources of labour rather than as immigrants so apparently the term ‘migrant’ was introduced into legislation to denote a temporary resident.”

localized, and extra-legal.”⁸⁹ According to Landau, there are three techniques of exclusion that are aimed at reinforcing the distinction between citizens and non-citizens: “legal status and documentation; arrest, detention, and deportation; and a general lack of access to constitutional protections through the court and political processes.”⁹⁰ Landau goes on to acknowledge that while the poor may also at times be subjected to these techniques of exclusion, what makes non-citizens experience distinct in this regard is the extent to which non-citizen’s exclusion has been “both bureaucratically institutionalized and socially legitimate.”⁹¹ As I will demonstrate, *Die Son*’s readers have evoked discourse and narratives that have sought to legitimize the exclusion of non-citizens.

Indeed, citizenship is indexed by one’s birth right, thereby appealing to claims of indigeneity. Such conceptions of citizenship are present in claims such “looks like we were not born here”⁹² in an attempt to bolster one’s entitlement to the nation and inclusion, as such. However, this was not always the case. The discourse of ‘rights’ is argued to have emerged in the 1980s in South Africa. Neocosmos⁹³ stresses the importance of acknowledging that during this period (1980s) citizenship was premised above all on inclusivity and not on indigeneity. Conceptions of citizenship were therefore the result of not only the state but also popular politics. This raises this question: At what moment did conceptions of citizenship become premised on exclusivity and indigeneity?

⁸⁹ Landau, Op. Cit., p. 221

⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 222

⁹¹ Ibid., p. 222

⁹² Sonlesers, 2008. ‘Ons moet tevrede wees met die min’, *Die Son*, 11 July, p. 25

⁹³ Neocosmos, 2006, Op. Cit., p. 68

Neocosmos locates the rupture in the definition of citizenship at the moment when the post-apartheid state put forth a notion of citizenship that stipulated that the right to access the South African labour market was rooted in indigeneity.⁹⁴ In this way, foreigners came to be imagined as non-indigenous. Consequently, from the onset of the 1990s, a human rights discourse emerged in which xenophobic discourses was being generated. It was only from this period that the state came to consider migrant labour as undesirable.⁹⁵ Indeed, African foreign nationals are imagined to have a “parasitical relationship” to South Africa’s resources which works to symbolically associate African foreign nationals with words such as “invasion,” thereby inhibiting the “post-1994 nation-building process.”⁹⁶ As I will show, many of *Die Son*’s readers continue to imagine African foreign nationals, particularly “illegal immigrants,” as threatening the nation.

More so, there has been a shift from anti-rural and pro-urban in South African nationalism to pro-South Africa to anti-Africa, which includes viewing the rest of the continent as “rural, backward, immersed in poverty and politically unstable and corrupt.”⁹⁷ What accompanies this Africa/South Africa opposition is the belief that foreigners come to South Africa with the intention of benefitting from South African nationalism. Although writing about Walter Benjamin’s optical detective, Tom Gunning may provide useful conceptual tools to imagine the opposition Neocosmos is proposing. Tom Gunning writes: “Through a defensive posture, the

⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 69

⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 77

⁹⁶ Peberdy, S. 2001. “Imagining Immigration: Inclusive Identities and Exclusive Policies in Post-1994 South Africa”, *Africa Today*, 48(3):15-32, p. 25

⁹⁷ Neocosmos, 2006, Op. Cit., p. 79

intérieure constitutes itself as a space cut off from the world.”⁹⁸ We can imagine South Africa as the *intérieure*, which renders South Africans legible as insiders, and the rest of Africa as that which it has cut itself off from. Indeed, as Gunning notes, this opposition is contingent upon an illusion.⁹⁹

This illusion often takes the form of a narrative that re-writes history in which not only the labour of foreigners is concealed, but also the hospitality of neighbouring African countries to exiled South Africans is erased.¹⁰⁰ It is through the re-writing of history where African foreigner nationals’ proximity are imagined as threatening and to be taking something away from the nation that allows for an affective reading of African foreign nationals as something to be “feared, hated and distrusted.”¹⁰¹ The (ambivalent) negative attachment developed towards African foreigner nationals is simultaneously imagined as a positive attachment towards the category of “citizen.” The affective reading of the category of “non-citizen” or “foreigner” bolsters South Africans attachment to the category of “citizen.”

Drawing from Davies and Head, Neocosmos notes that one of the socio-political factors that fed xenophobic sentiments and violence was that hiring labourers from South Africa was conceptualised as democratic by the state, whereas hiring labourers from neighbouring African countries through the migrant labour system was considered undemocratic.¹⁰² More so, that citizenship was further defined by the state on the grounds of rights, including the right to access

⁹⁸ Gunning, T. 2003. “The Exterior as Intérieure: Benjamin’s Optical Detective”, *boundary 2*, Vol. 30, No. 1:105-129, p. 106-7

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 107

¹⁰⁰ Ahmed, 2004, *Op. Cit.*, p. 117

¹⁰¹ Matshinhe, D. M. 2011. “Africa’s Fear of Itself: the ideology of Makwerekwere in South Africa”, *Third World Quarterly*, 32(2):295-313, p. 302

¹⁰² Neocosmos, 2006, *Op. Cit.*, p. 81

resources, and duties served to cement the opposition between citizen and non-citizen. Neocosmos argues that it is through South Africa's legislation only guaranteeing citizen's rights and the ability to access resources that contributed to and shaped xenophobia in post-apartheid South Africa.¹⁰³ While it is recognised that human rights are applicable to citizens and non-citizens alike, this has often failed to manifest in practice. Thus, when demands for citizenship fail to deliver on its promise and coincide with citizen's demands, a rupture takes place filled with (ambivalent) tension.

Why, then, are some bodies encountered as being more hateful than others? Following Ahmed, these are the "histories of association"¹⁰⁴ that are brought to the surface in each encounter. The historicity of the relationship between hate and the figure of the African foreign national in South Africa sheds light on the historical conditions that contributed to the events of May 2008, and how the history of "unwanted immigrants" in South Africa is drawn. The African foreigner is already encountered as more hateful than others due to the history of the term "alien" in South Africa, which has been further exacerbated by an array of socio-political factors in the current moment.

¹⁰³ Ibid., p. 98

¹⁰⁴ Ahmed, 2014, Op. Cit., p. 13

Pathos of nearness

African foreign nationals' bodies, as concrete objects of intimacy, became "texts' on which ... some of [the] most graphic and scrutable messages"¹⁰⁵ were written. Skin, I suggest, became evidence of foreignness or strangeness as well as a container for the politicised "I," thereby acting as a border between citizen and non-citizen. The xenophobic discourse and violence directed towards and impressed on African foreign nationals acted as a mechanism of status control, distinguishing citizens from non-citizens. The language of difference therefore operates as a mechanism to bolster justifications for xenophobic violence and political discourses of threat. Difference is never absolute difference. Rather, it's systematic differentiation. In this vein, Christo Davids' column in *Die Son* bears witness:

Do we have the perception of "who cares, it's not my family getting hurt"? It's our country even though we do not know how to say elbow in Zulu. Selfishness ruins our country. It is as though the dark cloud of apartheid has once again emerged in another form, this time with another purpose and new role players [*Het ons die persepsie van "wie gee om, die mos nie my familie wat seerkry nie"? Dis ons land al weet ons nie hoe om elmboog in Zoeloe te se nie. Selfsug vermink ons land. Dis asof die donderwolk van apartheid weer sy verskyning gemaak het net in 'n ander vorm, die keer met 'n ander doel en nuwe rolspelers*]¹⁰⁶.

David Matsinhe, like Christo Davids, acknowledges the historical continuity between apartheid and post-apartheid mechanisms to categorise subjects.¹⁰⁷ In particular, Matsinhe argues that the

¹⁰⁵ Ashcroft, B., Griffiths, G., & Tiffin, H. 1995. "The body and performance: introduction", in Ashcroft, B., Griffiths, G., & Tiffin, H. (eds.). *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader*, London: Routledge, p 322, cited in Matsinhe, 2011:302

¹⁰⁶ Davids, C. 2008. 'Suidoos het gedraai van skaamte', *Die Son*, 29 May, p. 8

¹⁰⁷ C.f. Matsinhe, 2011

“almost exclusive loathing of African foreign nationals,”¹⁰⁸ including their emotions and affects, bear traces of apartheid relations. One of the insidious tools from the “dark cloud of apartheid” that has “emerged in another form” are a series of physical tests that need to be passed in order to be included in the category of citizen.

Mechanisms for distinguishing between citizens and non-citizens often privilege skin as a medium to do so. In this vein, let’s consider Didier Anzieu and his principal work *The Skin Ego*.

¹⁰⁹ Anzieu conceptualises the skin ego [*Moi-peau*] as the “mental image of which the Ego of the child makes use during the early phases of its development to represent itself as an Ego containing psychic contents, on the basis of its experience of the surface of the body.”¹¹⁰

Resisting the consideration that subjectivity is initiated through linguistic techniques, Anzieu¹¹¹ considers subjectivity as premised on the body.¹¹² Anzieu states that:

The first function of the skin is to be the sac that contains and retains inside itself all the good, full material that has accumulated through breastfeeding, everyday care, and the experience of being bathed in words. Its second function is to be the interface that marks the border with the external world, which it keeps on the outside, the barrier that protects one against being penetrated by the aggression and greed of others, whether people or objects. The third function of the skin, which it shares with the mouth and carries out at least as much as the mouth does, is to be a site and primary mode of

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., p. 300

¹⁰⁹ Anzieu, D. 1989. *The Skin Ego*. Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., p. 40

¹¹¹ Ibid., p. 40

¹¹² Ahmed, S., & Stacey, J. 2001. “Introduction: Demographies”, in Ahmed, S. & Stacey, J. (eds.). *Thinking Through Skin*. London & New York: Routledge, p. 7

communication with other people, to establish meaningful relations; in addition, it is a surface for registering the traces left by those others.¹¹³

Through “tactile interaction,” subjects come to understand the skin as not only a surface, but also a container of the self, “exclusive of the other.”¹¹⁴ Despite the problematic assumptions that the skin ego rests upon,¹¹⁵ I suggest that the skin ego remains productive for conceptualising subjectivity. Precisely because of Anzieu’s insistence that the skin functions as a mechanism for the “I” to distinguish itself from the “you.”

Skin, I suggest along with Jennifer Biddle,¹¹⁶ is able to produce distinctions between those who are considered fully human and those who are thought of as not-fully human.¹¹⁷ Through a “skin-figured identity,”¹¹⁸ readers reveal the limits of who is included in the category fully human. Here, I suggest we reflect on how *Die Son*’s readers articulate citizenship through rights as a mechanism that produces recognisable neighbours as undeserving foreigners under conditions where people might share social and economic circumstances. Hence, I want to give consideration to how the language of hate and the violence enacted on African foreign nationals articulates the place of rights, including the rights to inclusion, in the xenophobic violence of May 2008. Building on this, I suggest, the effects of human rights discourse amongst *Die Son*’s readers generate normative ideas about the human. In particular, the human as a subject that

¹¹³ Anzieu, Op. Cit., p. 44

¹¹⁴ Handcock, T. 2012. 'Transgressing boundaries: Skin in the construction of bodily interior', in Attiwill, S. (ed.). *Proceedings of 2012 IDEA Symposium*, Perth, Australia, 6-9 September 2012, p. 1-8, p. 1

¹¹⁵ C.f. Imogen Tyler (2001) for a critique of Anzieu’s skin ego.

¹¹⁶ Biddle, J. 2001. “Inscribing identity: skin as country in the Central Desert”, in Ahmed, S. & Stacey, J. (eds.). *Thinking Through Skin*. London & New York: Routledge, p. 178

¹¹⁷ Although, Biddle (2001:178) remains sceptical of conceptualising skin as a “a material, external cover for a stable, self-identified and self-identical subjectivity” reminiscent of Anzieu’s skin ego.

¹¹⁸ Biddle, Op. Cit., p. 188

struggles with and for recognition.¹¹⁹ If human rights discourse produces the human as the subject of human rights, *Die Son*'s readers are critical of the "human" in the formulation "human rights." Claims that some readers feel they are either treated like dogs or that "dogs have a better life than those [in Blikkiesdorp]"¹²⁰ are indicative of their awareness and experience of the discrepancy between who gets recognized as fully human:

Why is it important for us to help foreigners? Our own people have been rejected, removed from homes, and left on the Flats. They also stay in a tent and are expected to wait. Now the xenophobic incident happens and jumping takes place to help. Our own people suffer. If it comes to politics, you need us. Coloured people, we are just used. Looks like we were not born here. Foreigners are now treated better. [*Hoekom is dit nou belangrik vir ons om foreigners to help? Ons eie mense is verwerp, uit huise gesit, en op die Vlakte gelos. Hulle bly ook in 'n tent en is gesêom te wag. Nou kom die xenofobiese geval en word daar gespring om te help. Ons eie mense suffer. As dit by politiek kom, het julle ons nodig. Bruin mense, ons word net gebruik. Dit lyk asof ons nie hier gebore is nie. Buitelanders word nou beter behandel*].¹²¹

In this extract, the reader appears to link long-term frustration with the state, disappointment with democracy, and hatred with xenophobia. Indeed, the attention paid to citizen's frustrations over poor service delivery and housing led some to put forth what is known as the relative deprivation gap theory. This theory arose from the observation that the xenophobic attacks took place in predominantly impoverished areas characterised by high levels of crime, unemployment and poverty. However, the relative deprivation gap theory leaves much

¹¹⁹ Schippers, B. 2014. *The Political Philosophy of Judith Butler*. New York: Routledge, p. 54

¹²⁰ Mfazwe, A. 2008. 'Vergeete' in blikkiesdorp', *Die Son*, 14 Augustus, p. 10

¹²¹ Sonlesers, 2008. 'Ons moet tevrede wees met die min', *Die Son*, 11 July, p. 25

unexplained.¹²² We may ask along with Neocosmos why if people are economically deprived should they scapegoat foreigners?¹²³ Why were affluent South Africans not targeted? By way of addressing these questions, Mosselson posits that what was at stake was the punishment of those seen to be transgressing the “boundaries of political community,”¹²⁴ which in turn asserted the “privileged position”¹²⁵ of South Africans.

Readers from *Die Son* are therefore expressing more than their frustration; they are simultaneously asserting their right to belong and be cared for, differentiating the particular “I” from the abstract “we” of the rainbow nation. While there have been efforts by some readers to point out to “people haters” that ultimately “we are all children of Africa,”¹²⁶ the inclusivity and glory of the rainbow nation has been destroyed:¹²⁷

Call me xenophobic if it is necessary, but I do not agree with what is currently happening in our country. I have sympathy for the foreigners who have been uprooted but believe me – the government has never been so eager to help our people who pay taxes here, so quickly. Let me mention a few examples: In 2007, people who had no refuge, from a school in Ravensmead that was their home, dropped off and placed into a tent on an open field. These were legal South Africans. Earlier this year there were similar cases in Delft. People were thrown out of unfinished homes – with the government's knowledge that these people had no alternative [*Noem my maar xenofobies as dit moet, maar ek stem*

¹²² c.f. Neocosmos, 2006; Mosselson, 2010; Matsinhe, 2011

¹²³ Neocosmos, 2006, Op. Cit., p. 4

¹²⁴ Mosselson, A. 2010. “‘There is No Difference between Citizens and Non-Citizens Anymore’: Violent Xenophobia, Citizenship and the Politics of Belonging in Post-Apartheid South Africa, *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 36(3):641-655, p. 650

¹²⁵ Ibid., p. 650

¹²⁶ Briewe. 2015. ‘Kom reg, julle mensehatters’, *Die Son*, 26 April, p. 22

¹²⁷ Francis, L. 2015. ‘Reënboognasie se glans vergaan’, *Die Son*, 19 April, p. 9

*nie saam met dit wat tans in ons land aangaan nie. Ek het simpatie met die buitelanders wat ontwortel is, maar glo my – die regering was nooit só gretig om ons mense wat hier belasting betaal, só gou te help nie. Kom ek noem ‘n paar voorbeelde: In 2007 is mense wat geen heenkome gehad het, uit ‘n skool in Ravensmead wat hul tuiste was, verdryf en in ‘n tent op ‘n oop stuk veld neergeplak. Dit was wettige Suid-Afrikaners. Vroeër van jaar was daar soortgelyke gevalle in Delft. Mense is uit onvoltooide huise gesmyt – met die regering se medewete dat dié mense geen alternatief het nie]*¹²⁸.

By the reader signalling the Ravensmead incident and the case where “people were thrown out of unfinished homes,” we are invited to scenes of suffering where, under these conditions, *Die Son*’s readers capacity to feel sympathy for African foreign nationals has been devoured by the state’s absence of sympathy for South African nationals: “Nobody wants to be ugly with any living being, but do things the right way. Perhaps South Africans will have more sympathy than” [*Niemand wil lelik wees met enige lewende wese nie, maar doen dinge op die regte manier. Miskien sal die Suid-Afrikaners dan meer simpatie hê*].¹²⁹ In the scenes of suffering that are evoked by *Die Son*’s readers, sympathy functions as a “social and aesthetic technology of belonging.”¹³⁰ If sympathy, like hatred, functions as an affective technique, we bear witness to the kinds of obligations that are being asked to be recognized and acted upon.

Now we are in a position to understand the relationship between the individual – “the ego” – and the hated object, which is seen as standing in the way of self-preservation. Under conditions of day-to-day struggle coupled with *Die Son* informing its readers that the tents for victims of xenophobic violence cost R500 000 a month and more than R55 million in total, sentiments

¹²⁸ Sonlesers. 2008. ‘Regering gretig om uitlanders te help’, *Die Son*, 6 June, p. 31

¹²⁹ Sonlesers. 2008. ‘Regering gretig om uitlanders te help’, *Die Son*, 6 June, p. 31

¹³⁰ Berlant, L. 2004. “Compassion (and withholding)”, in Berlant, L. (ed.). *Compassion: The Culture and Politics of an Emotion*. London & New York: Routledge, p. 5

amongst readers that coloured people are “just used” and treated as though they “were not born here.” and that the government’s treatment of African foreign nationals is evidence that “foreigners are now treated better”¹³¹ become exacerbated. Thus, I suggest that the African foreign national becomes a site where unresolved tensions can be found. Sara Ahmed formulates the tendency of hate to align the particular with the general as when “the individual comes to *stand for* or *stand in for*.”¹³² This is not to say the individuals or groups are inherently more hateable as I have argued. Rather, as the individual comes to stand in for something, the subject is transformed into an object onto which meaning can be projected through the impressing of attributes onto them giving the idea that some individuals embody hatred. In turn, in May 2008, for example, xenophobia shows its capacity to organise individuals through an affect such hate.

In this way, *Die Son* and its readers try to make sense of the social and political conditions under which collective hatred emerges and circulates. We bear witness to not only the way in which hatred becomes a particular group expression, but also how affect takes different forms. As an illustration of this group expression, *Die Son* published an article with a headline that read “Xeno-Exodus.”¹³³ In this article, the politics of production that demarcates who is included and who is not are evident. An individual who chose not to reveal their identity to *Die Son* stated that they were from Zimbabwe and that they would be returning to their home country because locals from Grabouw were complaining that foreigners were stealing their jobs. Exclusion in this instance is represented through the expressed fears of the individual from Zimbabwe. Hatred then (as with fear) is not experienced the same. Hence, African foreign nationals and South African nationals cultivate feelings of fear and hatred from their distinct “social and political

¹³¹ Sonlesers. 2008. ‘Regering gretig om uitlanders te help’, *Die Son*, 6 June, p. 31

¹³² Ahmed, 2004, Op. Cit., p. 49

¹³³ Mfazwe, A. 2010. ‘Xeno-Exodus’, *Die Son*, 7 July, p. 6

positions.” Thus, while hatred is economic and circulates in relationships of difference, South African nationals and African foreign nationals experience a “common (yet, different) hatred.”¹³⁴ Hence, hatred is not unitary nor singular.

Indeed, the May 2008 xenophobic violence was an act of boundary making underscoring tensions between “interiority and exteriority, desires and fears, intimacy and anxiety, approaching and avoiding the friend and enemy and dependencies between victims and victimizers in an unequal way.”¹³⁵ *Die Son* demonstrates how xenophobic hatred signals attachments that have also been rendered politically unthinkable. That is, in a Freudian sense, by *Die Son*’s readers – admittedly not all – refusing to incorporate African foreign nationals into the collective self, expelling them as a cause of ‘unpleasure’ that is met with hatred and hostility, we see how narcissism signals its object. Narcissistic gain not only establishes and signifies “relations of the ego to the object,”¹³⁶ but demonstrates the emergence of a desire to move away from the object, which manifests in practice as “an aggressive tendency towards the object,”¹³⁷ a tendency, so intensified in the events of May 2008 that the hated object needed to be destroyed.

¹³⁴ Yanay, N. 2002. “Hatred as Ambivalence”. *Theory, Culture & Society*, 19(3):71-88, p. 75

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 5

¹³⁶ Freud, S. 1957 [1915]. “Instincts and Their Vicissitudes”, in Strachey, J. (trans & ed.). *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*. London: Hogarth Press, p. 420

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 420

Conclusion

While a handful of newspapers were curated to include coloured readers – such as *Die Burger Ekstra*, *Grassroots* and *South* – much of print media has failed to speak directly to working class coloured audiences, and this failure has been particularly striking at a time when print media in general in the country is in decline. In this thesis, I have argued in this thesis that *Die Son* has offered a platform for coloured readerships to attempt to recognise and identify with negotiations with what being ‘coloured’ means in post-apartheid South Africa by recounting and sensationalizing everyday experiences. Specifically, I have considered how *Die Son* enables the constitution of this community and the negotiation of its boundaries at a moment in South Africa where the formation of community has come under stress.

I have argued that *Die Son*’s success is connected to their ability to facilitate identification with a larger collective. The collective imagined by *Die Son* and its readers, as I have shown, were rendered possible under conditions that it had something to expel: the identification of a *figure out of place* that was premised on the limits of the boundary of the community, identified as such in order to help constitute what the community is by defining its moral, legal, and political boundaries. In this process, *Die Son* became a venue to comment on the failures of the government, and the elisions of everyday exclusion and violence in contemporary South African media.

In chapter 1, I considered narratives from *Die Son* and its readers that exposed experiences of exclusion and feelings of pain that referenced a state of woundedness in the lives of the tabloid’s readership. By reflecting on *Die Son*’s readers’ collective injury, I showed how readers’ used injury as a mechanism to point to the interior of the collective. In particular, I gave consideration

to how the tabloid's readers deliberated injury in relation to coloured subjectivity. One prominent theme that emerged in the discourse of readers' collective injury was the failure to access and benefit from the promises underpinning the "rainbow nation" in the advent of democracy in South Africa. The coverage of readers' discourse of injury that often accompany their everyday experience worked to index the collective that *Die Son* assisted in constituting. While the tabloid cannot offer solutions to the dismay of readers' everyday lives, *Die Son*, as I showed, provided a sense of solidarity that was regarded as belonging to the interior of the readership community, confirming a collective identification.

In chapter 2, I examined the reportage of stories of sexual outrage, framed by *Die Son* through campaigns such as *Son sien 'n rapist! Son sien 'n lafaard!* [Son sees a rapist! Son sees a coward!]. Specifically, I argued that by situating the stories of sexual outrage in a logic of abjection, the tabloid worked to align readers with what was seen as belonging to the interior of the community. Yet, unlike with chapter 3 and 4, this chapter revealed that readers required from *Die Son* an exposition of the 'object' of disgust. This, I argued, was because the 'objects' of disgust did not intrude into the larger collective but circulated within. The capacity for the tabloid to exclude what was named as abject was crucial in allowing *Die Son* to emerge as a counterparental figure in the eyes of its readership. By conceptualizing *Die Son* as a paternal figure, I suggested that the tabloid's rendering of community members as abject coincided with a mode of attachment to not only *Die Son*, but a collective that needed to expel that which did not belong.

In chapter 3, I argued that *Die Son*'s figure of the *wolf in blue* revealed the unstable boundary of the criminal and the cop, thereby exposing police as not occupying the stable figures of social order that they were supposed to exemplify. I examined how the language used to describe the

criminal and the cop did not differentiate between the two, but rather compared the criminal and the cop. I situated the haunting of the criminal and the cop alongside a history of the relationship between police officers and police dogs in South Africa, specifically focusing on the apartheid state's relationship with wolves, to reveal the *wolf in blue* as an uncanny experience. In doing so, I suggested that *Die Son's* production of the *wolf in blue* was an effort to produce clear categories of what belonged and what did belong. By demonstrating how *Die Son* undoes conceptual pairing of inside and outside with the figure of the *wolf in blue*, I showed that the tabloid's pointing to the shared characteristics of the criminal and the cop referenced a troubling resemblance due to the uncanny capacity for each figure to call on one another.

In chapter 4, I turned to the figure of the African foreign national to consider how collective hatred outlined the African foreign national as an 'object of hate' during the May 2008 xenophobic attacks. Xenophobia, as an expression of collective hatred, was used as a force to demarcate the boundaries of insiders and outsiders. I engaged *Die Son's* framing of xenophobia as a politics of hatred that transformed differences that mattered little into characteristics that needed to be expelled or even destroyed from the interior of the collective. However, unlike chapter 2 and 3, this chapter was concerned with *Die Son's* attempt to undo the coupling of the African foreign national with symbols of loss and threat. Thus, I meditated on how *Die Son* endeavored to negotiate with its readers the status of the African foreign national as a *figure out of place*. Yet, as I argued, under conditions of intimacy and proximity, hatred became a force with which readers asserted their privilege and right to belong.

Due to the framing of xenophobia as an affective intensity such as hate ran the risk of reducing xenophobia to a framing of an attitude or act that was abnormal or irrational, I gave further consideration to the historicity of the figure of the foreigner in South Africa. In doing so, I

argued that it was not simply anyone who came to be hated and outlined as an ‘object of hate.’ Rather, I showed that through histories of association – the continuation of ideologies, policies, and practices from the past into the present – some bodies came to be encountered as already more hateful than others.

If *Die Son* assumes an emotional role through the figure of a counterparent, the tabloid’s relationship with its reader coincides with a development of attachment and identification. This attachment is possible, as I have suggested, under conditions of a presence of an identified threat that needs to be expelled. Yet, the identification process between *Die Son* and its readers is by no means linear. Rather, if anything, it is indicative of a desire of the tabloid’s readership to move closer to those that readers identify with. At a moment where readers have few institutions to rely on in South Africa – primarily the incapacity of the state to contain and discipline bodies, producing properly socialized subjects – *Die Son* acknowledged that the *figure out of place* was geographically and socially part of the interior of the community, yet the tabloid simultaneously re-positioned and constituted each figure as exterior to the collective.

Insofar as the *figures out of place* are produced, so is the ideal, the properly socialized subjects, which *Die Son* aligns itself and its readers with. The figure of the abject criminal, the *wolf in blue*, and the African foreign national are, as I have argued, evoked by the tabloid and readers alike as threats that *Die Son*’s readership faces. Each figure, to a different extent, was deemed unfit to be constituted part of the larger collective. Through the failure to be constituted part of the collective, each figure aligned *Die Son*’s readership, in a concrete way, with what was deemed as proper to the interior of the collective.

The conditions of impossibility to exclude each *figure out of place* is what allowed *Die Son* to constitute and secure an intimate *counterpublic* collective. By *Die Son* undoing its promise of

Son Sien Alles [Son Sees Everything], its inability to concretely expel each *figure out of place*, constituted grounds for the forging of a collective: the impossibility of avoiding contact with each figure. *Die Son*, I argued, derived its authority by giving a collective expression to figures that posed a threat, where each figure was determined and outed by acts of exclusion. The tabloid's splendor lies in its ability to index the boundaries of the collective. The negotiation of boundaries that are inchoate are steps towards containing those who are proper to the interior and improving – or at the very least recognising – the social conditions of its readership, rendered possible by *Die Son*.

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Figures

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Figure 2: Jason, E. 2010. "Wolwe in Blou: Gattas in hof oor rape", *Die Son*, 14 July, p.1

Maps

Map 2: Western Cape, South Africa, from self-identification *Census* 2011. Map by A. Firth.